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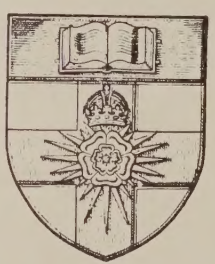

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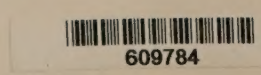
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REPORTS

FROM

COMMISSIONERS, INSPECTORS,

AND OTHERS:

FORTY-SEVEN VOLUMES.

— *(25.)* —

HIGHLANDS AND ISLANDS.

SESSION 1.—5 *February* 1895——6 *July* 1895.
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HIGHLANDS AND ISLANDS:

[c. 7681.] Report of the Royal Commission, Highlands and Islands, with Appendices. p. 1

[c. 7668.] Minutes of Evidence. Vol. I. 95

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OF THE

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(HIGHLANDS AND ISLANDS, 1892),

WITH APPENDICES.

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REPORT

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CONTENTS.

PAGE

THE COMMISSION, ... v

REPORT by the Commission, ... vii

ADDENDUM by M. Hugh Shaw Stewart, Esq., M.P., James Noel M. Forsyth, Esq., and George Gordon, Esq. xxvi

„ „ Rev. Malcolm MacCallum, ... xxvi

„ „ Henry Munro, Esq., ... xxvii

APPENDICES TO REPORT—

Book of Reference to Maps, showing lands scheduled—

(1) County of Argyll, ... 2

(2) County of Inverness, ... 25

(3) County of Ross and Cromarty, ... 38

(4) County of Sutherland, ... 46

(5) County of Caithness, ... 54

(6) County of Orkney, ... 58

(7) County of Shetland, ... 60

Maps showing lands scheduled (separately issued).

Evidence (see Volumes 1 & 2).

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND,
WHITEHALL, *December* 15, 1892.

The Queen has been pleased to direct that Letters Patent be made and passed under the Seal appointed by the Treaty of Union to be kept and made use of in place of the Great Seal of Scotland, in the terms and to the effect following, viz. :—

VICTORIA *R.*

VICTORIA, by the Grace of God of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, Queen, Defender of the Faith, to Our trusty and well-beloved David Brand, Esquire, Advocate, Sheriff of Ayrshire, and Chairman of the Crofters Commission; Our trusty and well-beloved Michael Hugh Shaw-Stewart, Esquire, Member of Parliament for the Eastern Division of the County of Renfrew; Our trusty and well-beloved Angus Sutherland, Esquire, Member of Parliament for the County of Sutherland; Our trusty and well-beloved James Noel Muller Forsyth, Esquire of Quinish, Argyllshire; Our trusty and well-beloved George Gordon, Esquire, Land Valuer, Elgin; Our trusty and well-beloved John Malcolm M'Callum, Minister of the Parish of Muckairn, Argyllshire; Our trusty and well-beloved John Macleod, Esquire, Inverness; and Our trusty and well-beloved Henry Munro, Esquire, Inverness,—Greeting!

Whereas We have deemed it expedient that a Commission should forthwith issue to inquire whether any, and if any, what land in the Counties of Argyll, Inverness, Ross and Cromarty, Sutherland, Caithness, and Orkney and Shetland, now occupied for the purposes of a deer forest, grouse moor, or other sporting purposes, or for grazing, not in the occupation of crofters or other small tenants, is capable of being cultivated to profit or otherwise advantageously occupied by crofters or other small tenants:

Now know ye that We, reposing great trust and confidence in your knowledge, discretion, and ability, have nominated, constituted, and appointed, and do by these presents nominate, constitute, and appoint you, the said David Brand, Michael Hugh Shaw-Stewart, Angus Sutherland, James Noel Muller Forsyth, George Gordon, John Malcolm M'Callum, John Macleod, and Henry Munro, to be Our Commissioners for the purposes of the said inquiry:

And for the better enabling you Our said Commissioners to make the said inquiry, We do by these presents authorise and empower you, or any three or more of you, to call before you, or any three or more of you, such persons as you may judge necessary, by whom you may be the better informed of the matters herein submitted for your consideration, and every matter connected therewith, and also to call for, have access to, and examine all such books, documents, papers, or records as you shall judge likely to afford you the fullest information on the subject of this Our Commission; and to inquire of and concerning the premises by all other lawful ways and means whatsoever:

And We do further by these presents authorise and empower you, or any three or more of you, to visit and personally inspect such places as you may deem expedient for the more effectual carrying out of the purposes aforesaid:

And Our further will and pleasure is that you, or any three or more of you, do with as little delay as possible report to Us under your hands and seals upon the matters referred to you as aforesaid, and that you may have power to certify to Us from time to time your several proceedings in respect of the matters aforesaid, if it may seem expedient to you so to do:

And We further will and command, and by these presents ordain, that this Our Commission shall continue in full force and virtue, and that you Our said Commissioners, or any three or more of you, may from time to time proceed in the execution thereof, and of every matter and thing therein contained, although the same be not continued from time to time by adjournment:

And for the purpose of aiding you in the execution of this Our Commission, We do hereby authorise and empower you to appoint a Secretary to this Our Commission:

And We ordain the said Letters Patent to be extended in the most ample form with all clauses needful, and to pass the Seal aforesaid, *per saltum*, without passing any other Seal or Register. For doing whereof this shall be to the Director of Our Chancery for writing the same, and to the Keeper of the said Seal for causing the same to be appended thereto a sufficient Warrant.

Given at Our Court at St James's, the 6th day of December 1892, in the fifty-sixth year of Our Reign.

By Her Majesty's Command,

(Signed) G. O. TREVELYAN.

REPORT.

TO THE

QUEEN'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR MAJESTY,—

Your Majesty's Commission, bearing date the sixth day of December 1892, directed us to inquire "whether any, and if any, what land in the counties "of Argyll, Inverness, Ross and Cromarty, Sutherland, Caithness, and Orkney and "Shetland, now occupied for the purposes of a deer forest, grouse moor, or other "sporting purposes, or for grazing, not in the occupation of crofters or other small "tenants, is capable of being cultivated to profit or otherwise advantageously occupied "by crofters or other small tenants." We have since endeavoured to discharge the duty committed to us by your Majesty's commands, and we have now the honour to submit the following Report :—

In the prosecution of the Inquiry, we held public sittings at convenient centres throughout the counties mentioned. These sittings were sixty-four in number, and were invariably preceded by public announcement that a sitting was about to be held, and inviting all those willing to give evidence to send in their names. Evidence or information was tendered either in written statements, or more frequently in the course of oral examination, or in both ways, by persons who voluntarily came forward, and to a large extent such evidence was directed to the indication and description of lands believed to be available within the meaning of the Royal Warrant; or, on the other hand, it was directed to show that such lands were not suitable for the objects of our Inquiry, or only to a less extent than had been represented. Further, these sittings were invariably preceded or followed—in most cases were followed—by personal inspection of all such lands in or near the district where the sitting was held, as we deemed it necessary or proper to examine. In many instances the sittings were prolonged, and for the most part deep interest was taken in the Inquiry by those concerned.

In the matter of inspection of land, we have to explain that at first such inspection was made by all, or nearly all, the Commissioners acting together. In course of time, however, it was found practicable and desirable to divide the Commission for the purpose of examining land into inspecting parties, and in this way the work requiring to be done was more speedily, and, we believe, as satisfactorily accomplished. It is hardly necessary to say that this mode of procedure involved continuous labour of a very arduous and exhausting kind on the part of one and all of the Commissioners, but this labour was undertaken and performed in the belief that not otherwise would we be in a position to present a reliable and satisfactory Report. It should be added that in a few districts no names were forthcoming of parties desirous to be examined, and there, accordingly, no sitting was held, but nevertheless careful inspection was made of all lands which we thought required consideration.

The persons who came forward for examination may be said to have belonged to one or other of the following classes :—

(1) Crofters appointed as delegates at public meetings of crofters to represent the united views of a township or townships, or other body of crofters;

(2) Crofters possessing information as to particular localities, who volunteered to give evidence;

(3) Crofters desirous of submitting their own individual statements;

(4) Cottars, or representatives of cottars, desirous to obtain holdings;

(5) Landowners appearing in person; and

(6) Factors, Managers, or Law Agents appearing for Landowners.

From these witnesses much information was derived bearing on the subject matter of the Inquiry, and both at the sittings and in the examination of lands, every aid was given by those interested, either as landowners or crofters, and in remote or inaccessible quarters special efforts were not infrequently made by them during the inspections to secure our comfort and facilitate the work of the Commission.

Public proceedings commenced in the Isle of Skye, Inverness-shire, our first sitting being held at Portree on 18th April 1893. From that time our inquiries were steadily carried on till the beginning of November in that year, and during this period large portions of Inverness-shire and Ross-shire, including some of the most extensive deer forests in those counties, and the whole of the counties of Sutherland and Caithness, in both of which also deer forests are to be found, were not only examined, but the lands thus inspected were afterwards duly considered at special meetings or conferences of the Commissioners. In 1894 proceedings commenced towards the end of March in the county of Argyll, and in the course of the summer the whole of the island territory from Barra Head to the Butt of Lewis was visited, next Shetland and Orkney, and on returning to the mainland we inspected the lands which had been left unvisited there.

Our last sitting was held at Ullapool on 10th September 1894. Since that date a portion of the county of Argyll, known as the district of Cowal, lying between Loch-fyne and Lochlong, not previously considered, was examined; and we believe we have seen all lands requiring inspection, and accordingly are in a position to present a Report based on investigation into the whole subject matter of the Inquiry.

The proceedings necessary in Harris and Lewis, on the mainland in Knoydart and Applecross, and in the Shetland and Orkney Islands were greatly facilitated and expedited by means of the steamer for which provision had been made by the Government. But for this arrangement much work which has been successfully accomplished must either have remained unperformed, or been performed in an unsatisfactory manner.

The lands inspected consisted of deer forests and grazing farms, which may be taken to include grouse moors, and the direct question arising in connection with these was, whether there were adequate grounds for arriving at the conclusion that certain portions of these lands might be cultivated to profit, or otherwise advantageously occupied by crofters or other small tenants, and, if so, should be scheduled in that view.

In dealing with deer forests we found ourselves able to schedule certain portions of land as suitable either for profitable cultivation or advantageous occupation. In like manner, in dealing with grazing farms, we examined certain areas of old arable land not under crop, and hill grazing of a kind adapted for crofter occupation, and such land, it may here be observed, in many quarters possessed a soil of higher quality and more fertile nature than is to be found in certain neighbouring lands occupied and possessed by crofters. But, while lands have been scheduled both in deer forests and grazing farms, we deem it our duty to add that we found large tracts of land presently under deer forests which were not suitable for the objects of our Inquiry.

The main reasons in respect of which we arrived at this conclusion were in the first place that these lands are to a great extent rocky and sterile, are for the most part at a considerable altitude above sea-level, and are too often remote and inaccessible; and in the second, that in many cases lands examined within deer forests were found, from the configuration of the surface and other circumstances, not suited for formation into crofters' holdings, or for what is often called the "lotting of crofts."

It is indeed true that there is to be found in the Appendix a considerable body of testimony to the effect that certain areas, now afforested, had at one time occupied dwellings upon them, but parts of the lands thus referred to were only used as summer sheilings and not permanently, and with regard to the remainder, though there was

conclusive evidence of occupation, we do not believe that these lands could be profitably occupied as crofters' holdings now.

It is probable that those crofters in occupation of such lands, had to be satisfied with a more precarious subsistence than is to be met with generally now-a-days in the crofting counties, and though it may be that some individuals are now desirous of settling in these places, we are satisfied that this desire is not widespread, and in any case we are not prepared to make any recommendation as to any part of that area which has not been scheduled.

In arriving at this conclusion we had fully in view the suggestion that parts of these lands might be brought under sheep, but we do not see our way to any scheme for declaring such lands available for crofters' grazings with reasonable prospects of profit and advantage.

In the case of grazing farms our experience differed from that in the inspection of deer forests. In many of these farms we found large areas of old arable land not under crop, and hill grazings of a much more promising kind for occupation by crofters than we were able to find in the case of lands under deer. The scheduled area is therefore much larger in the latter instance than in the former.

On the material question of profit and loss, as to which opposing views were submitted, we are of opinion that the profit and loss account of a subsisting holding, with or without a Fair Rent, does not present a reliable standard of judgment; neither does the profit and loss account of an imaginary holding afford such a standard on the data which have been assumed. The question is not whether a patch of arable land can be cultivated to profit. The small holder does not live, and does not expect to live, by his arable land. For the means of livelihood from his holding he looks to sales from his stock of cattle and sheep, and in certain cases, such as in North and South Uist and in Shetland, from horses or ponies. But, as crofts are presently constituted, the holding is mainly of use to the crofter as a home, and he has to depend on money or wages otherwise earned from fishing or labour for the payment of his rent and the support of his family. The problem for consideration is, has the result of our inquiries been to enable us to schedule any lands, and if so, what lands, which, with a due combination of old arable, or land suitable for cultivation, along with pasture land or hill grazings held in common, may reasonably be deemed capable of rearing a profitable stock, or of profitable occupation by an industrious tenant possessed of the means requisite to equip and stock the holding, which stock could be summered on the grazing, and entirely wintered, or almost entirely wintered, on the produce of the holding? Our answer to the main question is that we have been able to schedule such lands, and to define and colour the same on Ordnance Survey maps; but we desire to add that the occupants of these lands must be selected with care, and that they must only be called on to pay a "Fair Rent" for the holding, using these words in the statutory sense. Such "Fair Rent" would, of course, include interest on any necessary outlay which had to be incurred.

In dealing with this question it is impossible for us to leave out of view the matter of stock prices and the quality of stock. A good stock almost always fetches a full price and even a high price, and, accordingly, we assume, as a condition of success, that for the most part moderately good prices rule for the stock sold.

In thus scheduling lands we had in view three separate and distinct kinds:—

(1) Land suitable for new holdings with corresponding pasture. Such land has been coloured *yellow*;

(2) Land which could be advantageously occupied as extensions of grazings by neighbouring crofters. Such land has been coloured *pink*; and

(3) In addition to the above two classes of land, we have defined by *brown* colouring such portions of deer forests and large sheep grazings as are considered suitable for occupation as moderately-sized holdings or farms, at rents exceeding the statutory limit of £30 yearly.

Coloured maps showing the lands thus scheduled are issued separately as an Appendix.

But in the case of all the lands scheduled, the boundaries proposed may be taken as subject to re-adjustment.

In dealing with grazing farms, where only part of a farm has been scheduled, care has been taken as far as possible to leave what, in the event of the scheduled lands being appropriated, would constitute a workable and profitable farm. In other cases whole farms have been scheduled, and coloured in one or more shades according to the circumstances of the particular case. In some of these schedulings both of parts of farms, and of whole farms, certain portions of land under crop have been included here and there. Lands under crop, we are well aware, do not come within the scope of our Inquiry. On the other hand, where we were of opinion that certain stretches of land ought to be scheduled, we held that we ought not to feel ourselves deterred by the presence of lesser areas of land under crop therein, from scheduling the lands we thought suitable.

The land scheduled *yellow* as available for new holdings in all cases includes large areas of old arable land formerly cultivated but presently under grass, or is land capable of being reclaimed, and surrounded or bordered by grazing lands adapted for cattle or sheep stock, or both.

Except as to certain lands in Caithness and Orkney, and possibly in one or two other quarters, we have not contemplated the formation of a croft from land wholly arable, and this for two reasons:—First, because in too many districts the soil and climate forbid the formation of such a holding with adequate prospects of success; and secondly, because crofters themselves entirely confined their evidence, unless in the counties just named, to a demand for holdings partly arable, but mainly pastoral. The holdings we have thus had in view are:—

(1) Self-sustaining holdings;

(2) Small holdings which afford a home, but would not occupy the crofters' whole time; and

(3) Fishermen's holdings.

We deal first with what may be called self-sustaining holdings. These are holdings with such an area and quality of soil—arable and pasture—and such a combination of these, as with a fair rent and moderately good prices for the stock sold may be deemed capable of affording an independent and sufficient means of living to the tenant, and occupy his whole time. As in some degree examples of the kind of holdings we have in view we may point to certain of the crofts in Sutherland, in Caithness, in Orkney, and in Argyll, but would observe that many of even these are not so large as we think ought to be formed as self-sustaining holdings.

Small holdings, to be regarded as homes, but which would not occupy the crofters' whole time, and new small holdings for cottars may be considered together.

While the evidence taken not only discloses a demand for self-supporting holdings, and a readiness and willingness to take them up, it is not to be left out of view that the kind of holding to which, for the most part, crofters are accustomed is one affording a home, but making it necessary for the crofter to supplement what he derives from his holding by labour or fishing, or by carrying on a trade or business. In various districts those who came forward to give evidence rather showed that they had not reached the idea of a self-sustaining holding, and craved our attention to the great demand for the smaller size of holdings, and to the extension of their present holdings, both as to arable and pasture.

Urgent representations were made by and on behalf of the class known as cottars, sometimes described as "landless cottars," and who often are younger sons, or sons-in-law or other relatives of crofters. Very many of these persons are deserving and intelligent, and owe their unfortunate position to adverse circumstances. Their ambition almost invariably was, in the statements made at the sittings, to get a croft such as their crofter neighbours presently possess. While the position of the crofter is one of difficulty, owing, in part at least, to the smallness of his holding, the position of the cottar is still more difficult, and any scheme that would result in affording cottars the opportunity of obtaining crofts such as presently exist would operate a substantial relief both to the cottars themselves and to the neighbouring crofters.

On the matter of size of holdings, there is much room for careful consideration. In some parts of the counties in question circumstances are favourable to the formation and

carrying on of holdings of large area, but on the north-west coast in particular there are special circumstances adverse to such holdings, and not to be left out of sight. In consequence of the weak nature of the land and the severity of the weather, the ground must not be turned over during the winter season, as is the practice on the east coast. If this were done the effect would be that the land would get washed away. The tillage is therefore necessarily confined to the spring of the year. Moreover, the season for tillage is brief and late, and always precarious. Accordingly, if the crofter plants his potatoes and sows his corn too early, he runs the risk of losing all from wet or violent weather. If he does this too late, he incurs the risk of his crop not ripening. Therefore, he must have a holding, the size of which is compatible with its successful management in view of these conditions. His working strength at spring and harvest-time consists of himself, his wife, and those of his family at home able to assist him. Most of the cultivation is necessarily spade cultivation. Hired assistance is the exception, for it can only be afforded with difficulty, and it diminishes the chance of profit from his holding.

In this connection, also, regard must be had to the matter of manuring. The manure made on all crofts near the sea-shore is invariably supplemented by the use of sea-ware when it can be obtained, so that, if new holdings are formed on the north-west coast, the benefit to the crofters in being able to obtain an abundant supply of sea-ware should form an important consideration in deciding as to the situation and size of such new holdings. These observations would have less application to new holdings established as self-sustaining holdings, but in the formation of new holdings, especially on the north-west coast, not intended to be of that kind, it will be found necessary to have regard to the above considerations.

We are aware that certain observations are made on the matter of size of holdings in the Report of the Highlands and Islands Commission, 1883 (see page 101), including the extent of arable land deemed necessary for each holding, but we are of opinion that materials do not exist for enabling us to suggest practical measures on this important question, adapted to uniform or even general application, and that in the lotting of crofts and fishermen's holdings, special regard must be had to the circumstances of the localities where such lotting is carried out.

In referring to the north-west coast we have abstained from alluding to the Island of Lewis, as there the state of matters is such as to demand separate and special treatment.

Besides self-sustaining holdings, extension of existing holdings, and the formation of holdings of limited area for landless cottars or others, there remains another class to which our attention was directed at the sittings, namely, fishermen's holdings. We are clearly of opinion that much may be done to effect an improvement in the existing state of matters, as to holdings for fishermen throughout the counties in question, particularly on the west and north-west coast and in the Long Island. In considering lands situated in these quarters, we have had carefully in view the suitability of lands on the sea-shore for fishermen's holdings, and, where thought advisable, these lands have been coloured *Yellow* for such ; that is to say, for holdings consisting of a house site, a yard or garden, a potato patch, and space where possible for a cow's grazing. In localising and defining these areas it is scarcely necessary to say that we had in view the matter of harbour accommodation, either natural or artificial, though in most cases the former. It distinctly appears from the evidence laid before us that a desire exists in many quarters of the crofting sea-board for the formation of such holdings. Their establishment at various points on the lands scheduled need not present serious difficulty, as all the requisites would be found together, to wit, suitable land near a natural harbour, sea-ware for manuring purposes, adjacent grazing for a cow, and desirable applicants ready to take up such holdings. The formation of these would in our judgment be of immense advantage, especially on the north-west coast, to cottars. Many such persons, though honest and hard-working, occupy an untenable position both as to their dwellings and to their neighbours. Often they have no land at all, and when they have, their only title is that of squatter on the common grazing of the crofters, or on the holding of some crofter who is a relative, or who is too good-natured to oppose his intrusion. The male members of the cottar's family go to sea as hired hands on the east coast, and the female members as " gutters " or as outworkers. But fishermen's holdings of the kind we have in view would not only, we believe, be readily taken up by such cottars, but they are the very men to carry them on successfully, and moreover such holdings would in many cases not be beyond their capabilities and resources.

So much for land scheduled *Yellow* as available for new holdings.

Before leaving this part of our subject matter we deem it right to place on record the result of our observations as to the effect of the Crofters Holdings (Scotland) Act, 1886, (49 & 50 Vic., c. 29). Our inspections of land throughout the counties mentioned brought us into immediate proximity with many crofting townships, as well as with the individual holdings of many crofters, and accordingly we derived materials for judgment from a very large portion of the crofting area. Our opinion is that, speaking generally, the Act has had a beneficial effect, and particularly in the following directions. In the first place, the fixing of a Fair Rent has to a large extent removed from the minds of crofters the sense of hardship arising from the belief that they were made to pay rent on their own improvements, or otherwise made to pay at an excessive rate for soil of a poor quality. In the second place, the combination of a Fair Rent with Statutory Security of Tenure has not only taken away or allayed causes of discontent, but has imparted a new spirit to crofters and imbued them with fresh energy. The abiding sense produced that the permanent improvements which a crofter makes upon his holding will, if he complies with certain reasonable statutory conditions, accrue either to himself or to his family successor, will not be taxable by the landlord in the form of increased rent, and moreover will have a money value under a claim for Compensation on Renunciation of Tenancy or Removal from his holding, has led to vigorous efforts towards improvement by crofters in many quarters. For instance, we found that more attention is being paid to cultivation, to rotation of crops, to reclamation of outruns, to fencing, and to the formation or repair of township roads; but most conspicuous of all the effects perceptible, is that upon buildings, including both dwelling-houses and steadings. In a considerable number of localities we found new and improved houses and steadings erected by the crofters themselves since the passing of the Act. In the third place, while the Enlargement Sections of the Act have not proved so effectively operative as was intended or anticipated, we did not fail to observe, in the various cases of Enlargement of Holdings which came under our eye, that the enlargements granted had been, as far as they went, of great benefit to the holdings enlarged. And, in the fourth place, the percentage of arrears cancelled has terminated liabilities which could never have been met.

We pass next to the consideration of lands coloured *pink* for extensions of crofters' holdings, and more particularly of crofters' grazings. As matter of historical fact, large areas of grazing land in various districts, which were at former periods continuously grazed by the stock of crofters and other small tenants, or were occupied during the summer as sheilings, have been taken from these occupants to their serious loss. The rents they paid were stock rents, and when deprived of the means of breeding stock, whether of cattle or sheep, or when they had these means curtailed, difficulty and discontent frequently arose. Much evidence on this matter was laid before us, and accordingly we embraced every opportunity which occurred while making inspections, of looking in the first instance to the grazings presently held by crofters, together with the numbers possessing a right of pasturage over these; and in the next, to the reasonableness and practicability of declaring certain lands contiguous or near to crofters' grazings as available or suitable for extensions of their holdings, and duly scheduling the same. The result of our inquiries on this head has been entirely to satisfy our minds, not only that of the numerous applications made for extension of grazings many had much force, but that in a considerable number of instances there were lands of the kind available.

Such lands accordingly have been scheduled and coloured *pink* on the Ordnance Survey Sheets as available for extensions of holdings, and more particularly of grazings, to neighbouring crofters, or otherwise suitable for crofters' grazings. The particular crofters or townships of crofters who should share in such grazings will naturally fall to be afterwards determined. The main question here is one of advantageous occupation, and that occupation of such lands as grazings would be advantageous to the occupying tenants in a high degree we entertain no doubt whatever, provided the crofts are of sufficient size to winter the stock grazed on the common pasture. It is quite true that the scheduled grazings cannot be added to existing hill pastures or other common pastures without due consideration of the circumstances which attach to the holdings of the crofters proposed to be benefited, but the adjustment or re-adjustment of these need not present any serious difficulty.

In many cases where the addition of such grazings would bring together a larger number of stock than could be wintered on the township lands, this drawback could be overcome by further reclamation of outrun lands, or by greater skill and attention to the

cultivation and management of soil already under rotation. In any case, the difficulties of wintering, and other difficulties attaching to such extensions, would be more than counterbalanced by the advantages derived from these.

The system of grazing presently pursued on crofters' hill pastures or commons varies in different localities. In many, especially in Skye, on parts of the West Coast, and in Sutherlandshire, there is a "souming," that is to say, the "carry" of the grazing is first determined, and then the number of cattle, sheep, or horses, which each crofter may graze thereupon is fixed either by reference to the wintering capacity of his arable land, or at so much per £ sterling of rent, or in view of both these means of judgment.

According to the old law of Scotland, a *soum* or *sowm* is grass for a cow, or for five, and in some cases more, sheep. *Roum* or *rowm* is an antique expression for a piece of land. In former times the right of pasturage possessed by the tenants of the tacksman was in the eye of the law (and where not on mere tolerance) a servitude of pasturage. It grew up in commons, and the promiscuous possession to which it led was controlled and curbed by the old action of "souming" and "rouming," whereby the servient subject was "soumed"; that is, the amount of stock it could carry determined, and then the proportion effeiring to each of the dominant tenements "roumed," *i.e.*, fixed according to their respective capacity for winter foddering.*

These soumings were often adjusted in past times with much practical skill by persons having a minute knowledge of the ground, and where adhered to, resulted in the tenants obtaining all the benefit which the pasturage was fitted to yield, and each tenant getting up to, but no more than, the full measure of the right of grazing which attached to his holding. But much difficulty arose in getting crofter and other tenants to adhere to the "souming." As in larger areas of population, a township of crofters is a microcosm. The energetic, stock-gathering crofter soon came to have more than his due share and proportion of stock; the careless, unfortunate, indigent, or otherwise weak crofter to have less. This inequality in the possession and exercise of grazing rights may be said to exist at present more or less seriously throughout the common hill grazings in the crofting area on the mainland, in the outer islands, and throughout the scattalds of Shetland.

Writing in 1809, Dr Arthur Edmonston says (*View of the Zetland Islands*, Vol. I., pages 148 and 149):—

"The uncultivated ground, outside of the enclosure, is called the Scatthold, and is "used for general pasture, and to furnish turf for firing. Every tenant may rear as "many sheep, cattle, or horses, on the general scatthold attached to the town in which "his farm lies, as he can. There is no restriction on this head, whether he rent a large "or a small farm. If there be no moss on the scatthold contiguous to his farm, the "tenant must pay for the privilege to cut peat in some other common, and this payment "is called 'Hogalif.' It seldom exceeds 3s. per annum."

We found the same condition of matters to exist in Shetland now.

In Orkney the common pastures are of much smaller extent than we are accustomed to find on the mainland, and many townships or districts have no common pasture. On the other hand, the individual holdings are much larger, some of them ranging as high as 10, 20, and even upwards of 30 acres of arable land, with or without grazing outrun.

In those districts on the mainland where there is no souming, crofters have exercised in the past, and in many places continue to exercise, a right of unlimited grazing, with the consequence that the pasture is over-eaten, the quality and value of the stock reared become depreciated, and in hard or prolonged winter weather the death-rate rises to an alarming pitch. To meet the difficulties arising from this state of matters, the Crofters Common Grazings Regulation Act of 1891 (54 & 55 Vic. c. 41) was passed. That Act, which is permissive in its terms, has been adopted, we are glad to know, to a considerable extent, and where adopted has effected a substantial improvement; but to many grazings it has not been applied, and often for this reason, that the better-to-do

* See Rankine on *Land Ownership*, Third Edition, p. 398.

and more influential among the crofters are hostile to it, as its application would lead at once to the reduction of their over-stocks. In Shetland it has been held in the Sheriff-Court that the Act does not apply to persons who share in crofters' grazings, but are not themselves crofters.

From all these considerations it is abundantly plain that mere extensions of grazings, unaccompanied by the presence and enforcement of rules efficiently directed to the regulation of the stock, and to the equitable maintenance of the grazing rights of each crofter interested, is not to be thought of. With a view to such regulation and maintenance we desire to recommend a large extension of the "club-farm" system. Under it crofters have no individual hill stocks, but only a joint ownership in the stock. Where this system prevails, the crofters, or townships of crofters, interested in a grazing, hold a common stock duly proportioned to the "carry" of the ground, with one central management for herding, breeding, clipping, selling, and dividing of profits, or where necessary, imposing assessments required for the undertaking, as for example, to pay wintering, shepherds' wages, and the general upkeep of buildings and fences. When this system is carried on honestly and properly, not only is the very most made of the ground, but the individual crofter is more certain of his or her return than otherwise, especially where, as in the case of a widow, an invalid, or an occasional absentee, grazing interests fail to receive due attention.

It is quite true that difference of opinion prevails among those qualified to judge as to the merits and demerits of this system; but, after carefully considering the whole matter and weighing the evidence adduced, we are of opinion that the club-farm system can easily be carried on with a large measure of success.

We deem it well here, in connection with the general question of common grazings, to point out that we found frequently in the course of our inquiries that crofters did not pay sufficient attention, and indeed often had not the means of paying sufficient attention, to the important matter of breeding, in the cases of cattle, sheep, and horses alike. In some quarters the landlords make provision for the matter of proper breeding among crofters' stocks, but in most instances the crofters in this respect have to attend to their own stocks. In many places little or no attention is paid to the quality of the sires, and hence grazings which, if used by properly bred stock, would yield animals capable of fetching a good price, are not infrequently to be found grazed by animals of an indifferent or inferior quality, much to the detriment of the crofters when they put their stock on the market in competition with stock to the breeding of which more attention has been paid.

We would venture to suggest as a means of speedily and efficiently bringing about an improvement in this respect, that some measures be taken under proper authority, and subject to all necessary regulations, to induce crofters to use bulls, stallions, and rams of improved quality, and to encourage them to pay more strict attention to this matter than they do at present.

In the third place, certain lands, both in deer forests and on grazing farms, duly examined by us, have been scheduled *Brown* for moderately-sized holdings at a rent somewhat above the statutory crofter limit of £30 yearly. There are many crofters of credit and reputation, who, if they had the opportunity, would be glad to obtain such farms. It ought to be added that such lands are not in our opinion adapted for ordinary crofters' holdings, but for grazing farms with a due proportion of land under crop, and they would vary considerably in extent according to the nature and quality of the ground.

In connection with the matter of grazing farms, we ascertained that for a considerable time past a process of aggregation of such farms altogether undesirable has been going on simultaneously in two different ways. On the one hand, separate and distinct farms of comparatively moderate size have been from time to time consolidated into single farms in the occupancy of one tenant. On the other hand, a farmer has too often found himself able to obtain possession as tenant of a considerable number of farms, sometimes adjacent, sometimes in different quarters. In like manner also numbers of farms belonging to particular proprietors have fallen into their hands as occupants.

While this aggregation of farms in the possession of one individual was admitted on the part of the proprietors, it was explained on their behalf that this mainly arose from

the increasing difficulty experienced in finding separate tenants for large farms, and from their being obliged, failing a tenant, to take over sheep stocks at valuations made by farm valuators. They often felt compelled, it was said, to let their farms at a low rent to pluralist farmers rather than have them thrown upon their hands with obligations as to taking over stock which it was sometimes difficult for them to meet.

The following cases of farms in the hands of one individual as proprietor or tenant are taken from the Valuation Rolls :—

South Calder, Caithness,	£80	0	0
West Calder, „	190	0	0
Calder Mains and Achavarn, Caithness,	400	0	0
Assery, Forsie, and Portnellan, „	200	10	0
Dalnawillan, Caithness,	155	0	0
Carriside, „	29	10	0
Armadale, Sutherlandshire,	261	15	3
In all	£1316	15	3

Lambsdale and Brawlbin, Caithness,	£65	0	0
Dorrery, Caithness,	270	0	0
Lochend, etc., „	653	9	0
Kingsburgh, Skye, Inverness-shire,	430	0	0
In all	£1418	9	0

Brubster, Caithnesss,	£325	0	0
Upper Dounreay, Caithness,	447	0	0
Achavarasdale, „	65	0	0
Achnachy, Brubster Meadow, and Brubster Croft, Caithness,	47	0	0
Skaill and Achibrae, Caithness,	500	0	0
Altnabreac, „	25	0	0
In all	£1409	0	0

Scrabster, Caithness,	£922	13	0
Lower Dounreay, Caithness,	602	12	0
Melness (joint-tenancy), Sutherlandshire,	282	7	0
In all	£1807	12	0

Borlum, Sandside, Shebster and Grazings of Shurary, Caithness,	£975	0	0
Lybster and Clashdoin, Caithness,	305	3	0
In all	£1280	3	0

Thurdistoft and Lochside, Caithness,	£803	9	0
Dunbeath (joint-tenancy), „	827	14	0
In all	£1631	3	0

Mains of Gerston, Caithness,	£385	0	0
„ Banniskirk (joint-tenancy), Caithness,	380	0	0
„ Brims, Caithness,	400	0	0
„ Rumsdale and Glenmore, Caithness,	130	0	0
„ Thrumster Mains,	210	0	0
„ Raggra,	75	0	0
In all	£1580	0	0

Farm, House, and "Barns" of Olrig, Caithness,		£595	0 0
Farm of Borgie, „		400	0 0
	In all	£995	0 0
Dunn and Oldhall, Caithness (a joint-tenancy),		£700	0 0
Larel and Upper Calchfield (joint-tenancy), Caithness,		300	0 0
West Watten, Caithness,		800	0 0
Banks of Achingail,		50	0 0
	In all	£1850	0 0
Skinnet and Sixpenny, Caithness,		£430	0 0
Brawl, „		250	0 0
	In all	£680	0 0
Ashcoriclete, Caithness, Dirlot, „ Dalnaha, „ Croick, „		£370	0 0
Stemster, Pulhoy, Knockdee and Mill, Caithness,		£579	10 0
Brabsterdorran,		310	0 0
	In all	£889	10 0
Clibrig, Sutherland,		£601	14 0
Doulay and Craggie, Sutherlandshire,		160	0 0
Achilty, Coulnisk and Tor-Achilty, Ross-shire,		252	11 0
Kirkan, Ross-shire,		50	0 0
Balinroich, „		570	0 0
	In all	£1634	5 0
Sciberscross, Sutherlandshire,		£751	13 0
Glenhurich, Pollock, and Gorteneoran, Argyllshire,		400	0 0
	In all	£1151	13 0
Mudale, Sutherlandshire,		£130	12 0
Syre and Langdale, „		621	8 0
Culmaillie, „		533	0 6
Hartfield, Ross-shire,		202	10 0
	In all	£1487	10 6
Ardvar, Sutherlandshire,		£220	0 0
Achmore, „		450	0 0
Cromault, „		40	0 0
	In all	£710	0 0
Stronechrubie and Ledmore, Sutherlandshire,		£412	2 0
Easter Moy, Ross-shire,		221	5 0
	In all	£633	7 0

Invercassley, &c., Sutherlandshire,		£700	0 0
Bighouse, Sutherlandshire, Forsinain, &c., „		£703	1 0
Eldrabol, Sutherlandshire,		£170	1 3
Crackaig and Lothbeg, „		487	10 2
Grazings of „ „		225	0 10
	In all	£882	12 3
Erribol, Sutherlandshire,		£502	8 3
Meddat, Ross-shire,		426	1 0
	In all	£928	9 3
Faddoch and Killilan, Ross-shire,		£600	10 3
Leek and Inverigor, Inverness-shire,		62	0 0
	In all	£662	10 3
Ratagan, Ross-shire,		£357	13 6
Beolary, Inverness-shire,		547	0 0
	In all	£904	13 6
Lienassie, Ross-shire,		£230	9 9
Lealt and Easter Keppoch, Ross-shire,		80	1 6
Invershiel and Achnangart (joint-tenancy), Ross-shire,		625	7 6
	In all	£935	18 9
Forest Farm, Kincardine, Ross-shire,		£540	0 0
Ardmore, Ross-shire,		580	0 0
Croick, „		225	0 0
Rhamore and Ceanstruie, Ross-shire,		60	0 0
Marybank, Ross-shire,		70	0 0
Garty, „		53	0 0
Scotsburn, and crofts of Wester and Mid Glen,		250	0 0
	In all	£1778	0 0
Edderton, Balblair, Ross-shire,		£340	0 0
Mains of Balnagown and Knockgarty, Ross-shire,		382	10 0
	In all	£722	10 0
Newton and Neilston, Ross-shire,		£614	16 8
Drynoch, Inverness-shire (a joint-tenancy),		650	0 0
	In all	£1264	16 8
Clair and Rhidorrach, Ross-shire, Drumore and Swordalemoor, „		£241	0 0
Swordale Mains, Bogriach, &c., „		200	0 0
Wester Swordale or Milton, „		132	0 0
	In all	£573	0 0

Balmuchy, Ross-shire,	£441	17	10
Culisse, „	723	13	9
Cashachan, „	150	3	9
In all	£1315	15	4
Corriewick and Camashie, Ross-shire,	£240	12	5
Glenmeanie, „	200	8	7
Easter Arabella, „	150	0	0
Farm of Arabella, „	747	0	0
In all	£1338	1	0
Part of Strathmashie and Dalchully, Inverness-shire,	£400	0	0
Sherrabeg, „	600	0	0
Sherramore and Garramore, „	400	0	0
Glenturret, „	500	0	0
Annat, „	280	0	0
Home Farm, Glentruim, „	75	0	0
Aberarder, „	375	0	0
In all	£2630	0	0
Uiginish, Skye, Inverness-shire,	£150	0	0
Glenbrittle, Skye, „	980	0	0
In all	£1130	0	0
Part of Fassifern and Drumsallie-hill, Inverness-shire,	£300	0	0
Strone, „	255	0	0
Inverskillivulin, „	250	0	0
Loch-Arkaig, „	533	0	0
Glenpean, „	350	0	0
Clunes, „	300	0	0
In all	£1988	0	0
Mains of Faillie and Ballinluig, Inverness-shire,	£200	0	0
Inverernie, „	130	0	0
Achlaschoillie and Newton, „	120	0	0
Knocknashenish, „	24	0	0
Shalvanach, „	20	0	0
Gask Mains, „	90	0	0
Dalvellan, Culran, &c., „	56	0	0
Lentran, „	240	0	0
In all	£880	0	0
Inverguseran, Niagart, &c., Knoydart, Inverness-shire,	£150	0	0
Scotas and Doune, „	250	0	0
Caolas, „	70	0	0
Kilchoan, „	80	0	0
Mains of Inverie, „	66	0	0
In all	£616	0	0
Monkstadt, Skye, Inverness,	£430	0	0
Sartle, „ „	210	0	0
In all	£640	0	0

Waternish, Skye, including Fasach, Trumpan, Unish, Ascrib, &c.,	£400	0	0
Claigean, Skye, Inverness-shire,	£580	0	0
Husabost, „ „	200	0	0
In all	£780	0	0
Feorlig and Harlosh Island, Skye, Inverness-shire,	£160	0	0
Milton, South Uist, „ „	500	0	0
In all	£660	0	0
Dibydale, Skye, Inverness, Ollisdale, „ „ Lowergill, „ „ Hamara, „ „ Ramasaig, „ „ Waterstein, „ „	£350	0	0
Farms, Island of Rum, Argyllshire,	£500	0	0
Ardochy and Suie, Mull, Argyllshire,	£140	0	0
Fidden, &c., „	120	0	0
Pottie, „	80	13	8
Ardfenaig, „	190	0	0
In all	£530	13	8
Knockvaolagan, Mull, Argyllshire,	£172	0	0
Ardverginish, „ „	281	5	0
Glens and Bevin, „ „	412	10	0
Knock, „ „	290	0	0
Derryguaig, „ „	65	0	0
Accurrach, Inveraray, „	166	5	0
Maam, „ „	241	15	0
Kilblaan, „ „	170	15	0
Laggans, Kintyre, „	170	0	0
Part of Moil, „ „	300	0	0
Tonrioch, „ „	300	0	0
Glenadale, „ „	100	0	0
North Moil, „ „	350	0	0
South Moil „ „	400	0	0
Langholm, „ „	200	0	0
Machririoch and Achadaduie, Argyllshire,	450	0	0
Glenmurrel, „	125	0	0
Low Baliemeanach, „	450	0	0
In all	£4644	10	0
Stewartfield, Argyllshire,	£320	0	0
Gartnagrenach, „	45	0	0
Kilchamaig, „	646	0	0
Escart, Bardarivine, and Hill of Achaglaic, Argyllshire,	160	0	0
Achaglas Hill, Argyllshire,	42	0	0
Loup, Leaumnamuick, Achavraid, and Achavellich,	160	0	0
In all	£1373	0	0

Pennygown, Mull, Argyllshire,			£380 0 0
Leiter,	„		100 0 0
Ishriff,	„		85 0 0
Ben Duarach,	„		100 0 0
Ben Talla,	„		116 0 0
Callichally,	„		300 0 0
		In all	£1081 0 0

Ardtornish, Morven, Argyllshire,			£1464 0 0
Achranich,	„	„	
Acharn,	„	„	
Funeray,	„	„	

Kilpatrick, Mull, Argyllshire,			£363 0 0
Ulva,	„	„	425 0 0
		In all	£788 0 0

Balephetrish, Tiree, Argyllshire,			£420 0 0
Crossipol,	„	„	260 0 0
Reef,	„	„	320 0 0
		In all	£1000 0 0

Acha and Mill, Coll, Argyllshire,			£30 0 0
Kilbride,	„	„	200 0 0
Gallanach,	„	„	375 0 0
Arinagour,	„	„	95 0 0
Totronald,	„	„	175 0 0
Grishipoll,	„	„	194 10 0
Balard,	„	„	100 0 0
Breckacha,	„	„	480 0 0
		In all	£1649 10 0

Auchoish, Argyllshire,			£155 0 0
Glassary,	„		300 0 0
Killinochonoch, Argyllshire,			297 0 0
Barsloisnach,	„		572 0 0
Achnamara,	„		61 2 6
Castle-Sweyn,	„		105 0 0
Oibgraham,	„		35 0 0
		In all	£1525 2 6

Kilmory, Argyllshire,			£400 0 0
Lingarton,	„		
Balemore Hill,	„		
Achnaba,	„		245 0 0
Drumfuir,	„		
Ardnaherir	„		
Achnalephin, Blarbuie and Dupin, Argyllshire,			125 0 0
		In all	£770 0 0

The result of our Inquiry may be summarised thus :—

	Old Arable.	Pasture.	Total.	Grand Total.
	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.
ARGYLL—				
Extent of land scheduled Yellow for new Crofters' Holdings,	21,247	211,268	232,515	
Extent of land scheduled Pink for extension of existing Holdings,	457	34,151	34,608	
Extent of land scheduled Brown for moderately-sized Farms,	1,412	105,278	106,690	373,813
INVERNESS—				
Extent of land scheduled Yellow for new Crofters' Holdings,	17,559	255,950	273,509	
Extent of land scheduled Pink for extension of existing Holdings,	1,674	127,146	128,820	
Extent of land scheduled Brown for moderately-sized Farms,	1,546	145,723	147,269	549,598
ROSS AND CROMARTY—				
Extent of land scheduled Yellow for new Crofters' Holdings,	3,076	68,037	71,113	
Extent of land scheduled Pink for extension of existing Holdings,	1,033	116,065	117,098	
Extent of land scheduled Brown for moderately-sized Farms,	1,436	133,586	135,022	323,233
SUTHERLAND—				
Extent of land scheduled Yellow for new Crofters' Holdings,	2,426	154,234	156,660	
Extent of land scheduled Pink for extension of existing Holdings,	370	118,892	119,262	
Extent of land scheduled Brown for moderately-sized Farms,	1,500	118,476	119,976	395,898
CAITHNESS—				
Extent of land scheduled Yellow for new Crofters' Holdings,	2,234	31,421	33,655	
Extent of land scheduled Pink for extension of existing Holdings,	270	12,595	12,865	
Extent of land scheduled Brown for moderately-sized Farms,	499	39,391	39,890	86,410
ORKNEY—				
Extent of land scheduled Yellow for new Crofters' Holdings,	1,314	2,958	4,272	
Extent of land scheduled Pink for extension of existing Holdings,	356	8,357	8,713	
Extent of land scheduled Brown for moderately-sized Farms,	...	...	...	12,985
SHETLAND—				
Extent of land scheduled Yellow for new Crofters' Holdings,	2,246	20,780	23,026	
Extent of land scheduled Pink for extension of existing Holdings,	368	17,454	17,822	
Extent of land scheduled Brown for moderately-sized Farms,	...	...	...	40,848
			Grand Total,	1,782,785

Summarising these figures alternatively, we have the following result for the three separate purposes stated :—

Yellow for New Holdings.

	Old Arable	Pasture	Total	Grand Total
Argyll,	21,247	211,268	232,515	
Inverness,	17,559	255,950	273,509	
Ross and Cromarty,	3,076	68,037	71,113	
Sutherland,	2,426	154,234	156,660	
Caithness,	2,234	31,421	33,655	
Orkney,	1,314	2,958	4,272	
Shetland,	2,246	20,780	23,026	
				794,750

Pink for Extension of Existing Holdings.

Argyll,	457	34,151	34,608
Inverness,	1,674	127,146	128,820
Ross and Cromarty,	1,033	116,065	117,098
Sutherland,	370	118,892	119,262
Caithness,	270	12,595	12,865
Orkney,	356	8,357	8,713
Shetland,	368	17,454	17,822
			439,188

Brown for Moderately sized Farms.

Argyll,	1,412	105,278	106,690
Inverness,	1,546	145,723	147,269
Ross and Cromarty,	1,436	133,586	135,022
Sutherland,	1,500	118,476	119,976
Caithness,	499	39,391	39,890
Orkney,	...	...	...
Shetland,	...	...	...
			548,847
Grand Total,			1,782,785

The Island of Lewis.

We have already indicated that the Island of Lewis, owing to the exceptional circumstances in which it is placed, requires separate treatment. While various districts in other parts of the area under our consideration are congested, as in Skye and South Uist, and while many of the crofters and cottars in such districts are frequently called upon to undergo privation, and cope with difficulties, there is no part of that area where matters are so urgent, or where what may be called the "crofter problem" is so acute as in Lewis.

The Fair Rent applications from the Lewis estate dealt with by the Crofters Commission in 1888, 1889, 1890, 1891, and 1892 were 2572 in number, and the total arrears came to £40,979, 18s. 1d. Of that amount, £30,092, 7s. 4d. were cancelled (or an average of £11, 14s. per holding), and £10,887, 10s. 9d. were ordered to be paid. The former rents amounted to £7247, 15s. 1d., and the Fair Rents to £4944, 1s. 8d., being an average reduction of 31·784 per cent. It was earnestly hoped that with this relief a better state of things would gradually arise ; but we cannot say from the information we have obtained that such has been the case. We found that the arrears which the Crofters Commission ordered to be paid have not only been left to a large extent unpaid, but additional arrears have been allowed to accumulate on the Fair Rents. As at the date of our sitting in Stornoway on 9th July 1894, we were informed by the Estate Management that the arrears, exclusive of the rent for the year ended Whitsunday, and to be collected in September, amounted to £12,168, 8s. 4d. This sum is also exclusive of the instalments of arrears amounting to £198, 8s., which had not then become payable.

Further, we found, and it is indeed matter of common knowledge, that the average size of the holdings, even as these were originally lotted, is very small in the various

parishes of Lewis, and notwithstanding this fact there has been going on for a length of time, and there is still going on, a most unfortunate process of sub-division, sub-letting, and of erecting or suffering to be erected on crofts, dwelling-houses otherwise than in substitution for those already upon the holding, notwithstanding the prohibition (without the consent of the landlord in writing) contained in Section 1 (4) of the Crofters' Holdings (Scotland) Act, (49 & 50 Vict. c. 29). The enforcement of this prohibition is by Section 3 vested with the landlord. It is no uncommon thing to find two and three dwellings, with separate fires and with a separate family in each, on, or attached to one holding. The dwellings are generally placed close to each other, and are sometimes in the midst of the holding. Sometimes the new dwelling-house or dwelling-houses are built on the common pasture. Many of these holdings were sub-divided long ago, and whether consented to or opposed by the Estate Management at the time, such sub-divisions are now stereotyped. They mostly take place on the occasion of a son or a daughter marrying and settling on the father's or mother's holding.

Without entering into too much detail, the following cases in one of the townships in the parish of Uig may be taken as illustrative of the minute sub-divisions which occur generally throughout the island :—

Two-thirds of	Lot No.	11.	
One-third	„ „	11.	
One-half	„ „	12.	
One-half	„ „	12.	
One-third	„ „	14.	
Two-thirds	„ „	14.	
One-half	„ „	16.	
One-half	„ „	16.	
Two-thirds	„ „	19.	
One-third	„ „	19.	
One-half	„ „	22.	
One-half	„ „	22.	
One-third	„ „	24.	
Two-thirds	„ „	24.	
One-third	„ „	30.	
Two-thirds	„ „	30.	
Two-thirds	„ „	31.	
One-third	„ „	31.	
One-half	„ „	33.	
One-half	„ „	33.	
Two-thirds of	Lot No.	35.	
One-third	„ „	35.	
Three-fifths	„ „	36.	
Two-fifths	„ „	36.	
One-half	„ „	37.	
One-half	„ „	37.	
One-half	„ „	39.	
One-half	„ „	39.	
Two-thirds	„ „	41.	
One-third	„ „	41.	
Four-ninths	„ „	28.	
Three-ninths	„ „	28.	
Two-ninths	„ „	28.	
Four-fifths	„ „	26	
One-fifth	„ „	26.	
One-half	„ „	40.	
One-half	„ „	40.	
One-half	„ „	15.	
One-half	„ „	15.	

In a neighbouring township again we find :—

One-third of	Lot No.	1.	
One-third	„ „	1.	
One-third	„ „	1.	
Two-thirds of	Lot No.	4.	
One-third	„ „	4.	

The result of this process of sub-division has necessarily been to crowd and congest the townships where it has occurred with an excessive population far beyond what the soil can support. Even though no sub-division at all had been resorted to, the condition of matters would have been bad. But as it is that condition has been rendered very much worse. Moreover, in most parts of the Island of Lewis, the arable land of the crofters' holdings is of poor quality, and has been exhausted by constant cropping, while, with certain exceptions, the grazing, whether township or common hill pasture, is also inferior.

Further, it appears from the evidence laid before us by the Estate Management that there are no fewer than 483 holdings in Lewis rented at £1 and under, yearly, viz., 232 in the parish of Stornoway, yielding a rent of £217, 10s.; 126 in Barvas, rent £110, 13s.; 66 in Uig, rent £50, 4s.; and 59 in Lochs, rent £42, 7s. The present number of holdings recognised by the Estate, and including both farms and crofts, exceeds by 995 the number in 1844, when the holdings numbered altogether 2110, with a rental of £9437, 19s. 2d., or about £1200 above the present total rental. The number of holdings, or so-called holdings, not recognised by the Estate is very large, but we are not in a position to specify how many.

On the neighbouring estates of North Harris and South Harris, on the other hand, while sub-division is considerable, it has not been carried to the same extent as in Lewis, but, as there, many of the holdings are very small, the arable land of a holding being often only between one and two acres in extent. In Harris the difficulty of cultivation, which is nearly all done by the spade, is very great, as the best arable land consists of patches of

land between the rocks, and the arable part of the holding is made up of a number of discontiguous portions, many of them of only a few square yards in extent.

The lands open for consideration by us in Lewis were the forests of Aline, estimated area and rent, as taken from the Parliamentary Return of 1891,* 11,160 acres, rent £300; Arnish, 3290 acres, rent £50; Morsgail, 24,100 acres, rent £1000; Park, 50,000 acres, rent £2000; Scaliscro, 11,000 acres, rent £150.

Total area,	99,550 acres.
Total rent,	£3500.

There are also the following farms:—

	Rents in Valuation Roll.
Manor (Home) Farm,	£210 0 0
Gress,	137 5 6
Coll,	90 9 0
Tolsta,	80 2 0
Dell,	68 0 0
Galson,	165 13 6
Dalmore, Dalbeg, and Campay,	50 2 6
Linshader,	79 0 6
Mangursta,	80 0 0
Croir,	40 0 0
Crobeg, Stimervay, Oronsay, and Shiant Islands,	110 2 0
Mealista,	85 0 0
Tinsgarry and Erista,	60 0 0
Reef,	77 17 6
Garrynahine Inn Lands,	50 9 0
Ardroil, Ardmore, and Vuiavighvore Island,	245 2 0
Aignish,	70 0 0
Melbost,	100 12 3
Holm,	143 15 6
Stonyfield,	60 6 0
Goathill,	90 7 6

On referring to the Ordnance Survey Maps it will be seen to what extent the foresaid forests and farms have been scheduled.

While the said return makes the whole sporting area in Lewis 99,550 acres, the Estate Management states this area at 75,105 acres, made up thus:—Park, 41,913 acres; Aline, 8774; Arnish, 2776; Morsgail, 13,311; Scaliscro, 3143; Grimista, 5178. (See evidence in Appendix, page 1082.) According to the figures of the Estate Management the distribution of land in Lewis stands thus:—Crofters, 258,958 acres; farms, 65,969 acres; forests, 75,105 acres; glebes, schools, town-lands, and the Flannan and Rona Islands, &c., 4148 acres—in all, 404,180 acres. On the other hand, the number of crofters in Lewis, as appears from the Estate evidence (page 1079), is 3076, and the number of cottars 900 to 1000, but this latter number can hardly be regarded as an over-estimate.

On these facts we are of opinion that were the whole forest and farm lands in the Island of Lewis made available for crofters in some form or other, this step, while it might allay or mitigate the more serious evils arising from the existing condition of matters, would not effect a permanent remedy, and would only relieve the urgency for a limited number of years.

Possibly it could be shown in various instances that Fair Rents have not been paid when they might and ought to have been paid; and that payment of rates has here and there been improperly refused: nor can we refrain from an expression of regret that such should be, if it is the case, but the acuteness of the state of matters which now exists is far past the stage when reluctance to act might naturally on these grounds arise in one's mind. The body politic has to be dealt with, as a whole, and the merits or deserts of individual members thereof touch, and only touch, the fringe of the case.

In considering the whole of the aforesaid matters we have refrained from discussing or referring to any questions which might be held to be raised with the owners of lands scheduled, in the event of the same being afterwards assigned to crofters.

* See Parliamentary Paper, 452, Session 1891.

We have not been directed to consider such questions in carrying through the present Inquiry, and accordingly we do not offer any opinion as to what the effect of assigning scheduled land from deer forests or from grazing farms may be, or what claims on the part of landowners or present occupants, if any, may arise in respect of such lands being assigned. Indeed such a proceeding on our part would be premature, as it is impossible for us to say whether all or, if some, which, of the lands scheduled may ultimately be assigned. Nevertheless, we have not been, and could not be, oblivious to the fact that claims and questions of importance on the part of landowners and tenants may arise.

Thus, both in extensions of grazings, and in the case of land for new holdings, the proprietor or grazing tenant, or sporting tenant, may be expected to claim that certain fences be erected, but not at his cost. The proprietor of lands now scheduled, and afterwards assigned, it may be anticipated, will urge certain views as to the erection of such new buildings as may be deemed necessary, and, in the event of the rent of lands assigned proving less than the rent now levied and obtained, he may likewise be expected to ask attention to his altered position.

Mere extensions of existing holdings, or extensions of grazings, may be obtained without much difficulty, and without raising any serious questions; but, on the other hand, we have not failed to notice that the transference of tenants to, and their establishment in, new holdings may raise questions of public policy. With these, however, we are not called upon to deal.

All which we humbly submit to your Majesty's consideration.

DAVID BRAND.
M. HUGH SHAW STEWART.
ANGUS SUTHERLAND.
For JAMES NOEL MULLER FORSYTH,
DAVID BRAND.*
GEO. GORDON.
MALCOLM MACCALLUM.
JOHN M'LEOD.
HENRY MUNRO.

WILLIAM MACKENZIE,
Secretary.

19*th March* 1895.

* For Letter of Authority see page xxviii.

ADDENDUM to Report of the Royal Commission (Highlands and Islands, 1892) by the undersigned Commissioners.

While we concur in the opinion that the lands scheduled for the specific purposes described in the Report may, under certain conditions, be profitably cultivated or advantageously occupied by crofters or other small tenants, we are of opinion that this result can only be obtained under a well-considered scheme of land purchase by a representative body possessed of full powers for carrying out properly defined regulations, both as to the selection of the tenants for new holdings, and also as to the occupation of all grazings scheduled.

Without such a precautionary measure regulating the assignment of these lands, we are of opinion that not only would serious losses to the present owners of the lands inevitably result, but large areas of the Highlands at present usefully occupied would be rendered valueless, and existing evils, for which this Commission was appointed to suggest a remedy, would be aggravated.

M. HUGH SHAW STEWART.
For JAMES NOEL M. FORSYTH,
M. HUGH SHAW STEWART.
GEO. GORDON.

ADDENDUM to the Report of the Royal Commission (Highlands and Islands, 1892) by the Rev. Malcolm MacCallum.

The unanimous Report of this Commission, and the evidence led before it, in my opinion conclusively prove that there is urgent need of fresh legislation for the settlement of the land question in the Highlands, and that such legislation should proceed on the lines of the Crofters' Holdings (Scotland) Act, 1886. The important reforms in the tenure and occupation of the land recommended in our Report can be most expeditiously and equitably carried out by a Land Court or judicial body similar to the Crofters Commission, which, notwithstanding its too limited powers and scope, has, in a marked degree, succeeded in restoring harmony and prosperity within the narrow sphere of its operations. The joint right of the Highland clansmen with the landlords to the land has, so far as existing crofters are concerned, been recognised, and to some extent been given effect to by the Crofters Act. But with respect to the land cleared for sheep and deer, and constituting an area much more extensive, valuable, and fertile than that presently in the occupation of crofters, the landlords have appropriated the clansmen's rights and interests in it without payment or compensation of any kind. The solution of the Highland problem is not land purchase, but resumption of the clansmen's right to occupy the Fatherland. It is an inexpensive solution, and one that would not impoverish, but might ultimately benefit, the landlords, seeing that the return from the large grazings is a constantly diminishing quantity, and many of them, well suited for crofters' holdings, are admittedly unlettable.

In any case, the demand that the cleared lands, now lying almost wholly waste, should be made available for the enlargement of present holdings, and for re-occupation under the conditions applicable to existing crofts, by the same class of tenants as those unfairly evicted, is a call for simple justice, and a wider and more consistent application of the main principle of the Crofters Act.

But these reforms could not be equitably and effectively carried out by local and elective bodies. In localities that have been cleared, and where the available land exists, no demand for it could arise. And, on the other hand, in congested districts there would

be the demand for land, but no means of meeting it, the land being already fully occupied. In the course of our inspections we found not infrequently that the land suitable for the enlargement of a township lay in a different parish, and sometimes in a different county from that in which the township requiring enlargement was situated. No local body would be able to take a conjunct view of the Highlands and the requirements of the people as a whole; and no elective body could afford to give the close, unbiassed, and lengthened consideration that would be required for the adjustment of all the questions that would arise. And, as a matter of experience, it is found that the Highland County Councils have failed to carry out the Small Holdings and Allotments Acts, the administration of which has been entrusted to them. The County Council of Argyll may be taken as an example. Urgent applications, to the number of three hundred and seventy, were addressed to the County Council of Argyll for Small Holdings and Allotments, but the Council refused to take any action, and summarily dissolved its Small Holdings and Allotments Committee. The following extract from its Minutes, of date 20th December 1893, shows the position taken by the Council:—

"The report of the Allotments and Small Holdings Committee, dated 4th October "1893, and the summaries of replies received from landowners and applicants as printed "and circulated were produced.

"Mr Turner moved the adoption of the Report of the Allotments and Small Holdings "Committee, which was seconded by the Rev. Mr MacCallum.

"It was moved by Mr Allan of Aros and seconded by Mr Dickie, as an amendment, "that the Report be not adopted, seeing that Argyllshire is a poor and scattered county, "the ratepayers of which are already burdened with heavy taxation; it is therefore un-"fair to impose upon them the extra cost of carrying out the Small Holdings and Allot-"ments Acts, an experiment which ought to be borne by the State.

"The motion and amendment having been put to the meeting, and a division taken, "the amendment was carried and became the substantive motion."

To entrust the administration of any new land legislation for the benefit of the Highlands to the County or Parish Councils in the face of such an object lesson would be to court failure. The conspicuous success of the Crofters Commission points to the creation of a Land Court as the surest and safest instrument to carry out the reforms recommended in the foregoing Report.

MALCOLM MACCALLUM.

ADDENDUM to the Report of the Royal Commission (Highlands and Islands, 1892) by Henry Munro.

In signing the foregoing report I have done so subject to certain reservations hereinafter set forth; and in so doing, I wish it to be understood that my object is not to weaken the joint conclusions at which the Commissioners have arrived, but to strengthen the Report.

At page X. of Report there occurs the following sentence, namely:—"In dealing "with Grazing Farms, where only part of a farm has been scheduled, care has been "taken as far as possible to leave what, in the event of the scheduled lands being appro-"priated, would constitute a workable and profitable farm."

Acting upon this principle, it has frequently occurred, all over the area of our investigations, that in course of inspecting and scheduling lands as suitable for the purpose specified in our Remit, considerable tracts of land in connection with, and forming part of, Grazing Farms or other subjects have been excluded, on the ground, not that they were less suitable for occupation by crofters or other small tenants than the parts scheduled, but that to schedule them would mean the destruction of the usefulness or amenity of what should be left as a workable farm. I cannot concur in what has been here done, because the Commissioners are not invited to follow that course; and further because in my opinion they are not entitled to exclude any lands suitable for the purposes specified in the Royal Warrant.

In coming to this conclusion, I am far from wishing that every justice should not be done both to landlord and tenant in any changes which may hereafter be made. If indeed the Commission were entrusted with administrative powers I am free to say that they would not only be entitled, but bound, to give weight to claims which might be advanced, so as not in any way to impair unnecessarily the value or amenity of any property; but as the Commissioners were appointed to ascertain and report upon certain facts as these actually existed, they are, in my judgment, bound to so, and the interests of property may very safely be left to the consideration of Parliament.

HENRY MUNRO.

The Letter of Authority referred to on page xxv is in the following terms :—

6 Parliament Square,
Edinburgh, *October 9th*, 1894.

The Chairman,

Royal Commission (Highlands and Islands, 1892).

Dear Sir,

I have to inform you that I am about to leave this country for New Zealand, on matters of urgent business, and accordingly cannot await the final adjustment of the Report. I expect to be away from home for some time. In these circumstances, should the Draft Report as submitted by you at the Meetings of the Commissioners held here on 5th and 6th curt. be adhered to in substance, I hereby authorise you, acting with the written concurrence of Mr Shaw Stewart and Mr Gordon, first duly handed to you, to sign the Report for me, and on my behalf. At the same time, I reserve my right, if so advised, to append a special memorandum, on certain particular matters.

Believe me,

Dear Sir,

Yours truly,

JAMES NOEL M. FORSYTH.

21*st December* 1894.

We hereby consent and agree to the Chairman, Sheriff Brand, adhibiting Mr Forsyth's signature, under terms of above letter.

M. HUGH SHAW STEWART.
GEO. GORDON.

ROYAL COMMISSION (HIGHLANDS AND ISLANDS, 1892).

APPENDIX TO REPORT.

BOOK OF REFERENCE TO MAPS

SHEWING

LANDS SCHEDULED IN THE COUNTIES OF ARGYLL, INVERNESS, ROSS AND CROMARTY, SUTHERLAND, CAITHNESS, AND ORKNEY AND SHETLAND.

YELLOW—Lands Scheduled as suitable for new Crofters' Holdings.

PINK— Lands Scheduled as suitable for Additional Grazings to existing Crofters' Holdings.

BROWN— Lands Scheduled as suitable for moderately-sized Farms.

ROYAL COMMISSION (HIGHLANDS AND ISLANDS, 1892).

BOOK OF REFERENCE TO MAPS SHOWING LANDS SCHEDULED—(1) COUNTY OF ARGYLL.

No. of Sheet.	No. of Scheduled Land on Sheet.	Proprietor.	Estate.	Parish.	Description.	Extent of Land Scheduled.						Remarks.
						Yellow.		Pink.		Brown.		
						Old Arable.	Pasture.	Old Arable.	Pasture.	Old Arable.	Pasture.	
						Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	
XII.	1	N. B. Stewart of Keil, . . .	Keil, . .	Southend, .	Gartvaich Grazings, . .	178	43	...	...	...	...	
	2	His Grace the Duke of Argyll, .	Argyll, . .	Southend and Campbelton,	Kerrafuar and Glecknahavill Grazings,	232	2,147	...	...	...	...	
	3	,,	,,	Southend, .	Sheanachie Grazings, . .	289	523	...	...	...	...	
	4	,,	,,	Southend and Campbelton,	Balnabraid and Achinhoan Grazings,	385	2,069	...	...	...	...	
	5	,,	,,	Campbelton, .	Balligroggan Grazings, . .	83	1,432	...	...	...	...	
	6	Captain Hector Macneal, .	Ugadale, . .	,,	Mid Losset ,, . .	...	273	...	...	...	...	
	7			,,	Lands above High Kilkivan Grazings,	256	32	...	...	...	...	
	8	Commander Duncan Stewart, .	Knockrioch, .	,,	High Knockrioch ,, . .	109	...	...	...	...	...	Scheduled as suitable for allotments to Campbelton small tenants.
	9	His Grace the Duke of Argyll, .	Argyll, . .	,,	Whinhill and Gallowhill Grazings,	133	6	...	...	...	...	Scheduled as suitable for allotments to Campbelton small tenants, but excluding all subjects held under feu.
	10	,,	,,	,,	Auchalochy ,, . .	40	10	...	...	...	...	
	11	,,	,,	,,	Ballimeanach, East and West Laggan Grazings,	301	1,483	...	...	...	...	
	12	,,	,,	,,	Drumgarve ,, . . .	269	640	...	...	...	...	
	13	,,	,,	,,	Gartgreillean ,, . . .	61	864	...	...	...	...	
					Carry forward, . .	2,336	9,522	...	...	...	...	

BOOK OF REFERENCE TO MAPS SHOWING LANDS SCHEDULED—(1) COUNTY OF ARGYLL—(*continued*).

No. of Sheet.	No. of Scheduled Land on Sheet.	Proprietor.	Estate.	Parish.	Description.	Extent of Land Scheduled.						Remarks.
						Yellow.		Pink.		Brown.		
						Old Arable.	Pasture.	Old Arable.	Pasture.	Old Arable.	Pasture.	
						Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	
					Brought forward,	2,336	9,522	...	...	...	...	
XII.	14	His Grace the Duke of Argyll,	Argyll,	Campbelton,	Ballochgair Grazings,	178	979	...	...	...	...	
XII. and XX.	15	John N. Macleod,	Kintarbert,	Saddell and Skipness,	High Ugadale ,,	41	593	...	...	...	...	
XIX.	16	Trustees of John Ramsay of Kildalton,	Kildalton,	Kildalton and Oa,	Glenastle, Lower Giol, and Glendubh Grazings,	644	2,058	...	...	...	...	
	17	,,	,,	,,	Asabus ,,	118	416	...	...	...	...	
XIX.	18	,,	,,	,,	Cornabus Grazings (Carnmore, Leurabus, Tornamoine, Larachaluil, Ballychatrigan, Bularaide, and Strimnishmore),	634	1,561	...	...	...	...	
	19	,,	,,	,,	Arable land at Port Ellen,	28	...	...	...	...	...	Scheduled as suitable for allotments to villagers at Port Ellen.
	20	,,	,,	,,	Tighandrom Grazings,	48	60	...	...	...	...	Coloured yellow, but mainly suitable for cows' grazings in connection with above allotments.
	21	Charles Morrison of Islay,	Islay,	Kilchoman,	Ballimony ,,	19	1,157	...	...	...	...	
	22	,,	,,	,,	Cultoon ,,	84	359	...	...	...	...	
	23	,,	,,	,,	Kelsay Grazings (part of),	4	440	...	...	...	...	
	24	,,	,,	,,	Balsay ,,	67	239	...	...	...	...	
	25	,,	,,	,,	Torony ,,	39	478	...	...	...	...	
	26	,,	,,	,,	Olistadh ,,	31	752	...	...	...	...	
	27	,,	,,	,,	Gearach ,,	13	173	...	...	...	...	
	28	Trustees of John Ramsay of Kildalton,	Kildalton,	Killarrow and Kilmeny,	Laggan ,, (part of),	37	151	...	...	...	...	
					Carry forward,	4,321	18,938	...	...	...	...	

BOOK OF REFERENCE TO MAPS SHOWING LANDS SCHEDULED—(1) COUNTY OF ARGYLL—(*continued*).

No. of Sheet	No. of Scheduled Land on Sheet.	Proprietor.	Estate.	Parish.	Description.	Extent of Land Scheduled.						Remarks.
						Yellow.		Pink.		Brown.		
						Old Arable.	Pasture.	Old Arable.	Pasture.	Old Arable.	Pasture.	
						Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	
					Brought forward,	4,321	18,938	...	...	...	...	
XIX.	29	Charles Morrison of Islay,	Islay,	Killarrow and Kilmeny,	Gartbreck Grazings (part of),	18	33	...	...	...	...	
	30	Kirkman Finlay,	Dunlossit,	,,	Kyngarry ,,	252	645	...	...	...	...	
	31	Charles Morrison of Islay,	Islay,	,,	Grobolls ,,	74	131	...	...	...	...	
	32	,,	,,		Nereby ,, (part of),	134	268	...	...	...	...	
	33	,,	,,	,,	Gartloisgte ,, ,,	32	88	...	...	...	...	
XIX. and XXVII.	34	,,	,,	,,	Dail Grazings (part of) (Scouller, Kill-Bhraenan, and Upper Gluich),	300	976	...	..	...	...	
XX.	35	Major Charles B. Macalister,	Glenbarr,	Killean and Kilkenzie,	Blary Grazings,	...	...	...	...	46	722	
	36	,,	,,	,,	Arnicle ,,	...	...	...	...	46	868	
	37	Colonel Sir David Carrick Buchanan, K.C.B.,	Carradale,	Saddell and Skipness,	South Dippens Grazings (part of),	27	37	...	...	...	...	
	38	,,	,,	,,	Carradale Point Grazings (part of Mains Farm),	...	...	...	127	...	...	
	39	,,	,,	,,	Carradale Mains Farm (part of Mear, Port Righ),	105	14	...	...	...	...	
	40	,,	,,	,,	Carradale Mains Farm (at Port-na-Cuile),	41	...	...	...	...	...	
	41	,,	,,	,,	Grianan Grazings,	...	...	...	...	26	2,122	
	42	John Ronald Moreton Mac-Donald,	Largie,	Killean and Kilkenzie,	Culfuar ,, (part of),	...	...	18	...	...	...	Scheduled as suitable for cows' grazings for the villagers of Tayinloan.
	43	,,	,,	,,	Gortinanane ,, ,,	116	63	...	...	...	...	
	44	,,	,,	,,	Drumavow ,,	72	...	...	...	...	...	
					Carry forward,	5,492	21,193	18	127	118	3,712	

No. of Sheet.	No. of Scheduled Land on Sheet.	Proprietor.	Estate.	Parish.	Description.	Extent of Land Scheduled.						Remarks.
						Yellow.		Pink.		Brown.		
						Old Arable.	Pasture.	Old Arable.	Pasture.	Old Arable.	Pasture.	
					Brought forward, . .	Acres. 5,492	Acres. 21,193	Acres. 18	Acres. 127	Acres. 118	Acres. 3,712	
XX.	45	John Ronald Moreton Mac-Donald,	Largie, . .	Kilcalmonell and Kilberry,	Refliuch Grazings, . . .	66	64	...	...	...	...	
	46	William James Yorke Scarlett,	Gigha, . .	Gigha and Cara,	Ardailly ,, ...	34	240	...	...	...	...	
	47	,,	,,	,,	Eilean Garbh Grazings, . .	...	...	...	60	...	...	
	48	,,	,,	,,	Kinererach, ,, . .	77	420	...	...	...	...	
	49	John N. Macleod, . . .	Kintarbert, .	Saddell and Skipness,	Spearsaig ,, (part of),	32	1,167	...	...	...	...	
	50	John Ronald Moreton Mac-Donald,	Largie, . .	Kilcalmonell and Kilberry,	Cour-sheileach ,, . .	40	421	...	...	...	...	
	51	,,	,,	,,	Carnbeg, Carnmore, and Auchabhrad Grazings,	374	2,656	...	...	...	...	
	52	Trustees of John Pollok, . .	Ronachan, .	,,	Stewartfield Farm and Grazings,	352	630	...	...	...	...	Commissioners all agreed to schedule the arable and pasture land on the south-east side of the public road, but Mr Shaw Stewart, Mr Gordon, and Mr Forsyth dissented from the scheduling of the whole farm herein made, and agreed to, by a majority.
	53	John Mackinnon of Balinakill, .	Balinakill, .	,,	Loup, including Leum-na-muic Grazings,	271	1,058	...	...	...	...	
	54	Colin G. P. Campbell of Stonefield,	Stonefield, .	,,	Kilchamaig Grazings (part of), .	83	411	...	..	...	...	
XXI.	55	Robert Chellas Graham of Skipness,	Skipness, . .	Saddell and Skipness,	Auchnastrone ,, . .	59	139	...	...	...	...	
					Carry forward, . .	6,880	28,339	18	187	118	3,712	

BOOK OF REFERENCE TO MAPS SHOWING LANDS SCHEDULED—(1) COUNTY OF ARGYLL—(*continued*).

No. of Sheet.	No. of Scheduled Land on Sheet.	Proprietor.	Estate.	Parish.	Description.	Extent of Land Scheduled.						Remarks.
						Yellow.		Pink.		Brown.		
						Old Arable.	Pasture.	Old Arable.	Pasture.	Old Arable.	Pasture.	
					Brought forward, . .	Acres. 6,880	Acres. 28,399	Acres. 18	Acres. 187	Acres. 118	Acres. 3,712	
XXI.	56	Robert Chellas Graham of Skipness,	Skipness, .	Saddell and Skipness,	Caolfin Grazings (part of), .	...	...	22	...	...	...	Scheduled as suitable for cow park Grazings to the Skipness villagers.
	57	,,	,,	,,	Laggan ,, ,, .	136	312	...	...	...	...	
XXVII.	58	Dr Angus Macindeor, . .	Coul (Islay), .	Kilchoman, .	Coul ,, ,, .	7	27	...	...	...	...	
XIX. and XXVII.	59	Charles Morrison of Islay, .	Islay, . .	,,	Rockside ,, ,, .	90	623	...	...	...	...	
XXVII.	60	Kirkman Finlay, . . .	Dunlossit .	Killarrow and Kilmeny,	Knocklearoch ,, (part of),	61	296	...	...	...	...	
	61	Mrs Isabella Maclaren or Smith	Sunderland and Foreland,	Kilchoman,	Foreland ,, ,,	281	385	...	...	...	...	
	62	Frederick William Ord Campbell,	Ballinaby, .	,,	Ballinaby ,, ,,	147	176	...	...	...	...	
	63	Charles Morrison of Islay, .	Islay, . .	,,	Aoradh ,, ,,	62	4	...	...	...	...	
	64	,,	,,	Killarrow and Kilmeny,	Robolls Grazings, . . .	226	601	...	...	...	...	
	65 and 66	Kirkman Finlay, . . .	Dunlossit, .	,,	Woodend and Scanistle Grazings,	194	262	...	...	...	...	
	67	,,	,,	,,	Kilslevan Grazings, . . .	93	397	...	...	...	...	
	68	Charles Morrison of Islay, .	Islay, . .	Kilchoman, .	Ardnave ,, . . .	362	1,246	...	...	...	...	
	69 and 70	,,	,,	,,	Nave Islands, ...	...	113	...	...	...	...	
	71	,,	,,	Killarrow and Kilmeny,	Gortantaoid Grazings, . .	...	...	...	...	91	3,878	
	72	,,	,,	,,	Ardnahoe ,, (part of), (Staoinsha)	35	1,161	...	...	...	...	
					Carry forward, . .	8,574	33,912	40	187	209	7,590	

BOOK OF REFERENCE TO MAPS SHOWING LANDS SCHEDULED—(1) COUNTY OF ARGYLL—(*continued*).

No. of Sheet.	No. of Scheduled Land on Sheet.	Proprietor.	Estate.	Parish.	Description.	Extent of Land Scheduled.						Remarks.
						Yellow.		Pink.		Brown.		
						Old Arable.	Pasture.	Old Arable.	Pasture.	Old Arable.	Pasture.	
					Brought forward, . .	Acres. 8,574	Acres. 33,912	Acres. 40	Acres. 187	Acres. 209	Acres. 7,590	
XXVII.	73	Major-General Sir John Carstairs Macneill,	Colonsay, .	Colonsay and Oronsay,	Oronsay Grazings (part of), .	...	508	...	...	...	...	
XXVIII.	74	Colin G. P. Campbell, . .	Stonefield, .	Kilcalmonell and Kilberry,	Kilchamaig ,, ,,	15	27	...	...	...	...	
	75	,,	,,	,,	Arivore ,, ,,	...	...	...	40	...	...	
	76	,,	,,	,,	Kilchamaig ,,	40	116	...	...	...	...	
	77	James Campbell, . . .	Jura, . .	Jura,	Ardfin Grazings (part of), including Dunan and Sannaig,	25	1,788	...	...	...	...	
	78	,,	,,	,,	Crackaig Grazings, . . .	...	220	...	...	...	...	
	79 and 80	,,	,,	,,	Deer Forest of Jura (part of), .	...	...	...	1,148	...	...	
	81	Fred. W. O. Campbell, . . Henry Birkmyre, . .	Ormisary and Carse,	Kilcalmonell and South Knapdale,	Ormisaig and Balure or other Grazings (part of),	158	628	...	...	...	...	
	82	John Campbell, . . .	Kilberry, . .	Kilcalmonell and Kilberry,	Achalach Grazings, . . .	46	631	...	...	...	...	
	83	John N. Macleod, . . .	Kintarbert, .	South Knapdale,	Barnellan ,, (part of), .	33	2,961	...	...	...	...	
XXVIII. and XXIX.	84	Colin G. P. Campbell, . .	Stonefield, .	,,	Ashens Grazings (part of), Dubhchladach,	28	208	...	...	...	...	
XXVIII.	85	James Campbell, . . .	Jura, . .	Jura, . .	Deer Forest of Jura (part of), .	...	...	...	74	...	...	Scheduled as suitable for additional Grazings to the Crofters of Knockrome; with access to water for stock.
					Carry forward, . .	8,914	40,999	40	1,449	209	7,590	

BOOK OF REFERENCE TO MAPS SHOWING LANDS SCHEDULED—(1) COUNTY OF ARGYLL—(*continued*).

No. of Sheet.	No. of Scheduled Land on Sheet.	Proprietor.	Estate.	Parish.	Description.	Extent of Land Scheduled.						Remarks.
						Yellow.		Pink.		Brown.		
						Old Arable.	Pasture.	Old Arable.	Pasture.	Old Arable.	Pasture.	
					Brought forward, . .	Acres. 8,914	Acres. 40,999	Acres. 40	Acres. 1,449	Acres. 209	Acres. 7,590	
XXVIII.	86	James Campbell, . . .	Jura, . .	Jura, . .	Deer Forest of Jura (part of), .	...	...	3	2,971	...	...	
	87	Joseph Fox Tarratt, . . .	Ellarie, . .	South Knapdale,	Doide Grazings, ...	50	639	...	...	...	...	
	88	Colonel John Wingfield Malcolm,	Poltalloch, .	North Knapdale,	Castle Sween ,, (part of),	...	130	...	...	...	...	
	89	,,	,,	,,	,,	...	...	...	...	76	741	
XXVIII. and XXIX.	90	Robert Charles Graham Campbell,	Shirvain, . .	South Knapdale,	Srondoire ,, (part of), .	13	1,146	...	...	...	...	
XXVIII.	91	Colonel John Wingfield Malcolm,	Poltalloch, .	North Knapdale,	Balure Grazing, ...	12	753	...	...	...	...	
XXIX.	92	Colin G. P. Campbell, . .	Stonefield, .	Saddell and Skipness,	Lagganroaig Grazing, . .	...	...	...	...	13	1,321	
	93	,,	,,	Kilcalmonell and Kilberry,	Eascaird Grazings (part of), .	26	180	...	...	...	...	
	94	,,	,,	,,	,,	...	...	...	294	...	...	
	95	,,	,,	South Knapdale,	Ashens Grazings (part of), .	...	...	...	334	...	...	
	96	Donald N. Nicol, . . .	Ardmarnock, .	Kilfinan, . . .	Auchanaskioch and Melldalloch Grazings,	231	389	...	...	...	...	
	97	Lieut.-Col. Harding Burnley Campbell, ...	Ballimore, .	,,	Dal-nan-caorach and Strone Grazings (part of),	119	2,333	...	...	...	...	
	98	,,	,,	,,	Auchnaha Grazings (part of), .	36	462	...	...	...	...	
	99	Sir John W. P. Campbell Orde,	Kilmory, .	Glassary, .	Auchnaba, Achnaleppin and Alltoigh Grazings,	143	779	...	...	...	...	
XXXV.	100	Major-General Sir John Carstairs Macneill, . . .	Colonsay, .	Colonsay and Oronsay,	Machrins ,, (part of),	...	...	...	168	...	...	
	101	,,	,,	,,	Scalasaig Grazings (part of), .	...	...	...	...	14	202	
					Carry forward, . .	9,544	47,810	43	5,216	312	9,854	

BOOK OF REFERENCE TO MAPS SHOWING LANDS SCHEDULED—(1) COUNTY OF ARGYLL—(*continued*).

No. of Sheet.	No. of Scheduled Land on Sheet.	Proprietor.	Estate.	Parish.	Description.	Extent of Land Scheduled.						Remarks.
						Yellow.		Pink.		Brown.		
						Old Arable.	Pasture.	Old Arable.	Pasture.	Old Arable.	Pasture.	
					Brought forward, . .	Acres. 9,544	Acres. 47,810	Acres. 43	Acres. 5,216	Acres. 312	Acres. 9,854	
XXXV.	102	Major-Gen. Sir John Carstairs Macneill,	Colonsay, .	Colonsay and Oronsay,	Kiloran Grazings (part of), .	...	...	2	40	...	...	
	103	,,	,,	,,	,,	...	...	...	214	...	...	
	104	,,	,,	,,	,,	...	...	...	308	...	...	
XXXVI.	105	Colonel John Wingfield Malcolm,	Poltalloch, .	North Knapdale,	Baranloisgan Grazings (part of),	17	278	...	...	...	...	
	106	,,	,,	,,	Dunans Grazings, . . .	32	986	...	...	...	...	
	107	,,	,,	South Knapdale,	Daill ,, . . .	31	640	...	...	...	...	
	108	,,	,,	North Knapdale,	Bellanoch ,, . .	...	...	...	253	...	...	
XXXVI. & XXXVII.	109	,,	,,	Glassary, . .	Drumore ,, (part of), .	23	382	...	...	...	...	
XXXVI.	110	,,	,,	,,	Ballimeanach Grazings (part of), Dunchragaig and Balnacraig,	197	...	...	...	...	...	
	111	,,	,,	Kilmartin, .	Island Macaskin Grazing, .	...	...	3	170	...	...	
	112	,,	,,	,,	Poltalloch and Brennan Grazing,	...	...	...	...	32	870	
	113	,,	,,	,,	Parks at Carnassary Castle, .	50	7	...	...	...	...	
	114	Major Richard F. T. Gascoigne,	Kirkton, .	Craignish, .	Kirkton Grazings (part of), .	28	183	...	...	...	...	
	115	Colonel John Wingfield Malcolm,	Poltalloch, .	Kilmartin, .	Eilean Righ Grazings, . .	19	232	...	...	...	...	
	116	Colonel F. C. T. Gascoigne, .	Craignish, .	Craignish, .	Eilean Dubh ,, . .	...	...	...	42	...	...	
	117	,,	,,	,,	Eilean Mhic-Chroin Grazings, .	...	...	...	124	...	...	
					Carry forward, . .	9,941	50,518	48	6,367	344	10,724	

BOOK OF REFERENCE TO MAPS SHOWING LANDS SCHEDULED—(1) COUNTY OF ARGYLL—(*continued*).

No. of Sheet.	No. of Scheduled Land on Sheet.	Proprietor.	Estate.	Parish.	Description.	Extent of Land Scheduled.						Remarks.
						Yellow.		Pink.		Brown.		
						Old Arable.	Pasture.	Old Arable.	Pasture.	Old Arable.	Pasture.	
					Brought forward, . .	Acres. 9,941	Acres. 50,518	Acres. 48	Acres. 6,367	Acres. 344	Acres. 10,724	
XXXVI.	118	Major Stewart Macdougall, .	Lunga and Ardlarroch,	Craignish, .	Barrachan and Gemmill Grazings,	67	687	..	...	...	...	
	119	Marquis of Breadalbane, . .	Breadalbane, .	Kilbrandon and Kilchattan,	Island of Luing, Kilchattan Grazings (part of),	336	411	...	...	...	...	
	120	Corporation of Glasgow . .	Island Shuna, .	,,	Island Shuna Grazing, . .	80	1,042	...	...	...	...	
	121	Major Stewart Macdougall, .	Lunga, . .	Craignish, .	Eilean Arsa, Fraoch-Eilean, Eilean-an-Duin, Eilean Buidhe Grazings,	...	...	...	52	...	...	
	122	,,	,,	,,	Daill Grazings (part of), . .	.	133	...	...	...	...	
	123	Marquis of Breadalbane, . .	Breadalbane, .	Kilbrandon and Kilchattan,	Island of Luing, Kilchattan Grazing (part of),	28	240	...	...	...	...	
	124	,,	,,	,,	,,	...	...	9	136	...	...	
	125	Mrs M. A. Maciver Campbell, .	Asknish, . .	Kilninver and Kilmelfort,	Asknish Grazings, . . .	34	439	...	...	...	...	
	126	Marquis of Breadalbane, . .	Breadalbane, .	Kilbrandon and Kilchattan,	Island of Luing, Bardrishaig Grazings (part of),	26	310	...	...	...	...	
	127	,,	,,	,, .	Torsay Island Grazing (part of),	73	22	...	...	...	...	
	128	,,	,,	Kilninver and Kilmelfort,	Fearnach and Ardanstur Grazings,	111	1,207	...	...	...	...	
	129	Trustees of the late Keith Maciellan,	Kilmelfort, .	,,	Barachuile ,, ...	...	...	81	180	...	...	
XXXVI. and XLIV.	130	Marquis of Breadalbane, . .	Breadalbane, .	Kilbrandon and Kilchattan,	Dallermaig, ...	...	79	...	...	...	...	
	131	,,	,,	,,	Barrnagarry Grazings, . .	...	...	...	...	18	503	
	132	,,	,,	,,	Caddleton ,, ...	...	...	...	...	6	1,993	
					Carry forward, . .	10,696	55,088	138	6,735	368	13,220	

BOOK OF REFERENCE TO MAPS SHOWING LANDS SCHEDULED—(1) COUNTY OF ARGYLL—(*continued*).

No. of Sheet.	No. of Scheduled Land on Sheet.	Proprietor.	Estate.	Parish.	Description.	Extent of Land Scheduled.						Remarks.
						Yellow.		Pink.		Brown.		
						Old Arable.	Pasture.	Old Arable.	Pasture.	Old Arable.	Pasture.	
						Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	
					Brought forward, . .	16,696	55,088	138	6,735	368	13,220	
XXXVI. and XXXVII.	133	Colonel John Wingfield Malcolm,	Poltalloch, .	Kilmichael and Glassary,	Fields at Achnabreck, . .	57	...	...	...	...	...	Scheduled as suitable for allotments to Lochgilphead small tenants.
XXXVII.	133A	,,	,,	,,	Achnashelloch Grazings (part of),	16	...	..	..	...	..	Scheduled as suitable for allotments to Bridgend small tenants.
	134	,,	,,	,,	Achahoish ,, . .	71	870	...	...	...	...	
	135	Sir John W. P. Campbell Orde,	Kilmory, . .	,,	High Monydrain ,, . .	50	507	...	...	...	...	
	136	Mrs M. A. Maciver Campbell, .	Asknish, . .	,,	Knock and Scotston ,, . .	62	1,210	...	...	...	...	
	137	Colonel John Wingfield Malcolm,	Poltalloch, .	,,	Achnatearlach, Lag, and Dailan-eiranach Grazings,	98	885	..	..	...	...	
	138	,,	,,	,,	Kiarnanmor ,, . . .	65	568	...	...	...	..	
XXXVI. and XXXVII.	139	,,	,,	,,	Kilbride and Upper Rudale, .	62	828	...	...	...	...	
	140	,,	,,	,,	Achayerran Grazings, . .	66	307	...	...	...	...	
XXXVII.	141	,,	,,	,,	Fearnoch ,, . . .	51	812	...	...	...	...	
	142	Colonel John Wingfield Malcolm,	,,	,,	Socach ,, . . .	41	1,105	...	.	...	...	
	143	Trustees of the late Sir John Campbell of Cumlodden,	Minard, . .	,,	Feorlin ,, . . .	49	1,317	...	...	...	...	
	143A	,,	,,	,,	Garvachy ,, . . .	...	...	...	827	...	...	
	144	John Maclachlan of Maclachlan,	Strathlachlan, .	Strathlachlan, .	Drimdarrach ,, (part of) .	134	941	..	...	...	...	
	145	,,	,,	,,	Stucreach ,, . . .	86	814	...	...	...	...	
	146	Colonel John Wingfield Malcolm,	Poltalloch, .	Kilmartin, .	Glennan ,, . . .	33	111	...	...	...	...	
	147	Henry Bruce, ...	Ederline, . .	Kilmichael and Glassary,	Garbh-allt ,, . . .	...	...	..	...	12	344	
					Carry forward, . .	11,637	65 363	138	7,062	380	13,564	

BOOK OF REFERENCE TO MAPS SHOWING LANDS SCHEDULED—(1) COUNTY OF ARGYLL—(*continued*).

No. of Sheet.	No. of Scheduled Land on Sheet.	Proprietor.	Estate.	Parish.	Description.	Extent of Land Scheduled.						Remarks.
						Yellow.		Pink.		Brown.		
						Old Arable.	Pasture.	Old Arable.	Pasture.	Old Arable.	Pasture.	
					Brought forward, . .	Acres. 11,637	Acres. 65,363	Acres. 138	Acres. 7,062	Acres. 380	Acres. 13,564	
XXXVII.	148	Trustees of the late Sir John Campbell of Cumlodden, .	Cumlodden, .	Kilmichael and Glassary,	Goatfield Grazings (Gallanach, part of),	40	393	...	...	...	...	
	149	His Grace the Duke of Argyll, .	Argyll, . .	,,	Brenachoil ,, (part of), .	72	3,500	....	...	...	...	
	150	,,	,,	Inveraray, .	Braleckan ,, . . .	119	2,335	...	...	...	...	
	151	,,	,,	,,	Killian ,, (part of), .	31	429	...	...	..	...	
	152	Colonel John Wingfield Malcolm,	Poltalloch, .	Kilmartin, .	Torran ,, and (Aulodan, part of),	51	490	...	...	...	...	
	153	Henry Bruce, ...	Ederline, . .	Kilmichael and Glassary,	Fincharn ,, (part of), .	59	929	...	...	...	...	
	154	Colonel John Wingfield Malcolm,	Poltalloch, .	,,	Inverliver ,, ,, .	45	313	...	...	...	...	
	155	Henry Bruce, ...	Ederline, . .	,,	Ardary and Braevallich Grazings,	...	...	...	...	102	2,049	
	155A	Colonel John Wingfield Malcolm,	Poltalloch, .	Dalavich, .	Durran Grazings (part of), .	...	...	...	...	83	1,469	
	156	,,	,,	Kilmartin, .	Arinechtan ,, . . .	...	...	...	...	3	1,598	
	157	,,	,,	Kilchrenan and Dalavich,	Killmaha ,, . . .	...	...	...	...	7	968	
	158	Marquis of Breadalbane, . .	Breadalbane, .	Kilninver and Kilmelfort,	Loch-an-losgainn-mhoir ,,	...	...	...	...	...	414	
	159	Miss Annabella N. Macneill of Glenmore,	Glenmore, .	,,	Lagalochan Grazings, . .	...	138	...	...	...	...	
	160	James Archibald Campbell, .	Barbreck, .	Dalavich, .	Maolachy, Achnasaal and Dalachulish Grazings,	38	3,058	...	...	...	...	
	161	Marquis of Breadalbane, . .	Breadalbane, .	,,	Coriebuie Grazings (part of Druimdarroch),	12	360	...	...	...	...	
	162	Colonel John Wingfield Malcolm,	Poltalloch, .	,,	Cruachan Grazings, . . .	106	1,645	...	...	...	...	
	163	,,	,,	,,	Durran ,, (part of), .	67	678	...	...	...	...	
					Carry forward, . .	12,277	79,631	138	7,062	575	20,062	

BOOK OF REFERENCE TO MAPS SHOWING LANDS SCHEDULED—(1) COUNTY OF ARGYLL—(*continued*)

No. of Sheet.	No. of Scheduled Land on Sheet.	Proprietor.	Estate.	Parish.	Description.	Extent of Land Scheduled.						Remarks.
						Yellow.		Pink.		Brown.		
						Old Arable.	Pasture.	Old Arable.	Pasture.	Old Arable.	Pasture.	
					Brought forward, . .	Acres. 12,277	Acres. 79,631	Acres. 138	Acres. 7,062	Acres. 575	Acres. 20,062	
XXXVII.	164	His Grace the Duke of Argyll, .	Argyll,	Inveraray, .	Auchnatra Grazings, . .	...	...	...	...	6	274	
	165	,,	,,	,,	Kilblaan ,, (part of), .	104	1,623	...	...	...	...	
	166	G. A. Jamieson, C.A., *Curator Bonis* for G. F. W. Callander,	Ardkinglass, .	Kilmorich, .	Clachan and Ardganavan Grazings,	...	...	...	...	32	1,661	
	167	William Rolle Malcolm, . .	Duaig, . .	Dalavich, .	Duaig Grazings, . . .	10	537	...	...	...	...	
	168	Duncan Fraser, . . .	Kilmun, . .	,,	Kilmun and Narrachan Grazings,	54	1,670	...	...	...	...	
	169	Marquis of Breadalbane, . .	Breadalbane, .	Kilchrenan, .	Craignamoraig Grazings, . .	18	434	...	...	...	...	
	170	Colonel John Wingfield Malcolm,	Poltalloch, .	,,	Ballimeanach ,, . .	47	200	...	...	...	...	
	171	His Grace the Duke of Argyll, .	Argyll, . .	Inveraray, .	Maam and Kilblaan ,, . .	56	415	...	...	...	...	
XXXVII. and XLV.	172	,,	,,	,,	Drumlee Grazings (part of), .	...	...	...	...	...	3,560	
XLII.	173	,,	,, (Tiree)	Tiree, . .	Hynish Grazings (West part of),	43	445	...	...	...	...	
	174	,,	,,	,,	,, ,, (Middle, ,,)	...	...	...	...	74	180	
	175	,,	,,	,,	,, ,, (East, ,,)	74	55	...	...	...	...	
	176	,,	,,	,,	Heylipoll, ...	388	655	...	...	...	...	
	177	,,	,,	,,	Crossapoll Grazings, . . .	99	524	...	...	...	...	
	178	,,	,,	,,	Reef ,, . . .	...	...	...	1,222	...	...	
	179	,,	,,	,,	Baugh ,, (part of) .	44	60	...	...	...	...	
	180	,,	,,	,,	Hough ,, ,, .	...	...	...	778	...	...	
	181	,,	,,	,,	,, ,, ,,	106	213	...	...	...	...	
	182	,,	,,	,,	Clachan-mor ,, ,, .	90	67	...	...	...	...	
					Carry forward, . .	13,410	86,529	138	9,062	687	25,837	

BOOK OF REFERENCE TO MAPS SHOWING LANDS SCHEDULED—(1) COUNTY OF ARGYLL—(*continued*).

No. of Sheet.	No. of Scheduled Land on Sheet.	Proprietor.	Estate.	Parish.	Description.	Extent of Land Scheduled.						Remarks.
						Yellow.		Pink.		Brown.		
						Old Arable.	Pasture.	Old Arable.	Pasture.	Old Arable.	Pasture.	
					Brought forward, . .	Acres. 13,410	Acres. 86,529	Acres. 138	Acres. 9,062	Acres. 687	Acres. 25,837	
XLII.	183	His Grace the Duke of Argyll, .	Argyll (Tiree),	Tiree,	Ballyphetrish Grazings (part of),	210	362	...	...	...	...	
	184	,,	,,	,,	Gott ,, ,,	53	141	...	...	...	...	
XLIII.	185	,,	Argyll (Mull), .	Kilfinichen and Kilviceon,	Fidden ,, ,,	80	459	...	...	...	...	
	186	,,	,,	,,	,, ,, ,,	...	...	...	240	...	...	
	187	,,	,,	,,	Pottie ,, . . .	43	1,042	...	...	...	...	This scheduled area includes a few small portions of land presently under cultivation.
	188	,,	,,	,,	Ardfenaig , (part of), .	77	1,949	...	...	...	...	
	189	,,	,,	,,	Ardachy , , .	53	428	...	...	...	...	
	190	,,	,,	,,	Saor-Pheighinn Grazings (part of),	..	...	...	147	...	...	Scheduled as land suitable for additional Grazings to the Bunessan villagers.
	191	,,	,,	,,	Scoor ,, (part of),	...	...	...	422	...	...	
XXXV. and XLIII. and XLIV.	192	,,	,,	,,	Remainder of Scoor Grazings, .	512	3,618	...	...	...	...	
XLIII.	193	,,	,,	,,	Ardfenaig ,, (part of), .	...	...	...	301	...	...	
XLIII. and XLIV.	194	Francis William Clark of Ulva,	Ulva, . .	,,	Kilpatrick ,, (Ardchrishnish, Ormsaig and Beach),	70	5,317	...	...	...	...	
XLIII.	195	Mrs Annie H. Lawson, wife of William Bell,	Tavool, . .	,,	Tavool Grazings (part of), (Cullie-more),	18	257	...	...	...	...	
					Carry forward, . .	14,506	100,102	138	10,172	687	25,837	

BOOK OF REFERENCE TO MAPS SHOWING LANDS SCHEDULED—(1) COUNTY OF ARGYLL—(*continued*).

No. of Sheet.	No. of Scheduled Land on Sheet.	Proprietor.	Estate.	Parish.	Description.	Extent of Land Scheduled.						Remarks.
						Yellow.		Pink.		Brown.		
						Old Arable.	Pasture.	Old Arable.	Pasture.	Old Arable.	Pasture.	
					Brought forward, . .	Acres. 14,506	Acres. 100,102	Acres. 138	Acres. 10,172	Acres. 687	Acres. 25,837	
XLIV.	196	Mrs M. M. Cheape, . . .	Tiroran, . . .	Kilfinichen and Kilviceon	Tiroran Grazings (part of), .	13	1,647	...	...	...	...	
	197	His Grace the Duke of Argyll,	Argyll (Mull), .	,,	Balmeanach ,, ,, . . (Baile-meadhonach)	95	50	...	..	...	...	
XLIII. and XLIV.	198	,,	,,	,,	,, ,, ,,	...	...	...	1,033	...	...	
XLIII.	199	Mrs Hannah Gow Stewart, . .	Little Colonsay,	Kilninian and Kilmore,	Island of Little Colonsay Grazings,	..	...	...	167	...	...	
	200	Francis William Clark, . .	Ulva, . .	Kilfinichen and Kilviceon	Inch Kenneth, . . .	110	...	...	...	...	...	
	201	,,	,,	,,	Sandland Island Grazings, .	...	...	..	4	...	...	
XLIII. and XLIV.	202	His Grace the Duke of Argyll, .	Argyll, . .	Pennygown and Torosay,	Derryguaig ,, . .	24	2,388	...	...	...	...	
XLIII.	203	Roderick Maclean, 167 Main Street, Anderston, Glasgow,	Gometra, . .	Kilninian and Kilmore	Gometra ,, . .	...	...	85	1,094	...	...	
	204	Francis William Clark, . .	Ulva, . .	,,	Ulva ,, (part of), . .	341	3,324	...	...	...	...	
XLIII. and XLIV.	205	Joseph Charlton Parr, . .	Killichronan, .	,,	Achronich ,, ...	34	644	...	...	...	...	
XLIII. and LI.	206	Donald Maclellan, . . .	Treshnish, .	,,	Crackaig and Treshnish Grazings (part of),	160	1,016	...	...	..	...	
XLIII., XLIV. and LI., LII.	207	John H. Munro Mackenzie of Morinish and Glenbellart	Calgary, . .	,,	Achnacraig Grazings (part of), .	108	1,848	...	...	...	...	
XLIII. and XLIV.	208	Duncan Robertson, . . .	Pennyghael, .	Kilfinichen and Kilviceon, .	Torrans ,, ,, .	30	605	...	...	...	...	
XLIV.	209	Murdoch G. Maclaine, . .	Lochbuie, .	Pennygown and Torosay,	Laggan ,, ,, .	48	623	...	...	...	...	
					Carry forward, . .	15,469	115,247	223	12,470	687	25,837	

BOOK OF REFERENCE TO MAPS SHOWING LANDS SCHEDULED—(1) COUNTY OF ARGYLL—(*continued*).

No. of Sheet.	No. of Scheduled Land on Plan.	Proprietor.	Estate.	Parish.	Description.	Extent of Land Scheduled.						Remarks.
						Yellow.		Pink.		Brown.		
						Old Arable.	Pasture.	Old Arable.	Pasture.	Old Arable.	Pasture.	
						Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	
					Brought forward, . .	15,469	115,247	223	12,470	687	25,837	
XLIV.	210	Marquis of Breadalbane, . .	Breadalbane, .	Kilbrandon and Kilchattan,	Ardshellach Grazings (part of),	62	103	...	...	...	...	
	211	,,	,,	Kilninver and Kilmelfort,	Duachy ,, ,, .	72	...	...	...	...	...	
	212	,,	,,	,,	Barrnacarry ,, ,, .	...	...	...	375	...	...	Sheduled as suitable for Grazings to the villagers of Kilninver.
	213	Murdoch G. Maclaine, . .	Lochbuie, .	Pennygown and Torosay, .	Barachandroman,, ,, .	...	...	13	504	...	...	
XLIII. and XLIV.	214	His Grace the Duke of Argyll,	Argyll (Mull), .	Kilfinichen and Kilviceon,	Ardvergnish ,, ...	...	...	...	...	80	4,651	
	215	,,	,, .	Pennygown and Torosay,	Dishaig Grazings (part of Knock)	. .	...	...	...	12	2,521	
XLIV.	216	Arbuthnot Charles Guthrie, .	Duart, . .	,,	Achnacraig Grazings, . . .	140	2,526	...	...	...	...	
	217	Lieut.-Col. C. A. Macdougall, .	Dunollie (Kerrera Island)	Kilmore and Kilbride,	Baile-Mor ,, (part of),	14	399	...	...	..	..	
	218	Marquis of Breadalbane, . .	Breadalbane (Kerrera Island),	,,	Ardentrive, ,, . .	82	258	...	...	...	...	Found necessary to include some land under cultivation in this area.
	219	His Grace the Duke of Argyll, .	Argyll, . .	Pennygown and Torosay,	Eorsa Island ,, . .	...	...	...	230	...	...	
XLIII. and XLIV.	220	,,	,,	,,	Kilmore ,, . .	45	912	...	...	...	...	
XLIV.	221	Lieut.-Col. C. Greenhill Gardyne,	Glenforsa, .	,,	Ardmore ,, . .	...	...	2	265	...	...	Scheduled as suitable additional Grazings to the Salen small tenants.
	222	,,	,,	,,	Pennygown ,, (part of),	55	1,768	...			..	
	223	Arbuthnot Charles Guthrie, .	Duart, . .	,,	Corrynahenchry, Baile-meadhonach and Garmony Grazings,	264	4,703	...		...	...	
					Carry forward, . .	16,203	125,916	238	13,814	779	33,009	

BOOK OF REFERENCE TO MAPS SHOWING LANDS SCHEDULED—(1) COUNTY OF ARGYLL—(*continued*).

No. of Sheet.	No. of Scheduled Land on Sheet.	Proprietor.	Estate.	Parish.	Description.	Extent of Land Scheduled.						Remarks.
						Yellow.		Pink.		Brown.		
						Old Arable.	Pasture.	Old Arable.	Pasture.	Old Arable.	Pasture.	
					Brought forward, . .	Acres. 16,203	Acres. 125,916	Acres. 238	Acres. 13,844	Acres. 779	Acres. 33,009	
XLIV.	224	His Grace The Duke of Argyll,	Argyll (Lismore),	Lismore and Appin,	Kilcheran Grazings (part of), .	110	710	...	...	...	...	
	225	Richard Watson as Trustee for Archibald Argyll Lochnell Campbell of Lochnell, . .	Lochnell . .	,,	Island of Bernera Grazings, .	...	95	...	...	...	...	
	226	,,	,,	,,	Aachadun ,, .	39	159	...	...	...	...	
	227	Rev. James Alexander Fell, .	Lismore, . .	,,	Frackersaig ,, (part of),	100	218	...	...	...	...	
	227A	His Grace The Duke of Argyll,	Argyll (Lismore),	,,	Creag-an-eich ,, .	60	86	...	...	...	...	
	228	,,	,,	,,	Kilcheran ,, (part of),	23	60	...	...	...	...	
	229	,,	,,	,,	Tigh-an-druim ,, .	23	37	...	...	...	...	
	230	Trustees of the late Donald Campbell of Baleveolan, .	Baleveolan, .	,,	Baleveolan ,, .	45	85	...	...	...	...	
	231	Duncan MacColl, . . .	Port-Charran, .	,,	Port Charran ,, .	56	41	...	...	...	...	
	232	Dugald Mackechnie, . .	Tenga, . .	Kilninian and Kilmore,	Tenga Grazings (part of), . .	39	1,484	...	...	...	...	
XLIV. & LII.	233	John Ewart, W.S., and Francis John Martin, W.S., Edinburgh,	Glenaros, . .	,,	Aros Mains and Ledmore Grazings (part of),	193	1,810	...	...	...	...	
XLIV.	233A	Mrs Jane Fletcher of Glenaros,	,,	,,	Glenaros Grazings, South side (part of),	...	1,108	...	...	...	...	
XLIV. & LII.	234	Thomas Valentine Smith, .	Ardtornish, .	Morven, . .	Achantra, Achadh-beag, Ardness and Achafors Grazings,	347	3,660	...	...	...	...	
XLV.	235	Marquis of Breadalbane, . .	Breadalbane, .	Kilchrenan, .	Inverinan Grazings (part of), .	27	984	...	...	...	...	
	236	John Cunliffe Kay, . . .	Achlian, . .	Glenorchy and Innishael,	Keppochan ,, ,, .	...	1,944	...	...	...	...	
	237	His Grace The Duke of Argyll,	Argyll, . .	,,	Acurrach ,, ,, .	42	1,143	...	...	...	...	
	238	Marquis of Breadalbane, . .	Breadalbane, .	Kilchrenan, .	Achnamady ,, . . .	38	335	...	...	...	...	
	239	Mrs Jane Campbell, . .	Inverawe, .	Glenorchy and Innishael, and Kilchrenan,	Fanans, Shellachan, Barachander and Achnacraiobh Grazings,	135	3,043	...	...	...	...	
					Carry forward, . . .	17,480	142,918	238	13,844	779	33,009	

BOOK OF REFERENCE TO MAPS SHOWING LANDS SCHEDULED—(1) COUNTY OF ARGYLL—(*continued*).

No. of Sheet.	No. of Scheduled Land on Sheet.	Proprietor.	Estate.	Parish.	Description.	Extent of Land Scheduled.						Remarks.
						Yellow.		Pink.		Brown.		
						Old Arable.	Pasture.	Old Arable.	Pasture.	Old Arable.	Pasture.	
					Brought forward, . .	Acres. 17,480	Acres. 142,918	Acres. 238	Acres. 13,844	Acres. 779	Acres. 33,009	
XLV.	240	John Macarthur, . . .	Barbreck, .	Glenorchy and Innishael,	Barbreck Grazings (part of), .	10	396	...	...	...	...	
	241	William Campbell Muir, . .	Inistrynich, .	,,	Achnacarron ,, ,, .	64	553	...	...	...	...	
	242	Marquis of Breadalbane, . .	Breadalbane, .	,,	Ardteatle ,, . . .	39	671	...	...	...	...	
	243	,,	,,	,,	Barran ,, . . .	17	957	...	...	...	...	
	244	Richard Watson, as Trustee for Archibald Argyll Lochnell Campbell of Lochnell,	Lochnell, .	Muckairn, .	Achadh-na-h-annait Grazings, .	37	1,461	...	...	...	...	
	245	,,	,,	,,	Pairc-an-tairbh, Taynuilt ,, .	22	...	...	...	...	...	
	246	,,	,,	Innishael, .	Ichrachan ,, .	200	871	...	...	...	...	
	247	Marquis of Breadalbane, . .	Breadalbane, .	Ardchattan, .	Cruinache ,, . .	40	1,628	...	...	...	...	
	248	,,	,, .	Glenorchy, .	Duletter Grazings (part of), .	91	1,954	...	...	...	..	
XLV. and XLVI.	249	,,	,, .	,, .	Achanafaundaich and Bochyle Grazings,	62	2,274	...	...	...	...	
XLV.	250	,,	,, .	,, .	Craighouse Grazing (part of), .	102	2,737	...	...	...	...	
XLV. and XLVI.	251	,,	,, .	,, .	Deer Forest of Larig, . .	...	...	...	...	...	3,125	
XLV.	252	Robert William Pigott Clark Campbell,	Ardchattan, .	Ardchattan, .	Inveresragan Grazing (part of), .	11	189	...	...	...	...	
	253	,,	,, .	,, .	Cadderlie, &c. ,, . .	...	...	...	...	77	6,177	
	254	Marquis of Breadalbane, . .	Breadalbane, .	,, .	Inverkinglass ,, . .	17	580	...	...	...	...	
	255	,,	,, .	,, .	Acharn ,, (part of),	...	142	...	...	...	...	
	256	,,	,, .	,, .	Black Mount Deer Forest (part of),	25	930	...	...	...	...	
	257	Rev. James Alexander Fell, .	Lismore, . .	Lismore and Appin,	Clachan Grazing (part of), .	4	31	...	...	...	...	
					Carry forward, . .	18,221	158,292	238	13,844	856	42,311	

BOOK OF REFERENCE TO MAPS SHOWING LANDS SCHEDULED—(1) COUNTY OF ARGYLL—(*continued*).

No. of Sheet.	No. of Scheduled Land on Sheet.	Proprietor.	Estate.	Parish.	Description.	Extent of Land Scheduled.						Remarks.
						Yellow.		Pink.		Brown.		
						Old Arable.	Pasture.	Old Arable.	Pasture.	Old Arable.	Pasture.	
					Brought forward,	Acres. 18,221	Acres. 158,292	Acres. 238	Acres. 13,844	Acres. 856	Acres. 42,811	
XLV.	258	Rev. James Alexander Fell,	Lismore,	Lismore and Appin,	Clachan Grazing (part of),	78	77	...	...	...	...	
	259	,,	,,	,,	Achuaran Grazings ,,	35	...	...	...	...	...	This area includes a small portion of land under cultivation.
	260	,,	,,	,,	Achuaran ,, ,, (Alistra)	...	...	...	88	...	...	
XLVI.	261	Marquis of Breadalbane,	Breadalbane,	Glenorchy,	Airidh-Chastulaich Grazing (part of),	...	..	...	...	...	1,696	
	261A	,,	,,	,,	Ach-innis-Chailein Grazings (part of),	...	...	...	...	...	1,890	
	262	,,	,,	,,	Black Mount Deer Forest (part of),	...	...	...	...	...	3,788	
XLV. and XLVI.	263	,,	,,	,,	,, ,, ,,	...	3,130	...	...	...	...	
LI.	264	John Lorne Stewart,	Coll,	Coll,	Breachacha Grazings (part of),	132	117	...	...	...	...	
	265	,,	,,	,,	Soa Island,	...	25	...	...	...	...	
	266	,,	,,	,,	Laggamore Grazings,	36	118	...	...	...	...	
	267	,,	,,	,,	Kilbride ,, (part of),	53	83	...	...	...	...	
	268	,,	,,	,,	,, ,, ,,	20	91	...	...	...	...	
	269	,,	,,	,,	,, ,, ,,	23	147	...	...	...	...	
	270	,,	,,	,,	Fiskary ,,	45	276	...	...	...	...	
	271	,,	,,	,,	Arinagour ,, (part of),	...	...	28	94	...	...	
	272 and 273	,,	,,	,,	Totronald and Grimisary Grazings (part of),	140	730	...	...	...	...	
	274	,,	,,	,,	Grishipoll Grazings (part of),	32	67	...	...	...	...	
					Carry forward,	18,815	163,153	266	14,026	856	49,685	

BOOK OF REFERENCE TO MAPS SHOWING LANDS SCHEDULED—(1) COUNTY OF ARGYLL—(*continued*).

No. of Sheet.	No. of Scheduled Land on Sheet.	Proprietor.	Estate.	Parish.	Description.	Extent of Land Scheduled.						Remarks.
						Yellow.		Pink.		Brown.		
						Old Arable.	Pasture.	Old Arable.	Pasture.	Old Arable.	Pasture.	
					Brought forward, . .	Acres. 18,815	Acres. 163,153	Acres. 266	Acres. 14,026	Acres. 856	Acres. 49,685	
LI.	275	John Lorne Stewart,. . .	Coll, . .	Coll, . .	Cliad Grazings (part of), . .	40	89	...	...	...	...	
	276	,,	,, . .	,, . .	Gallanach ,, ,, . .	53	153	...	...	...	...	
	277	,,	,, . .	,, . .	,, ,, ,, . .	...	...	...	1,150	...	...	
	278	,,	,, . .	,, . .	,, ,, ,, . .	33	872	...	...	...	...	
	279	John H. Munro Mackenzie of Morinish and Glenbellart,	Calgary, . .	Kilninian and Kilmore,	Calgary ,, ,, . .	232	1,382	...	...	...	...	
	280	The Marquis of Northampton, .	Torloisk, .	,,	Langamull ,, ,, . .	10	242	...	...	...	...	
	281	Robert Macnab, M.D., . .	Penmore, . .	,,	Airds Grazing, ...	95	138	...	...	...	...	
	282	James N. M. Forsyth, . .	Quinish, . .	,,	Quinish ,, (part of), . .	...	...	...	147	...	...	
	283	James Cowan, ...	Glengorm, .	,,	Glengorm ,, ,, . .	110	410	...	...	...	...	
	284	,,	,, .	,,	,, ,, ,, . .	36	1,544	...	...	...	...	
LI. and LII.	285	Colonel John Fletcher Caldwell,	Mishnish, .	,,	Erray ,, ,, . .	95	1,276	...	...	...	...	
	286	John James Dalgleish, . .	Ardnamurchan,	Ardnamurchan,	Grigadale ,, ...	...	...	47	2,020	...	...	
LII. and LIV.	287	Alexander Allan, ...	Aros, . .	Kilninian and Kilmore,	Lettermore Grazing, . . .	33	1,160	...	...	...	...	
	288	,,	,, . .	,,	Arla ,, ...	42	581	...	...	...	...	
LII.	289	Mrs Caroline Eliza Cheape, .	Killundine, .	Morven, . .	Killundine ,, (part of), .	100	1,631	..	...	...	...	
	290	Miss Mary Stewart Beattie, .	Glenmorven, .	,, . .	Mungasdale ,, ,, .	...	...	...	1,130	...	...	
	291	Thomas Valentine Smith, .	Ardtornish, .	,, . .	Strath-an-Donich Grazings, .	...	...	...	...	14	1,134	
	292	J. Clement Gordon of Drimnin,	Drimnin, . .	,, . .	Achlenan Grazings (part of), .	59	773	..	...	...	...	
	293	,,	,, . .	,, . .	Auliston ,, . . .	...	513	...	...	...	...	
					Carry forward, . .	19,753	173,917	313	18,473	870	50,819	

BOOK OF REFERENCE TO MAPS SHOWING LANDS SCHEDULED—(1) COUNTY OF ARGYLL—(*continued*).

No. of Sheet.	No. of Scheduled Land on Sheet.	Proprietor.	Estate.	Parish.	Description.	Extent of Land Scheduled.						Remarks.
						Yellow.		Pink.		Brown.		
						Old Arable.	Pasture.	Old Arable.	Pasture.	Old Arable.	Pasture.	
					Brought forward, . .	Acres. 19,753	Acres. 173,917	Acres. 313	Acres. 18,473	Acres. 870	Acres. 50,819	
LII.	294	Miss Mary Stewart Beattie, .	Glenmorven, .	Morven, . .	Barr Grazings (part of), . .	...	...	...	...	31	1,460	
	295	T. H. G. Newton and Horace Newton,	Glencripesdale,	,,	Kinlochteacuis Grazings (part of),	...	...	...	...	67	3,416	
	296	Thomas Valentine Smith, .	Ardtornish, .	,,	Acharn Grazings (part of), .	...	...	...	...	...	2,983	
	297	,,	,,	,,	Crosben Grazings, . . .	...	...	..	...	22	1,255	
	298	,,	,,	,,	Claonlaid ,, . . .	54	3,416	...	...	...	...	
	299	T. H. G. Newton and Horace Newton,	Glencripesdale,	,,	Achagavel ,, . . .	...	...	...	...	7	2,039	
	300	,,	,,	,,	Liddesdale ,, . . .	30	5,764	...	...	...	...	
	300A	Robert Macfie of Airds, . .	Beach, . .	,,	Beach Grazing (part of), .	...	195	...	...	...	...	
	301	John Bell Sheriff, . . .	Kingairloch, .	,,	Kingairloch Grazing (part of), .	...	...	...	...	18	4,092	
	302	,,	,,	,,	Glengalmadale ,, ,, .	...	...	...	281	...	...	
	303	T. H. G. Newton and Horace Newton,	Glencripesdale,	,,	Laudale ,, ,, (Rudha-Aird-Earnaich),	...	...	...	...	...	1,204	
	304	John James Dalgleish, . .	Ardnamurchan,	Ardnamurchan,	Mingary Grazings (part of), .	...	...	2	174	...	...	
	305	,,	,,	,,	Remainder of Mingary Grazings,	177	5,342	...	...	...	...	
	306	,,	,,	,,	Glenbeg Grazings, . . .	14	789	...	...	...	...	
	307	Sir Rodney Stuart Riddell, Bart.,	Sunart, . .	,,	Ranachan ,, . . .	100	2,483	...	...	...	...	
	308	,,	,,	,,	Drumantorran Grazings (part of),	5	612	...	...	...	...	
	309	,,	,,	,,	,, ,, ,,	...	...	25	1,585	...	...	
					Carry forward, . .	20,133	192,518	340	20,513	1,015	67,268	

BOOK OF REFERENCE TO MAPS SHOWING LANDS SCHEDULED—(1) COUNTY OF ARGYLL—(*continued*).

No. of Sheet.	No. of Scheduled Land on Sheet.	Proprietor.	Estate.	Parish.	Description.	Extent of Holding.						Remarks.
						Yellow.		Pink.		Brown.		
						Old Arable.	Pasture.	Old Arable.	Pasture.	Old Arable.	Pasture.	
					Brought forward, . .	Acres. 20,133	Acres. 192,518	Acres. 340	Acres. 20,513	Acres. 1,015	Acres. 67,268	
LII.	310	John James Dalgleish, . .	Ardnamurchan,	Ardnamurchan,	Achateny Grazings, . . .	182	2,961	...	...	...	...	
	311	,,	,,	,,	Swordle ,, (part of),	...	...	...	1,660	...	...	
	312	,,	,,	,,	Gortenfern ,, ,,	...	...	15	784	...	...	
	313	Sir Rodney Stuart Riddell, Bart.,	Sunart, . .	,,	Achaneilean ,, . .	...	...	...	...	120	3,933	
LII. and LIII.	314	,,	,,	,,	Glenhurich ,, . .	...	...	...	...	146	14,890	
	315	Trustee of the late Miss Downie,	Appin, . .	Lismore and Appin,	Island of Shuna ,, . .	76	325	...	...	...	...	
	316	John C. Stewart, . . .	Fasnacloich, .	,,	Glasdrum, ...	108	431	...	...	...	...	
	317	,,	,,	,,	Fasnacloich Grazings (part of),	85	932	...	...	...	...	
	318	Mrs Christina Cameron Campbell of Fassifern,	Acharn, . .	,,	Acharn Grazings, . . .	127	2,158	...	...	...	...	
	319	George Wilson Anderson, .	Ardsheal, .	,,	Ardsheal ,, (part of), .	40	222	...	...	...	...	
	320	Mrs Christina Cameron Campbell of Fassifern,	Glenure, . .	,,	Barnamuic Grazings, . .	...	...	...	...	6	884	
	321	John C. Stewart, . . .	Fasnacloich, .	,,	Salachail ,, . .	...	...	...	...	31	3,669	
	322	Edward Seymour Greaves, .	Glenetive, .	Ardchattan, .	Deer Forest of Glenetive (part of),	...	...	...	...	37	959	
	323	William Macalpine Leny, .	Duror, . .	Lismore and Appin,	Achnacon Grazings (part of), .	75	819	...	...	...	...	
	324	,,	,,	,,	,, ,, ,,	...	...	30	737	...	...	
	325	Trustees of the late Miss Downie,	Appin, . .	,,	Leacantuim ,, ,,	...	114	...	...	...	...	
					Carry forward, . .	20,826	300,480	385	23,694	1,355	91,603	

BOOK OF REFERENCE TO MAPS SHOWING LANDS SCHEDULED—(1) COUNTY OF ARGYLL—(*continued*).

No. of Sheet.	No. of Scheduled Land on Sheet.	Proprietor.	Estate.	Parish.	Description.	Extent of Land Scheduled.						Remarks.
						Yellow.		Pink.		Brown.		
						Old Arable.	Pasture.	Old Arable.	Pasture.	Old Arable.	Pasture.	
					Brought forward, . .	Acres. 20,826	Acres. 200,480	Acres. 385	Acres. 23,694	Acres. 1,355	Acres. 91,603	
LIII.	326	Andrew Hunter Ballingal, W.S., Sole Trustee under Trust created by the late Mrs Ellen Caroline Macpherson Burns Macdonald of Glencoe,	Glencoe, . .	Lismore and Appin,	Invercoe Grazings (part of), .	...	...	35	23	...	...	
	327	The Guardians of Alexander J. H. Maclean of Ardgour,	Ardgour, .	Kilmallie, .	Inversanda Deer Forest (part of),	15	338	...	...	...	...	
	328	,,	,,	,,	Salachan Grazing (part of), .	10	320	...	...	...	...	
	329	,,	,,	,,	(Salachan Point),	...	...	37	73	...	...	
	330	,,	,,	,,	Keil Grazings, . . .	35	1,898	...	...	...	...	
	331	,	,,	,,	Aryhoulan Grazings, . .	...	...	...	...	57	11,910	
	332	Earl of Morton, . . .	Conaglen, .	,,	Deer Forest of Conaglen, South side,	...	...	...	...	...	1,765	
LII. and LXII.	333	,,		,,	Deer Forest of Conaglen (part of),	...	...	...	5,993	...	...	
	334	,,	,,	,,	Duiskey Grazings, . . .	...	...	...	2,765	...	...	
	335	,,	,,	,,	Deer Forest of Conaglen (part of),	...	...	...	1,336	...	...	
LXII.	336	,,	,,	,,	(Garvan and Drumfern),	37	271	...	...	...	...	
	337	,,	,	,,	Duiskey Grazings (part of), .	34	82	...	...	...	...	
	338	,,	,,	,,	Deer Forest of Conaglen (part of Achaphubil),	10	109	...	...	...	...	
LX.	339	Trustees of the late Thomas A. Swinburne,	Muck, . .	Small Isles, .	Gallanach Grazings (part of), .	61	620	...	...	...	...	
					Carry forward, . .	21,028	204,118	457	33.884	1,412	105,278	

BOOK OF REFERENCE TO MAPS SHOWING LANDS SCHEDULED—(1) COUNTY OF ARGYLL—(*continued*).

No. of Sheet.	No. of Scheduled Land on Sheet.	Proprietor.	Estate.	Parish.	Description.	Extent of Land Scheduled.						Remarks.
						Yellow.		Pink.		Brown.		
						Old Arable.	Pasture.	Old Arable.	Pasture.	Old Arable.	Pasture.	
						Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	
					Brought forward, . .	21,028	204,118	457	33,884	1,412	105,278	
LX.	340	George Bullough, . . .	Rum, . .	Small Isles, .	Deer Forest of Rum (part of), .	83	6,001	...	...	...	...	
	341	Robert Thom, ...	Canna, . .	,,	Canna Grazings (part of), (Tarbert),	94	1,081	...	...	...	...	
	342	,,	,,	,,	Island of Sanda Grazings (part of)	...	...	...	65	...	...	
	343	,,	,,	,,	,, ,, ,,	42	68	...	...	...	...	
	344	,,	,,	,,	,, ,, ,,	...	...	...	202	...	...	
					Total, . .	21,247	211,268	457	34,151	1,412	105,278	

BOOK OF REFERENCE TO MAPS SHOWING LANDS SCHEDULED—(2) COUNTY OF INVERNESS.

No. of Sheet.	No. of Scheduled Land on Sheet.	Proprietor.	Estate.	Parish.	Description.	Extent of Land Scheduled.						Remarks.
						Yellow.		Pink.		Brown.		
						Old Arable.	Pasture.	Old Arable.	Pasture.	Old Arable.	Pasture.	
						Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	
LII.	1	Robert Stewart, . . .	Kinlochmoidart,	Ardnamurchan,	Kinlochmoidart Grazings (part of),	...	...	18	1,091	...	...	
LX.	2	Norman Macpherson and the Misses Isabella, Anne Maria, and Margaret Macpherson,	Eigg, . .	Small Isles, .	Grulin Grazings, ...	...	...	35	1,302	...	...	
	3	,,	,,	,,	Kildonan Grazings (part of), .	80	1,770	...	...	...	...	
	4	,,	,,	,,	,, ,, ,, (Tolm and Howlaine),	...	...	19	540	...	...	
LXI.	5	Hugh Blackburn, . . .	Roshven, .	Ardnamurchan,	Roshven Grazings (part of), .	...	...	21	1,328	...	...	
	6	Mrs Gertrude S. Nicholson, .	Arisaig, . .	,,	Arisaig Deer Forest (part of), .	115	2,439	...	...	...	...	
	7	,,	,,	,,	Keppoch, ...	38	345	...	...	...	...	This area, which includes certain portions of land under cultivation, was scheduled as specially suited for new holdings.
	8	,,	,,	,,	Goirtean-a'-chaolais Grazings, .	10	184	...	...	...	...	
	9	,,	,,	,,	Eilean Eige, ...	...	93	...	...	...	...	
	10	,,	,,	,,	Kinloid Grazings (part of), .	...	...	3	197	...	...	
	11	John Andrew Macdonald, .	Glenaladale, .	,,	Lettermorar Grazings, . . .	...	...	...	...	22	6,344	
	12	Right Honourable Lord Lovat, .	Lovat, . .	Glenelg, . .	Bourblach Grazings (part of), .	...	...	...	668	...	...	Area of planted timber found here, not defined on the O.S., but to be deemed as excluded from this scheduling.
	13	E. S. Bowlby	Knoydart, .	,,	Kilchoan ,, ...	57	3,562	...	...	...	...	
	14	,,	,,	,,	Scotas ,, ...	25	5,423	...	...	...	...	
	15	,,	,,	,,	Inverguseran Grazings, . .	49	4,762	...	...	...	...	
					Carry forward, . .	374	18,578	96	5,126	22	6,344	

BOOK OF REFERENCE TO MAPS SHOWING LANDS SCHEDULED—(2) COUNTY OF INVERNESS—(*continued*).

No. of Sheet.	No. of Scheduled Land on Sheet.	Proprietor.	Estate.	Parish.	Description.	Extent of Land Scheduled.						Remarks.
						Yellow.		Pink.		Brown.		
						Old Arable.	[? Pasture.]	Old Arable.	Pasture.	Old Arable.	Pasture.	
					Brought forward, . .	Acres. 374	Acres. 18,578	Acres. 96	Acres. 5,126	Acres. 22	Acres. 6,344	
LXII.	16	Donald Cameron of Locheil .	Lochiel, . .	Kilmallie, .	Drumasallie Grazings (part of),	...	...	...	1,005	...	...	
	17	,,	,,	,,	Fassifern Grazings (part of), .	...	...	24	817	...	...	
	18	,,	,,	,,	Annat and Achadaliew Grazings,	...	...	...	...	124	4,695	
	19	,,	,,	,,	Strone Grazings, . . .	81	3,163	...	...	...	...	Found necessary to include certain portions of land under cultivation.
	20	,,	,,	,,	Moy and Inverskillavulin Grazings,	227	4,754	...	...	...	...	
	21	,,	,,	,,	Kinlocharkaig and Glenpean Grazings,	...	...	...	...	9	8,028	
	22	,,	,,	,,	Invermaillie and Glenmaillie Grazings,	...	...	...	...	200	4,064	
	23	,,	,,	,,	Glendessary Deer Forest (part of Murlaggan, Arcabbie, Caoinich),	...	...	...	...	35	13,953	
	24	,,	,,	,,	Ardachie Grazings, . . .	...	...	...	...	39	12,062	
	25	The Right Hon. Lord Abinger,	Inverlochy, .	Kilmonivaig,	Auchandaul and Camisky ,,	69	1,886	...	...	...	...	
	26	,,	,,	,,	Inverlochy Deer Forest (part of Lianachan and Coirechoinnlidh),	89	3,491	...	...	...	...	
	27	,,	,,	,,	Killichonnet Grazings, . .	63	638	...	...	...	...	
	28	,,	,,	,,	Dalnabie . . .	35	120	...	...	...	...	
	29	Captain G. L. Walker of Jarbreck, Moniaive, Dumfriesshire,	Blairour, . .	,,	Tirandrish ,, . .	72	2,525	...	...	...	...	
	30	Belford Hospital Trustees, .	Glenfintaig, .	,,	Glenfintaig ,, . .	229	5,760	...	...	...	...	
					Carry forward, . .	1,239	40,915	120	6,948	429	49,146	

BOOK OF REFERENCE TO MAPS SHOWING LANDS SCHEDULED—(2) COUNTY OF INVERNESS—(*continued*).

No. of Sheet.	No. of Scheduled Land on Sheet.	Proprietor.	Estate.	Parish.	Description.	Extent of Land Scheduled.						Remarks.
						Yellow.		Pink.		Brown.		
						Old Arable.	Pasture.	Old Arable.	Pasture.	Old Arable.	Pasture.	
						Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	
					Brought forward, . .	1,239	40,915	120	6,948	429	49,146	
LXII.	31	Trustees of the late Edward Ellice,	Glengarry and Glenquoich,	Kilmonivaig, .	Glenquoich Deer Forest (part of),	64	5,600	...	...	...	...	
	32	,,	,,	,,	,,	6	3,105	...	...	...	...	
	33	,,	,,	,,	Invergarry Deer Forest (part of),	12	1,973	...	...	...	...	
LXIII.	34	The Right Hon. Lord Abinger,	Inverlochy, .	,,	Innish, Clinaig, Monessie, and Achnacochine Grazings,	133	7,472	...	...	...	...	
	35	Alfred D. Mackintosh of Mackintosh,	Mackintosh, .	,,	Keppoch ,, (part of), (low ground),	65	77	...	...	...	...	Found necessary to include certain portions of land under cultivation in this scheduling.
	36	,,	,,	,,	,, ,, (hill pasture),	...	...	4	1,286	...	...	
	37	,,	,,	,,	Cranachan Grazings, . .	32	6,030	...	...	...	...	
	38	Trustees of the late Edward Ellice,	Glengarry and Glenquoich,	,,	West Laggan ,, . .	140	3,032	...	...	...	...	Some portions of land under cultivation had to be included in this area.
	39	Sir John W. Ramsden, Bart., .	Ardverikie, .	Laggan, . .	Shirramore and Shirrabeg ,,	...	...	...	...	403	35,053	
	40	,,	,,	,,	Strathmashie and Dalchully Grazings (low ground),	354	328	...	...	...	...	Exclusive of all land under wood.
LXIV.	41	Charles J. B. Macpherson, .	Belleville, .	Kingussie and Insh,	Etteridge ,, . .	...	...	...	...	318	15,859	
	42	Lieut.-Colonel Lachlan Macpherson,	Glentruim, .	Laggan, . .	Crubinmore and Crubinbeg Grazings,	...	...	...	...	70	836	
	43	,,	,,	,,	Breakachy ,, (part of),	19	395	...	...	...	...	
	44	,,	,,	,,	Coraldie ,, ,,	53	650	...	...	...	...	
	45	Charles J. B. Macpherson, .	Belleville, .	Kingussie and Insh,	Glenbanchor ,, . .	92	8,489	...	...	...	...	
					Carry forward, . .	2,209	78,066	124	8,234	1,220	100,894	

BOOK OF REFERENCE TO MAPS SHOWING LANDS SCHEDULED—(2) COUNTY OF INVERNESS—*(continued)*.

No. of Sheet.	No. of Scheduled Land on Sheet.	Proprietor.	Estate.	Parish.	Description.	Extent of Land Scheduled.						Remarks.
						Yellow.		Pink.		Brown.		
						Old Arable.	Pasture.	Old Arable.	Pasture.	Old Arable.	Pasture.	
					Brought forward, . .	Acres. 2,209	Acres. 78,066	Acres. 124	Acres. 8,234	Acres. 1,220	Acres. 100,894	
LXIV.	46	James Evan Bruce Baillie, .	Dochfour, .	Kingussie and Insh,	Balachroan and Pitmain Grazings,	416	6,616	...	..	...	...	Found necessary to include certain portions of land under cultivation.
LVIII.	47	Lady Emily Steele Pringle Gordon Cathcart,	Barra, . .	Barra, . .	Island of Lingay, Vatersay Grazings (part of),	...	66	...	—	...	...	
	48	,,	,,	,,	Island of Flodday, Vatersay Grazings (part of),	...	61	...	...	...	...	
	49	,,	,,	,,	Island of Sandray, Vatersay Grazings (part of),	20	983	...	...	...	...	
	50	,,	,,	,,	Island of Vatersay, Vatersay Grazings (part of),	492	1,758	...	...	...	...	
	51	,,	,,	,,	North Bay Grazings, . .	...	...	97	763	...	...	
	52	,,	,,	,,	Eoligarry ,, (part of),	369	2,121	...	...	...	...	
LIX.	53	,,	,,	,,	,, (Island of Fuaiy Garbh), ,,	...	...	...	228	...	...	
	54	,,	,,	,,	Island of Flodday, Eoligarry Grazings (part of),	...	...	...	95	...	...	
	55	,,	,,	,,	Islands of Hellisay and Carish, Eoligarry Grazings (part of),	...	356	...	...	...	...	
	56	,,	,,	,,	Island of Gighay ,, .	...	233	...	...	...	...	
LXIX.	57	,,	South Uist, .	South Uist, .	Kilbride ,, (part of),	96	...	...	...	...	...	
	58	,,	,,	,,	,, ,,	...	...	...	171	...	...	
					Carry forward, . .	3,602	90,260	221	9,491	1,220	100,894	

BOOK OF REFERENCE TO MAPS SHOWING LANDS SCHEDULED—(2) COUNTY OF INVERNESS—(*continued*).

No. of Sheet.	No. of Scheduled Land on Sheet.	Proprietor.	Estate.	Parish.	Description.	Extent of Land Scheduled.						Remarks.
						Yellow.		Pink.		Brown.		
						Old Arable.	Pasture.	Old Arable.	Pasture.	Old Arable.	Pasture.	
					Brought forward, . .	Acres. 3,602	Acres. 90,260	Acres. 221	Acres. 9,491	Acres. 1,220	Acres. 100,894	
LXIX.	59	Lady Emily Steele Pringle Gordon Cathcart,	South Uist, .	South Uist, .	South Boisdale Grazings, .	...	...	66	4,409	...	...	The Commissioners in the course of their inquiries in South Uist ascertained that this Island was in a congested condition, while they found on these farms a considerable extent of land available for new holdings, or for extensions of existing holdings; but from the character and situation of the land scheduled, it was impracticable to separate the hill grazings from the low ground, and the Commissioners have therefore felt it necessary to schedule the whole of these farms, although there were certain portions of land under cultivation.
	60	,,	,,	,,	Eilean Iasgaich ,, . .	...	...	...	108	...	...	
	61	,,	,,	,,	Milton ,, . . .	858	12,833	...	...	...	...	
	62	,,	,,	,,	Bornish ,, . . .	749	767	...	...	...	...	
	63	,,	,,	,,	Ormiclette ,, . . .	1,516	7,845	...	...	...	...	
LXIX. and LXXIX.	64	,,	,,	,,	Drimsdale ,, (part of),	...	...	45	9,560	...	...	
	65	,,	,,	,,	,, ,, ,,	581	63	...	...	...	...	
LXXIX.	66	,,	,,	,,	Geirinish ,, ,,	...	...	16	2,103	...	...	
	67	,,	,,	,,	,, ,, ,,	646	178	...	...	...	...	
	68	,,	,,	,,	Nunton Grazings (on North-east side of Benbecula),	...	...	34	1,686	...	...	
	69	Sir John W. P. Campbell Orde, Bart.,	North Uist, .	North Uist, .	Grimsay Island Grazings (part of)	...	...	57	285	...	...	
	70	,,	,,	,,	Knock-cuithean ,,	69	216	...	...	...	...	
	71	Colin Ridley Campbell Orde, .	,,	,,	Liernish and Eval ,, (part of),	42	696	...	...	...	...	
	72	Sir John W. P. Campbell Orde, Bart.,	,,	,,	Island of Kirkabost and Eilean Mor Grazings,	223	319	...	...	...	...	
	73	,,	,,	,,	Island of Vorogay Grazings, .	30	7	...	...	...	...	
	74	,,	,,	,,	Vacant Crofts at Claddach Kirkabost,	59	8	...	...	...	...	
					Carry forward, . .	8,375	113,192	439	27,642	1,220	100,894	

BOOK OF REFERENCE TO MAPS SHOWING LANDS SCHEDULED—(2) COUNTY OF INVERNESS—(*continued*).

No. of Sheet.	No. of Scheduled Land on Sheet.	Proprietor.	Estate.	Parish.	Description.	Extent of Land Scheduled.						Remarks.
						Yellow.		Pink.		Brown.		
						Old Arable.	Pasture.	Old Arable.	Pasture.	Old Arable.	Pasture.	
						Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	
					Brought forward, . .	8,375	113,192	439	27,6 2	1,220	100,894	
LXXIX.	75	Sir John W. P. Campbell Orde, Bart.,	North Uist, .	North Uist, .	Vacant Crofts at Claddach Kirkabost,	30	10	...	...	...	...	
	76	,,	,,	,,	Breinish and Cainish Grazings (North side Loch Efort), .	26	1,203	...	...	...	...	
LXXXVIII.	77	Alexander Macdonald, . .	Balranald, .	,,	Balranald Grazings (part of). (Paiblesgarry),	396	53	...	...	...	...	Found necessary to include certain portions of land under cultivation within this area.
LXXXIX.	78	Sir John W. P. Campbell Orde, Bart.,	North Uist, .	,,	Lee Grazings (part of), . .	24	1,861	...	...	...	...	
	79	,,	,,	,,	Lochmaddy Grazing land, .	93	194	...	...	...	...	This land is deemed specially suitable for Fishermens' Holdings, but from the area coloured on the map the Harbour premises and Sites and Yards of existing buildings would fall to be excluded.
	80	,,	,,	,,	,, ,,	109	27	...	...	...	...	
	81	Arthur J. Campbell Orde, .	,	,,	Griminish Grazings, . . .	...	...	30	571	...	...	
	82	,,	,,	,,	,, ,, . .	228	973	...	...	...	...	
	83	Sir John W. P. Campbell Orde, Bart.,	,,	,,	Sollas Grazings (part of), . .	262	656	...	...	...	...	
	84	,,	,,	,,	Grenetote ,, ...	188	1,788	...	...	...	...	
	85	,,	,,	,,	Newton ,, (part of), .	425	1,414	...	...	...	...	Found necessary to include certain portions of land under cultivation within this area.
	86	,,	,,	,,	,, ,, ,, (Islands in Lochmaddy Bay),	...	...	...	490	...	...	
	87	Trustees of Earl of Dunmore, *per* Messrs Dundas & Wilson, C.S.,	South Harris, .	Harris, . .	Islands in Sound of Harris, .	...	...	...	536	...	...	
					Carry forward, . . .	10,156	121,371	469	29,239	1,220	100,894	

BOOK OF REFERENCE TO MAPS SHOWING LANDS SCHEDULED—(2) COUNTY OF INVERNESS—(*continued*).

No. of Sheet.	No. of Scheduled Land on Sheet.	Proprietor.	Estate.	Parish.	Description.	Extent of Land Scheduled.						Remarks.
						Yellow.		Pink.		Brown.		
						Old Arable.	Pasture.	Old Arable.	Pasture.	Old Arable.	Pasture.	
					Brought forward, . .	Acres. 10,156	Acres. 121,371	Acres. 469	Acres. 29,239	Acres. 1,220	Acres. 100,894	
LXXXIX.	88	Sir John W. P. Campbell Orde, Bart.,	North Uist, .	North Uist, .	Newton Grazings (part of), (Screvan and Caolas),	60	744	...	...	...	...	
	89	Trustees of Earl of Dunmore, *per* Messrs Dundas & Wilson, C.S.,	South Harris, .	Harris, . .	Island of Bernera (part of), and Island of Torogay Grazings,	545	1,186	...	...	...	...	
	90	,,	,,	,,	Rodel Grazings (part of), . .	33	2,034	...	...	...	...	The Commissioners found much congestion on the East side of South Harris, while on the West side there exists within the area of these farms a large extent of land suitable for new Holdings. In the schedulings here made it was necessary to include certain portions of land under cultivation.
	91	,,	,,	,,	Hushnish and North Town Grazings (part of),	49	2,153	...	...	...	...	
	92	,,	,,	,,	Scarastaveg Grazings (part of),	130	784	...	...	...	...	
	93	,,	,,	,,	Scarastavore ,, . .	162	2,937	...	...	...	...	
	94	,,	,,	,,	Borvebeg ,, . .	57	1,985	...	...	...	...	
LXXXIX. and XCVIII.	95	,,	,,	,,	Luskentyre Deer Forest (part of),	74	1,294	...	...	...	...	
XCVIII.	96	,,	,,	,,	Taransay Island, . . .	83	3,267	...	...	...	...	
	97	Trustees of the late Sir Edward H. Scott,	North Harris, .	,,	Ardvourlie Deer Forest (part of),	...	...	2	2,890	...	...	
	98	,,	,,	,,	Husinish Point Grazings, . .	...	...	55	1,014	...	...	
XCIX.	99	,,	,,	,,	Ardvourlie Deer Forest (part of),	...	...	...	2,481	...	...	
	100	,,	,,	,,	Seaforth Island, Loch Seaforth,	...	...	...	625	...	...	Half of this area is in the County of Ross, and is the property of Lady Matheson of Lewis.
					Carry forward, . .	11,349	137,755	526	36,249	1,220	100,894	

BOOK OF REFERENCE TO MAPS SHOWING LANDS SCHEDULED—(2) COUNTY OF INVERNESS—(*continued*).

No. of Sheet.	No. of Scheduled Land on Sheet.	Proprietor.	Estate.	Parish.	Description.	Extent of Land Scheduled.						Remarks.
						Yellow.		Pink.		Brown.		
						Old Arable.	Pasture.	Old Arable.	Pasture.	Old Arable.	Pasture.	
					Brought forward, . .	Acres. 11,349	Acres. 137,755	Acres. 526	Acres. 36,249	Acres. 1,220	Acres. 100,894	
LXX.	101	Norman Macleod of Macleod .	Macleod, . .	Bracadale, .	Glenbrittle Grazings (part of Island of Soay), . . .	...	...	...	2,298	...	...	Crofters have at present a right to graze cattle over the whole Island, and the proprietor a concurrent right to graze sheep.
	102	,,	,,	,,	Talisker Grazings (part of Borlan, Folan, and Husdale),	302	3,357	...	...	...	...	
	103	,,	,,	,,	Glenbrittle Grazings (part of), .	245	13,066	...	...	...	...	
	104	,,	,,	,,	Talisker ,, ,, (Fiskavaig, Ardtreck, Fernilea, and Carbost),	230	3,631	...	...	...	...	
	105	,,	,,	,,	Drynoch and Glen-Drynoch Grazings (part of),	219	7,300	...	...	...	...	
LXX. and LXXX.	106	,,	,,	,,	Drynoch and Glen-Drynoch Grazings (Teangamore),	...	...	...	3,315	...	...	Excluding the subjects possessed by the Coillore Cottars, or sub-tenants.
LXXX.	107	,,	,,	Duirinish, .	Feorlig Grazings, . . .	328	3,209	...	...	...	...	
	107A	,,	,,	,,	Island of Harlosh, . . .	...	...	...	75	...	...	
	108	,,	,,	,,	Claigean Grazings (part of), .	...	...	...	1,794	...	...	
	109	,,	,,	,,	,, ,, ,, .	97	4,453	...	...	...	...	
	110	Kenneth Macleod Robertson Macleod of Greshornish,	Orbost, .	,,	Orbost ,, ,, (Varkasaig and Idrigill),	...	3,336	...	...	...	...	
	111	Rev. Hugh Macpherson, . .	Glendale, .	,,	Ollisdale, Dibidale, Lorgill, Ramasaig and Waterstein Grazings,	...	...	289	9,018	...	...	
	112	Nicol Martin, ...	Husabost, .	,,	Husabost Grazings, . . .	...	...	20	3,280	...	...	
					Carry forward, . .	12,770	176,107	835	55,979	1,220	100,894	

BOOK OF REFERENCE TO MAPS SHOWING LANDS SCHEDULED—(2) COUNTY OF INVERNESS—(*continued*).

No. of Sheet.	No. of Scheduled Land on Sheet.	Proprietor.	Estate.	Parish.	Description.	Extent of Land Scheduled.						Remarks.
						Yellow.		Pink.		Brown.		
						Old Arable.	Pasture.	Old Arable.	Pasture.	Old Arable.	Pasture.	
					Brought forward, . .	Acres. 12,770	Acres. 176,107	Acres. 835	Acres. 55,979	Acres. 1,220	Acres. 100,894	
LXXX.	113	Captain Allan Macdonald, .	Waternish, .	Duirinish, .	Ardmore Point, Trumpan, &c., Grazings,	438	2,112	...	...	...	...	A minority of the Commissioners, viz. : — Mr Shaw Stewart, Mr Gordon, and Mr Forsyth, dissented from this scheduling.
	114	,,	,,	,,	,, ,, ,,	...	...	...	1,150	...	...	
	115	,,	,,	,,	Point of Scorr-Horan Grazings,	...	...	...	361	...	...	
	116	,,	,,	,,	Fasach Hill Grazings (part of),	...	...	...	2,973	...	...	
	117	Kenneth Macleod Robertson Macleod,	Greshornish, .	,,	Coishletter ,,	162	3,318	...	...	...	...	
	118	Donald Macdonald, . . .	Lynedale, .	,,	Lynedale Hill ,,	...	...	74	1,952	...	...	
	119	Alexander Macdonald, . .	Treaslan, . .	Snizort, . .	Treaslan Hill ,,	...	...	26	845	...	...	
	120	Lachlan Macdonald, . .	Skaebost, .	,,	Deer Park and Skaebost Grazings,	...	...	36	2,478	...	...	
	121	The Right Honourable Lord Macdonald,	Macdonald, .	,,	Skerinish Grazings, . .	404	4,235	...	...	...	...	
LXXX. and LXXXI.	122	,,	,,	Snizort and Portree,	Scorrybreck ,,	505	15,501	...	...	...	...	A minority of the Commissioners, viz. :—Mr Shaw Stewart, Mr Gordon, and Mr Forsyth, dissented from this scheduling.
LXXX.	123	Trustees of the late George Alexander Baird,	Kilmuir, . .	Snizort, . .	Cuidrach , (part of), .	...	...	65	595	...	...	
	124	,,	,,	,,	Glenconan ,, ,,	...	...	14	1,156	...	...	
LXXX. and XC.	125	,,	,,	,,	,, ,, ,,	154	2,177	...	...	...	...	
XC.	126	,,	,,	Kilmuir, . .	Monkstadt ,, ,,	674	1,650	...	...	...	...	
					Carry forward, . .	15,107	205,100	1,050	67,489	1,220	100,894	

BOOK OF REFERENCE TO MAPS SHOWING LANDS SCHEDULED—(2) COUNTY OF INVERNESS—(*continued*).

No. of Sheet.	No. of Scheduled Land on Sheet.	Proprietor.	Estate.	Parish.	Description.	Extent of Land Scheduled.						Remarks.
						Yellow.		Pink.		Brown.		
						Old Arable.	Pasture.	Old Arable.	Pasture.	Old Arable.	Pasture.	
					Brought forward,	Acres. 15,107	Acres. 205,100	Acres. 1,050	Acres. 67,489	Acres. 1,220	Acres. 100,894	
XC.	127	Trustees of the late George Alexander Baird,	Kilmuir,	Kilmuir,	Sartle Grazings (part of),	...	...	38	3,550	...	...	
	128	,,	,,	,,	Duntulm ,, ,,	...	...	123	1,615	...	...	
	129	,,	,,	,,	Floddigarry ,, ,,	...	...	21	1,467	...	...	
LXI. and LXXI.	130	The Right Honourable Lord Macdonald,	Macdonald,	Sleat	Tormore ,, ,, (Gillean and Caradale),	...	...	69	2,806	...	...	
LXXI.	131	,,	,,	,,	Ostaig Grazings (part of),	...	...	...	1,304	...	...	
	132	,,	,,	,,	Knock ,, ,,	...	...	10	307	...	...	
	133	,,	,,	,,	Ord ,, ,,	...	...	...	1,255	...	...	
	134	,,	,,	,,	Duisdale-more Grazings,	...	...	11	1,028	...	...	
	135	,,	,,	,,	Kinloch Grazings (part of),	...	...	7	1,973	...	...	
	136	,,	,,	Strath,	Kyle ,, ,,	...	...	221	4,243	...	...	
	137	,,	,,	,,	Suishnish and Boreraig Grazings,	183	2,761	...	...	...	...	
	138	,,	,,	,,	Old Corry Grazings,	153	3,642	...	...	...	...	
	139	,,	,,	,,	Island of Pabbay ,,	182	146	...	...	...	...	
	140	,,	,,	,,	Strolomus ,, (part of),	...	...	7	466	...	...	
	141	,,	,,	,,	Sconser Deer Forest ,,	...	...	...	896	...	...	
	142	Trustees of the late Sir William Mackinnon,	Strathaird,	,,	Strathaird Grazings (part of), (Glasnakille),	...	...	27	1,778	...	...	
	143	,,	,,	,,	,, ,, ,, Faoileann,	9	491	...	...	...	...	
					Carry forward,	15,634	212,140	1,584	90,177	1,220	100,894	

BOOK OF REFERENCE TO MAPS SHOWING LANDS SCHEDULED—(2) COUNTY OF INVERNESS—(*continued*).

No. of Sheet.	No. of Scheduled Land on Sheet.	Proprietor.	Estate.	Parish.	Description.	Extent of Land Scheduled.						Remarks.
						Yellow.		Pink.		Brown.		
						Old Arable.	Pasture.	Old Arable.	Pasture.	Old Arable.	Pasture.	
						Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	
					Brought forward, . .	15,634	212,140	1,584	90,177	1,220	100,894	
LXXI.	144	The Right Honourable Lord Macdonald,	Macdonald .	Strath, . .	Scalpay Island Grazings (part of),	...	...	...	5,890	...	...	
	145	,,	,,	,,	Island of Longay Grazings, .	...	...	...	125	...	...	
LXXI. and LXXXI.	146	Mrs Evelyn Annie Wood, .	Raasay, . .	Portree, . .	Suisnish, Feerns and Hallaig Grazings,	238	3,233	...	...	...	...	
LXXXI.	147	,,	,,	,,	Manish Grazings, &c., . .	...	...	...	2,927	...	...	
LXXI.	148	Robert Birkbeck, 20 Berkeley Square, London,	Arnisdale, .	Glenelg, . .	Arnisdale Deer Forest (part of),	...	...	...	580	...	...	
	149	James Evan Bruce Baillie of Dochfour,	Glenelg, . .	,,	Eileanrioch Grazings (part of) (Rarsaidh),	...	...	...	676	...	...	
	150	,,	,,	,,	,, ,, ,, (Sandaig),	10	832	...	...	...	...	
	151	,,	,,	,,	Kirkton ,,	...	...	...	719	...	...	
	152	,,	,,	,,	Balvraid ,,	...	...	...	...	13	1,104	
LXXI. and LXXII.	153	,,	,,	,,	Scallasaig ,	...	...	...	...	59	5,349	
LXXII.	154	,,	,,	,,	Beolary ,,	85	6,036	...	...	...	...	A minority of the Commissioners, viz. :—Mr Shaw Stewart, Mr Gordon, and Mr Forsyth, dissented from this scheduling.
LXXII. and LXXIII.	155	Mrs Annie Cecilia Chisholm of Chisholm,	Chisholm, .	Kilmorack, .	Knockfin Deer Forest (part of),	...	...	...	...	123	5,564	
LXXIII.	156	Trustees of the late Edward Ellice,	Glengarry and Glenquoich,	Boleskine and Abertarff,	Leek Grazings ,,	73	767	...	...	...	...	
	157	Martin K. Angelo, . . .	Cullochy, .	,,	Coultry ,, ,,	87	925	...	...	...	...	
					Carry forward, . .	16.127	223,933	1,584	101,094	1,415	112,911	

No. of Sheet.	No. of Scheduled Land on Sheet.	Proprietor.	Estate.	Parish.	Description.	Extent of Land Scheduled.						Remarks.
						Yellow.		Pink.		Brown.		
						Old Arable.	Pasture.	Old Arable.	Pasture.	Old Arable.	Pasture.	
						Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	
					Brought forward, . .	16,127	223,933	1,584	101,094	1,415	112,911	
LXXIII.	158	The Right Hon. Lord Lovat, .	Lovat, . .	Boleskine, and Abertarff, .	Inchnacardoch Deer Forest (part of),	214	7,331	...	...	...	...	Found necessary to include certain portions of cultivated land within this area.
	159	,,	,,	,,	Glendoe Deer Forest (part of), and Borlum Grazings (part of),	72	2,876	...	...	...	...	
	160	Iain Robert James Murray Grant of Glenmoriston,	Knockie, . .	,,	Knockie Deer Forest (part of)),	...	2,438	...	...	...	...	
	161	John Charles Cunningham, .	Foyers, . .	,,	Compass Grazings (part of), .	21	2,345	...	...	...	...	
	162	The Right Hon. Lord Lovat, .	Lovat, . .	,,	Garthmore ,, . . .	76	1,897	...	...	...	...	
	163	,,	,,	,,	Migovie ,, (part of), .	49	1,721	...	...	...	...	
	164	Iain Robert James Murray Grant,	Glenmoriston, .	Urquhart and Glenmoriston	Wester Inverwick Grazings (part of),	...	...	40	1,846	...	...	
	165	,,	,,	,,	Easter Inverwick Deer Forest (part of),	53	1,581	...	...	...	...	
	166	,,	,,	,,	Invermoriston Deer Forest (part of),	...	...	22	3,208	...	...	
	167	Countess Dowager of Seafield, .	Glenurquhart, .	,,	Balmacaan Deer Forest (part of),	...	...	...	2,073	...	...	
	168	,,	,,	,,	Clunemore Grazings (part of), .	...	...	...	636	...	...	
	169	John Charles Cunningham, .	Foyers, . .	Dores, . .	Gorthlick ,, ,, .	40	85	...	...	...	...	
	170	,,	,,	Daviot, . .	Wester Aberchalder Grazings (part of),	29	428	...	...	...	...	
	171	Captain James Wilson Fraser, .	Farraline, .	Dores, . .	Farraline Grazings (part of), (Ballindalloch),	19	200	...	...	...	...	
	172	,,	,,	,,	,,	26	572	...	...	...	...	
	173	,,	,,	,,	Dunchea Grazings, . . .	69	767	...	...	...	...	
					Carry forward, . .	16,795	246,174	1,646	108,857	1,415	112,911	

BOOK OF REFERENCE TO MAPS SHOWING LANDS SCHEDULED—(2) COUNTY OF INVERNESS—(*continued*).

No. of Sheet.	No. of Scheduled Land on Sheet.	Proprietor.	Estate.	Parish.	Description.	Extent of Land Scheduled.						Remarks.
						Yellow.		Pink.		Brown.		
						Old Arable.	Pasture.	Old Arable.	Pasture.	Old Arable.	Pasture.	
					Brought forward, . .	Acres. 16,795	Acres. 246,174	Acres. 1,646	Acres. 108,857	Acres. 1,415	Acres. 112,911	
LXXIII.	174	Geo. Auldjo Jamieson, C.A., Trustee on the Estate of Evan Charles Sutherland of Skibo,	Aberarder,	Daviot, . .	Aberarder and Glenbeg Grazings (part of),	126	1,592	...	...	...	...	
	175	Captain Charles Duncan Stewart,	Brin, . .	,,	Tulloch Grazings, . . .	67	928	...	...	...	...	
	176	James Stirling Guthrie, . .	Flichity, . .	,,	Flichity ,, (part of), .	78	11	...	...	...	...	
LXXIV.	177	Alfred D. Mackintosh of Mackintosh,	Mackintosh. .	Moy and Dalarossie,	Coignafern Deer Forest (part of),	48	785	...	...	...	...	
	178	Campbell Keir Mackintosh .	Dalmigavie, .	,,	Dalmigavie Grazings (part of), .	...	1,065	...	...	...	...	
	179	Sir John Fowler, Bart., of Braemore,	Glenmazeran, .	,,	Glenmazeran Deer Forest (part of),	...	...	...	...	8	1,281	
	180	Edward Fairfax Studd, Oxton House, Exeter,	Banchor, . .	,,	Strathnoon Grazings, . .	...	...	...	...	70	2,885	
	181	His Grace the Duke of Richmond and Gordon,	Gordon, . .	Abernethy, .	Glenmore Deer Forest, . .	...	...	...	...	7	11,837	A minority of the Commissioners, viz.:—Mr Shaw Stewart, Mr Gordon, and Mr Forsyth, dissented from the scheduling of Glenmore and Abernethy. The area scheduled is exclusive of land under planted wood.
	182	Countess Dowager of Seafield, .	Seafield . .	,,	Abernethy Deer Forest (part of),	79	3,456	...	...	...	...	
	183	,,	,,	,,	,, ,, ,, (Bogleckynack),	11	49	...	...	...	...	
	184	,,	,,	,,	Remainder of Abernethy Deer Forest,	...	...	18	17,688	...	...	
LXXXIII.	185	The Right Hon. Lord Lovat, .	Lovat, . .	Kilmorack, .	Struy Deer Forest (part of), .	...	...	...	...	7	2,079	
	186	,,	,,	,,	,, ,, .	...	...	...	...	39	7,583	
	187	Mrs Annie Cecilia Chisholm of Chisholm,	Chisholm, .	Kiltarlity, .	Erchless Deer Forest, . .	...	...	...	...	...	7,147	
	188	The Right Hon. Lord Lovat, .	Lovat, . .	Kilmorack, .	Farley Deer Forest (part of), .	...	...	10	601	...	...	
LXXXIV.	189	Henry Sheldon Craddock Smithson of Lentran,	Faillie, . .	Daviot, . .	Faillie Grazings, . . .	355	1,890	...	...	...	...	
					Total, . .	17,559	255,950	1,674	127,146	1,546	145,723	

BOOK OF REFERENCE TO MAPS SHOWING LANDS SCHEDULED—(3) COUNTY OF ROSS AND CROMARTY.

No. of Sheet.	No. of Scheduled Land on Sheet.	Proprietor.	Estate.	Parish.	Description.	Extent of Land Scheduled.						Remarks.
						Yellow.		Pink.		Brown.		
						Old Arable.	Pasture.	Old Arable.	Pasture.	Old Arable.	Pasture.	
						Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	
LXXI.	1	Sir Kenneth James Matheson, Bart.,	Lochalsh,	Glenshiel,	Ardintoul Grazings (part of),	...	...	...	158	...	...	
	2	,,	,,	,,	Glas-Eilean, ,, ,,	...	...	...	33	...	...	
	3	,	,,	Lochalsh,	Auchtertyre, ,, ,,	...	...	...	111	...	...	
	4	,	,,	,,	Balmacara, ,, ,,	...	...	22	68	...	...	
	5	,	,,	,,	,, ,, ,,	...	...	...	577	...	...	
	6	,,	,,	,,	Fernaig, , ,,	...	...	...	476	...	...	
LXXI. and LXXII.	7	,	,,	,,	Conchra, , ,	38	1,981	...	...	...	...	
LXXII.	8	James Evan Bruce Baillie of Dochfour,	Glenelg,	Glenshiel,	Ratagan, ,, ,,	...	...	8	396	...	...	
	9	,,	,,	,,	,, ,, ,,	...	...	...	...	17	7,534	
	10	Trustees of the late Sir James Thomson Mackenzie, Bart.,	Glenshiel,	,,	Cluny and Achnangart Grazings (part of),	...	...	...	...	157	11,633	
	11	,,	,,	,,	Achnangartand Invershiel Grazings (part of),	...	...	60	2,588	...	...	
	12	,,	,,	,,	Morvich and Innse-chro Deer Forest (part of),	...	...	51	1,586	...	...	
	13	Sir Kenneth James Matheson, Bart.,	Lochalsh,	Kintail,	Keppoch Grazings (part of), (between Public Road and Sea),	11	53	...	...	...	...	
	14	,,	,,	,,	Ruarach Grazings (part of),	...	...	...	953	...	...	
	15	,,	,,	,,	Keppoch ,, ,, (Hill Grazings),	...	...	...	2,041	...	...	
	16	,,	,,	,,	Killilan Grazings (part of),	...	...	...	...	93	5,520	
	17	,,	,,	,,	,, Deer Forest (part of),	...	...	...	...	...	1,608	
					Carry forward,	49	2,039	141	8,987	267	26,295	

BOOK OF REFERENCE TO MAPS SHOWING LANDS SCHEDULED—(3) COUNTY OF ROSS AND CROMARTY—(*continued*).

No. of Sheet.	No. of Scheduled Land on Sheet.	Proprietor.	Estate.	Parish.	Description.	Extent of Land Scheduled.						Remarks.
						Yellow.		Pink.		Brown.		
						Old Arable.	Pasture.	Old Arable.	Pasture.	Old Arable.	Pasture.	
					Brought forward,	Acres. 49	Acres. 2,039	Acres. 141	Acres. 8,987	Acres. 267	Acres. 26,295	
LXXII.	18	Mrs Annie Cecilia Chisholm of Chisholm,	Chisholm,	Kintail,	Longard and Maam Deer Forest (part of),	...	...	...	...	66	13,794	
LXXII. and LXXIII.	19	,,	,,	,,	Coire-nan-cuilean and Coire-buidhe Deer Forest (part of),	...	...	...	...	7	8,367	
LXXI. and LXXXI.	20	Sir Kenneth James Matheson, Bart.,	Lochalsh,	Lochalsh,	Fernaig Grazings (part of),	...	...	...	37	...	...	
LXXXI.	21	Charles James Murray,	Lochcarron,	Lochcarron,	Keraig Grazings (Lochcarron),	56	1,471	...	...	...	...	
	22	,,	,,	Applecross,	Tullich Grazings (part of), Rassal,	...	...	...	...	7	1,466	
LXXXI. and LXXXII.	23	,,	,,	Lochcarron,	Glenmore Grazings (part of),	...	...	...	1,035	...	...	
	24	,,	,,	,,	Tullich ,, ,,	...	...	...	1,184	...	...	
LXXXI.	25	,,	,,	Applecross,	Glenshieldaig Deer Forest ,,	...	...	...	678	...	...	
	26	,,	,,	,,	Rudha-'Rhoin Grazings (part of),	9	715	...	...	...	...	
	27	,,	,,	,,	Glenshieldaig Deer Forest (part of), Balgy,	...	...	5	344	...	...	
LXXXII.	28	Sir Kenneth James Matheson, Bart.,	Lochalsh,	,,	Craigton Grazings (part of), (Iomaire),	...	...	...	576	...	...	
	29	,,	,,	,,	New Kelso ,,	103	3,026	...	...	...	...	
	30	,,	,,	,,	Sail-Riabhach and Beinn Dronnaig Deer Forest,	...	...	...	...	...	12,063	
	31	John Stirling of Fairburn,	Monar,	Urray,	Monar ,, (part of),	...	...	...	...	8	6,336	
					Carry forward,	222	7,251	146	12,891	355	68,261	

BOOK OF REFERENCE TO MAPS SHOWING LANDS SCHEDULED—(3) COUNTY OF ROSS AND CROMARTY—(*continued*).

No. of Sheet.	No. of Scheduled Land on Sheet.	Proprietor.	Estate.	Parish.	Description.	Extent of Land Scheduled.						Remarks.
						Yellow.		Pink.		Brown.		
						Old Arable.	Pasture.	Old Arable.	Pasture.	Old Arable.	Pasture.	
					Brought forward, . .	Acres. 222	Acres. 7,251	Acres. 146	Acres. 12,891	Acres. 355	Acres. 68,261	
LXXXII.	32	Right Honourable Lord Wimborne,	Achnashellach,	Lochcarron, .	Achnashellach Deer Forest (part of),	...	...	...	4,420	...	...	
	33	,,	,,	,,	,, ,, ,,	...	...	...	...	...	1,294	
	34	,,	,,	Lochcarron and Contin,	,, ,, ,,	...	...	...	...	60	5,290	
	35	Hugh Cameron Ross, . .	Ledgowan, .	Contin, . .	Ledgowan Grazings (part of), (Luib),	...	...	...	...	...	1,960	
	36	Richard Henry Combe, . .	Strathconan, .	,,	Coire-a'-bhuic ,, . .	...	...	...	...	54	5,659	
	37	,,	,,	,,	Inver and Camashie Grazings, .	...	...	...	...	...	6,400	
LXXXII. & LXXXIII.	38	,,	,,	,,	Glenmeanie ,,	...	...	...	...	98	4,676	
LXXXII.	39	,,	,,	,,	Caiseachan ,,	...	...	...	...	180	5,882	
	40	Arthur Bignold of Lochrosque,	Strathbran, .	,,	Strathbran ,, (lying between railway and River Bran),	...	...	...	...	161	99	
LXXXIII.	41	Sir William James Bell, Bart.,	Scatwell, .	Urray, . .	Aradie and Camban Deer Forest (part of),	...	...	...	...	3	5,345	
	42	,,	,,	Contin, . .	,, ,, ,, (Glascharn and Curin),	...	...	...	...	24	1,613	
XCI.	43	Sir Kenneth S. Mackenzie, Bart.,	Gairloch, . .	Gairloch, .	Eilean Horrisdale Grazing, .	3	75	...	...	...	...	This scheduling to be deemed exclusive of existing small holdings, and the sites and yards of buildings.
XCI. and XCII.	44	Paul Liot Banks as administrator-at-law for Mrs Mina Ann Liot Banks,	Letterewe, .	,,	Drumchork Grazings (part of), (Hill Pasture),	...	...	...	3,322	...	...	
					Carry forward, . .	225	7,326	146	20,633	935	106,479	

BOOK OF REFERENCE TO MAPS SHOWING LANDS SCHEDULED—(3) COUNTY OF ROSS AND CROMARTY—*(continued)*.

No. of Sheet.	No. of Scheduled Land on Sheet.	Proprietor.	Estate.	Parish.	Description.	Extent of Land Scheduled.						Remarks.
						Yellow.		Pink.		Brown.		
						Old Arable.	Pasture.	Old Arable.	Pasture.	Old Arable.	Pasture.	
					Brought forward, . .	Acres. 225	Acres. 7,326	Acres. 146	Acres. 20,633	Acres. 935	Acres. 106,479	
XCI.	45	Paul Liot Banks as administrator-at-law for Mrs Mina Ann Liot Banks,	Letterewe, .	Gairloch, .	Drumchork Grazings (part of) (hill pasture, low ground),	45	85	...	...	...	...	Found necessary to include certain portions of land under cultivation in this scheduling.
XCII.	46	,,	,,	,,	Little Gruinard Grazings (part of),	...	...	9	1,441	...	...	
XCII. and CI.	47	,,	,,	Lochbroom, .	Fisherfield Deer Forest (part of), Fisherfield and Gruinardgarbh,	...	...	13	3,306	...	...	
XCII.	48	Hugh Mackenzie, . . .	Dundonnell .	,,	Dundonnell Deer Forest (part of),	...	...	...	835	...	...	
XCII. and CI.	49	,,	,,	,,	Kildonan and Keppoch Grazings,	3	1,584	...	...	..	...	
XCII.	50	Sir Arthur George Ramsay Mackenzie, Bart.,	Coul, . .	,,	Inverlael Grazings (part of), .	...	...	39	686	...	...	
XCIII.	51	,,	,, . .	Contin, .	Drumanguish (let at present along with the Deer Forest of Strathvaich),	...	...	...	...	8	1,756	
	52	Charles A. Hanbury, . .	Strathgarve .	,,	Achnancleireach, . . .	46	2,273	...	...	...	...	
LXXXIII. and XCIII.	52A	The Duke of Sutherland, the Marquis of Lorne, and Lady Cromartie, as Curators for Lady Sibell Mackenzie,	Cromartie, .	Fodderty, .	Strath-Sgiathach and Heights of Strathpeffer Grazings,	...	...	6	7,546	...	...	
XCIII.	53	William Dalziel Mackenzie of Fawley Court, Henley-on-Thames,	Brae, . .	,,	Heights of Brae Grazings, .	...	1,013	...	...	...	..	
	54	,,	,,	Dingwall, .	Glensgaich ,,	27	2,260	...	...	...	..	
XCIII.	55	Trustees of Duncan Davidson of Tulloch,	Tulloch, . .	,, .	Hill of Tulloch Grazings, . .	...	...	...	875	...	...	
	56	Major Randle Jackson of Swordale,	Swordale, .	Kiltearn, . .	Clair ,, . .	182	2,582	...	...	...	...	
					Carry forward, . .	528	17,123	213	35,322	943	108,235	

BOOK OF REFERENCE TO MAPS SHOWING LANDS SCHEDULED—(3) COUNTY OF ROSS AND CROMARTY—(*continued*).

No. of Sheet.	No. of Scheduled Land on Sheet.	Proprietor.	Estate.	Parish.	Description.	Extent of Land Scheduled.						Remarks.
						Yellow.		Pink.		Brown.		
						Old Arable.	Pasture.	Old Arable.	Pasture.	Old Arable.	Pasture.	
						Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	
					Brought forward, . . .	528	17,123	213	35,322	943	108,235	
XCIII.	57	R. C. Munro Ferguson, M.P., .	Novar, . .	Alness, . .	Novar Mains Grazings (part of) (Kinloch),	53	2,252	...	...	...	...	
	58	,,	,,	,,	Novar Grazings (part of), lying behind the Crofting Township of Boath, . . .	36	2,703	...	...	...	...	
XCIII. and XCIV.	59	Sir Charles A. F. Ross, Bart., .	Balnagown, .	Edderton, .	Admiral's Farm and Casandamff Grazings,	124	658	...	...	...	...	
XCIV.	60	William Macfie of Clermiston, Corstorphine, Mid-Lothian,	Edderton, .	Edderton and Tain,	Bogrow and Lairgs of Tain Grazings,	58	230	...	...	...	...	
	61	,,	,,	,,	Edderton Hill and Hill of Tain Grazings,	...	...	...	1,853	...	...	
	62	Roderick Scott, solicitor, Inverness,	Grantfield, .	Tain, . .	Grantfield Grazings, . . .	12	45	...	...	...	...	
	63	Alex. Mackay, Hilton, Tain, .	Kingscauseway,	Tain, . .	Kingscauseway ,, (part of), .	49	...	...	...	...	...	
	64	R. B. Æ. Macleod, . .	Cadboll, . .	,,	Balcherry ,, . . .	192	1,033	...	...	...	...	
CI.	65	Alfred Hugh Mackenzie Catton of Gruinard,	Gruinard and Mungasdale,	Lochbroom, .	Gruinard Island Grazings, .	77	391	...	...	...	...	
	66	,,	,,	,,	Gruinard Deer Forest (part of Mungasdale),	76	57	...	...	...	...	
XCII. and CI.	67	,,	,,	,,	,, ,, ,,	...	...	...	1,485	...	...	
CI.	68	Duke of Sutherland, Marquis of Lorne and Lady Cromartie, Curators for Lady Sibell Mackenzie of Cromartie,	Cromartie (Coigach) .	Lochbroom, .	Island of Glas-leac-mor Grazings,	...	...	...	61	...	...	
	69	,,	,,	,,	Eilean Mullagrach ,,	...	...	...	82	...	...	
	70	,,	,,	,,	Badentarbert ,,	...	...	155	1,145	...	...	
					Carry forward, . .	1 205	24,492	368	39,948	943	108,235	

BOOK OF REFERENCE TO MAPS SHOWING LANDS SCHEDULED—(3) COUNTY OF ROSS AND CROMARTY—(*continued*).

No. of Sheet.	No. of Scheduled Land on Sheet.	Proprietor.	Estate.	Parish.	Description.	Extent of Land Scheduled.						Remarks.
						Yellow.		Pink.		Brown.		
						Old Arable.	Pasture.	Old Arable.	Pasture.	Old Arable.	Pasture.	
						Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	
					Brought forward, . .	1,205	24,492	368	39,948	943	108,235	
CI.	71	Duke of Sutherland, Marquis of Lorne, and Lady Cromartie as Curators for Lady Sibell Mackenzie of Cromartie,	Cromartie (Coigach),	Lochbroom, .	Langwell Grazings (part of), (lying west of County Road, near Drumruinie Lodge),	...	...	...	395	...	...	
	72	,,	,,	,,	Langwell (Strathcanaird) Grazings (part of),	196	6,397	...	...	...	...	
	73	,,	,,	,,	Inverpolly Grazings (part of), .	...	...	...	3,202	...	...	
	74	,,	,,	,,	Drumruinie Deer Forest ,, .	...	...	...	247	...	...	
CII.	75	,,	,,	Kincardine, .	Rhidorroch Deer Forest ,, (Drumvaich),	...	...	...	...	20	1,073	
	76	Sir Charles A. F. Ross, Bart., .	Balnagown, .	,,	Forest Farm Grazings (part of),	...	...	...	...	3	3,621	
	77	,,	,,	,,	,, ,, ,, (Tigh-na-luibe-riabhaich),	...	...	...	...	39	912	
	78	,,	,,	,,	,, ,, ,, (Luberoy and Oykell),	...	...	...	...	50	3,055	
	79	,,	,,	,,	,, ,, ,, (Craggan),	...	...	...	...	7	1,328	
	80	,,	,,	,,	,, ,, ,, (Upper and Lower Letters),	...	...	...	...	11	3,358	
	81	,,	,,	,,	,, ,, ,, (Amat),	...	...	...	...	30	2,082	
	82	,,	,,	,,	Langwell (Strathoykell) Grazings (part of),	...	...	...	1,414	...	...	
	83	,,	,,	,,	Forest Farm Grazings (part of), (Lub-choinnich),	...	...	...	...	111	2,939	
	84	,,	,,	,,	,, ,, ,, (Lub-na-meinne &c.),	...	...	...	...	62	3,101	
					Carry forward, . .	1,401	30,889	368	45,206	1,276	129,704	

BOOK OF REFERENCE TO MAPS SHOWING LANDS SCHEDULED—(3) COUNTY OF ROSS AND CROMARTY—(*continued*).

No. of Sheet.	No. of Scheduled Land on Sheet.	Proprietor.	Estate.	Parish.	Description.	Extent of Land Scheduled.						Remarks.
						Yellow.		Pink.		Brown.		
						Old Arable.	Pasture.	Old Arable.	Pasture.	Old Arable.	Pasture.	
						Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	
					Brought forward, . .	1,401	30,889	368	45,206	1,276	129,704	
CII.	85	Sir Charles A. F. Ross, Bart., .	Balnagown, .	Kincardine, .	Forest Farm Grazings (part of), (Glaschoille),	...	...	...	...	63	2,200	
	86	,,	,,	,,	,, ,, ,, (Croick),	...	...	...	...	97	1,682	
	87	,,	,,	,,	Braelangwell Grazings, . .	57	3,632	...	...	...	...	
	88	R. S. W. Sitwell, Stainsby House, Smalley, Derby, .	Strath Kyle, .	,,	Achnahanait and Achnagart Grazings,	...	...	...	3,014	...	...	
	89	George B. Hadwen, . . .	Rhelonie, .	,,	Rhelonie Grazings, . . .	...	...	...	2,820	...	...	
XCVIII. XCIX. CIV. CV.	90*	Lady Matheson, . .	Lewis, . .	Uig, . .	Morsgail Deer Forest,* . .	...	...	...	13,020	...	...	
XCIX.	91*	,,	,,	Lochs, . .	Aline* ,, . .	...	...	119	8,307 *	...	...	
	92*	,,	,,	,,	Park* ,, . .	...	...	165	40,135	...	...	
	93	,,	,,	,,	Stiomrabhagh Grazings, . .	107	3,083	...	...	...	..	
	94	,,	,,	,,	Eilean Chalum Chille ,,	17	203	...	...	...	...	
	95	,,	,,	,,	Crobeag ,,	29	126	...	...	...	...	
	96	,,	,,	,,	Eilean Orasaigh and Eilean Rosaidh.	...	90	...	...	...	...	
CIV.	97	,,	,,	Uig, . .	Mangursta Grazings, . .	42	2,620	...	...	...	..	
	98	,,	,,	,,	Carnis ,, (part of), .	30	628	...	...	...	...	
	99	,,	,,	,,	Tuimsgearraidh Grazings, .	70	1,518	...	...	...	...	
	100	,,	,,	,,	Reef ,, . .	93	451	...	...	...	...	
CIV. & CV.	101	,,	,,	,,	Scaliscro Deer Forest, . .	...	...	60	1,825	...	...	
					Carry forward, . .	1,846	43,240	712	114,327	1,436	133,586	

* The Commissioners deem it right to explain that they have scheduled these Forests (Nos. 90, 91 and 92) in respect of the exceptional circumstance of the case. They have abstained from scheduling similar lands on the Mainland. They do not believe that the lands now scheduled are suitable for new Holdings; but were these lands occupied as common pasture by the Crofters, under a properly adjusted system of management, their occupation would be of much advantage to the occupants and more than outweigh any disadvantages or supposed disadvantages otherwise arising. In considering the case of Lewis, it cannot be left out of view that the congestion is very great, and the demand by Crofters for access to the lands now scheduled is of a very urgent nature. The Commissioners recognise that in the event of these lands or any considerable portion thereof being assigned, such rents as are presently obtainable will probably not be got, and that there may be accordingly a corresponding increase of rates upon other parts of the Island.

BOOK OF REFERENCE TO MAPS SHOWING LANDS SCHEDULED—(3) COUNTY OF ROSS AND CROMARTY—(*continued*).

No. of Sheet.	No. of Scheduled Land on Sheet.	Proprietor.	Estate.	Parish.	Description.	Extent of Land Scheduled.						Remarks.
						Yellow.		Pink.		Brown.		
						Old Arable.	Pasture.	Old Arable.	Pasture.	Old Arable.	Pasture.	
						Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	
					Brought forward, . .	1,846	43,240	712	114,327	1,436	133,586	
XCIV. & CV.	102	Lady Matheson, . . .	Lewis, . .	Uig, . .	Linshader Grazings, . .	152	10,977	...	...	...	...	
CV.	103	,,	,,	Barvas, . .	Dalbeag ,, (part of), .	78	1,795	...	...	...	...	
	104	,,	,,	Stornoway, .	Arnish Deer Forest (part of), .	42	163	...	...	...	...	
	105	,,	,,	,,	Aignish Grazings (part of), .	...	...	82	57	..	...	
	106	,,	,,	,,	,, ,, ,,	85	...	...	...	...	...	
	107	,,	,,	,,	Melbost ,, ,,	...	...	74	...	...	...	
	108	,,	,,	,,	Goathill ,, ,,	...	...	49	29	..	..	
	109	,,	,,	,,	Tunga ,, ,, (Gearraidh-Scoir),	...	...	10	216	...	...	
	110	,,	,,	,,	Coll Grazings ,, (South side),	...	...	106	620	...	...	
	111	,,	,,	,,	Coll Grazings ,, (North side),	...	...	...	816	...	...	
	112	,,	,,	,,	Gress Grazings ,, .	181	3,579	...	...	...	...	
	113	,,	,,	,,	Tolsta ,, ...	...	3,035	...	...	...	...	
CXI.	114	,,	,,	Barvas, . .	Galson ,, ...	692	5,248	...	...	...	...	
					Total, . .	3,076	68,037	1,033	116,065	1,436	133,586	

BOOK OF REFERENCE TO MAPS SHOWING LANDS SCHEDULED—(4) COUNTY OF SUTHERLAND.

No. of Sheet.	No. of Scheduled Land on Sheet.	Proprietor.	Estate.	Parish.	Description.	Extent of Land Scheduled.						Remarks.
						Yellow.		Pink.		Brown.		
						Old Arable.	Pasture.	Old Arable.	Pasture.	Old Arable.	Pasture.	
						Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	
CI.	1	His Grace the Duke and Earl of Sutherland,	Sutherland,	Assynt,	Glencanisp Deer Forest (part of),	...	...	...	728	...	...	
	2	,,	,,	,,	,, ,, ,, (Ledbeg),	9	1,848	...	...	...	...	
	3	,,	,,	,,	Stronechrubie Grazings ,, (Lyne Hirsel),	11	4,218	...	...	...	...	
	4	,,	,,	,,	Ledmore Grazings,	33	3,499	...	...	...	...	
	5	,,	,,	,,	Cromault ,,	...	...	5	3,550	...	...	
CII.	6	Sir Charles A. F. Ross, Bart.,	Balnagown,	Creich,	Invercassley ,, (part of), (Caplich Hirsel),	...	...	...	...	6	2,237	
	7	,,	,,	,,	,, ,, (Wester Turnaig),	...	...	...	...	31	2,571	
	8	,,	,,	,,	,, (Tuiteam Grazings),	...	...	...	...	44	2,347	
	9	,,	,,	,,	,, (Croick Hirsel),	...	...	...	...	125	3,398	
	10	,,	,,	,,	,, (Glenmuick Hirsel),	...	...	...	...	19	4,936	
	11	,,	,,	,,	,, (Dalnaclave Hirsel),	...	...	...	...	18	2,323	
	12	William Ewing Gilmour, Woodbank, Alexandria, Dumbartonshire,	Glencassley,	,,	Glencassley Grazings (part of), (Dailteamhair Hirsel),	...	...	...	...	98	2,942	
	13	,,	,,	,,	,, (Bad-an-t-Sagairt Hirsel),	...	...	...	...	80	4,373	
	14	Lady Matheson of Lewis,	Achany,	Lairg,	Gruids Grazings (part of),	214	1,377	...	...	...	...	
CII. and CVIII.	15	,,	,,	,,	,, ,, ,,	...	...	20	26,862	...	...	
CII.	16	,,	,,	,,	Salachaidh ,, ,,	...	...	...	668	...	...	
	17	,,	,,	,,	,, ,, ,,	62	98	...	...	...	...	
	18	,,	,,	Lairg and Rogart,	Doulay and Craggie Grazings,	250	4,083	...	...	...	...	
					Carry forward,	579	15,123	25	31,808	421	25,127	

BOOK OF REFERENCE TO MAPS SHOWING LANDS SCHEDULED—(4) COUNTY OF SUTHERLAND—(*continued*).

No. of Sheet.	No. of Scheduled Land on Sheet.	Proprietor.	Estate.	Parish.	Description.	Extent of Land Scheduled.						Remarks.
						Yellow.		Pink.		Brown.		
						Old Arable.	Pasture.	Old Arable.	Pasture.	Old Arable.	Pasture.	
					Brought forward,	Acres. 579	Acres. 15,123	Acres. 25	Acres. 31,808	Acres. 421	Acres. 25,127	
CII.	19	His Grace the Duke and Earl of Sutherland,	Sutherland,	Lairg,	Shiness Grazings (part of), (Achadh-a'-Phris),	27	172	...	...	...	...	
	20	,,	,,	,,	Collaboll Grazings (part of),	12	28	...	...	...	...	
	21	,,	,,	,,	Dalchork ,, ,, (three fields next Lairg Glebe),	...	...	36	...	...	...	Scheduled as suitable for additional pasture to the Lairg villagers.
	22	,,	,,	Rogart,	Blarich Grazings (part of), (lying South of Highland Railway),	...	...	29	3,004	...	...	
	23	,,	,,	,,	,, ,, ,, (Rhaoine),	65	341	...	...	...	...	
CII. and CIII.	24	,,	,,	,,	,, ,, ,, (lying East of Tressady Burn),	206	2,017	..	...	...	...	
	25	,,	,,	Dornoch,	Torboll Grazings (part of),	141	7,163	...	...	...	...	
CIII.	26	,,	,,	,,	Cambusavie ,, ,,	5	1,510	...	...	...	...	
	27	,,	,,	,,	,, ,, ,, (next Mound),	...	...	3	417	...	...	
	28	,,	,,	Rogart,	Eden Grazings,	...	...	...	...	95	304	
	29	,,	,,	Golspie,	Morvich ,, (part of), (Aberscross),	5	1,258	...	...	...	...	
	30	,,	,,	Rogart,	Sciberscross ,, ,, (Braigh-Gruideach),	30	2,022	...	...	...	...	
	31	,,	,,	,,	,, ,, ,, (Gruideach),	36	1,574	...	...	...	...	
	32	,,	,,	Clyne,	,, ,, ,, (lying south of River Brora),	...	...	...	...	239	4,055	
					Carry forward,	1,196	31,208	93	35,229	755	29,486	

BOOK OF REFERENCE TO MAPS SHOWING LANDS SCHEDULED—(4) COUNTY OF SUTHERLAND—(*continued*).

No. of Sheet.	No. of Scheduled Land on Sheet.	Proprietor.	Estate.	Parish.	Description.	Extent of Land Scheduled.						Remarks.
						Yellow.		Pink.		Brown.		
						Old Arable.	Pasture.	Old Arable.	Pasture.	Old Arable.	Pasture.	
					Brought forward, . .	Acres. 1,106	Acres. 31,208	Acres. 93	Acres. 35,229	Acres. 755	Acres. 29,486	
CIII.	33	His Grace the Duke and Earl of Sutherland,	Sutherland, .	Clyne,	Gordonbush Grazings (part of), (Pollie Hirsel),	...	...	...	...	45	1,103	
	34	,.	,,	,,	,, ,, ,, (Gobanuisgeach Hirsel),	...	...	...	...	12	4,587	
	35	,,	,,	,,	,, ,, ,, (Ascoile Hirsel),	...	...	...	...	109	3,937	Excluding Lodge and Plantations.
	36	,,	,,	,,	,, ,, ,, (Grianan Hirsel),	...	...	...	...	98	4,111	
	37	,,	,,	,,	Inverbrora Grazings (part of), (Links between Railway and Sea),	...	...	...	82	...	...	
	38	,,	,,	,,	Clynelish Grazings (part of), (two fields near Brora),	...	...	34	...	...	...	Scheduled as suitable for cows' grazings to the Brora villagers.
	39	,,	,,	Loth, . .	Kintradwell Grazings (part of) (South of Kintradwell Burn),	47	73	...	...	...	. .	
	40	,,	,	,,	Crackaig Grazings (part of), (Glensletdale and west side of Glen-Loth),	...	...	...	...	54	5,900	
	41	,,	,,	,,	,, ,, ,, (east side of Glen-Loth),	...	...	...	2,280	...	...	
CIII. and CIX.	42	,,	,,	Kildonan, .	,, ,, ,, (lying south of Helmsdale River),	...	...	36	3,997	...	...	
CIII.	43	,,	,,	Loth, . .	Kilmote Grazings, . . .	...	...	...	357	...	...	
	44	,,	,,	,, . .	Culgower, ,, . .	...	...	...	1,132	...	...	
	45	,,	,,	,,	West Garty ,, . .	...	...	...	1,085	...	...	
					Carry forward, . .	1,153	31,281	163	44,162	1,073	49,124	

BOOK OF REFERENCE TO MAPS SHOWING LANDS SCHEDULED—(4) COUNTY OF SUTHERLAND—*(continued)*.

No. of Sheet.	No of Scheduled Land on Sheet.	Proprietor.	Estate.	Parish.	Description.	Extent of Land Scheduled.						Remarks.
						Yellow.		Pink.		Brown.		
						Old Arable.	Pasture.	Old Arable.	Pasture.	Old Arable.	Pasture.	
					Brought forward,	Acres. 1,153	Acres. 31,281	Acres. 163	Acres. 44,162	Acres. 1,073	Acres. 49,124	
CVII.	46	His Grace the Duke and Earl of Sutherland,	Sutherland,	Assynt,	Island of Soyea Grazings,	...	...	...	58	...	...	
	47	,,	,,	,,	Glencanisp Deer Forest (part of),	...	...	...	254	...	...	
	48	,,	,,	,,	Grazings attached to Lochinver Hotel (part of),	...	...	...	813	...	...	
	49	,,	,,	,,	Oldney Islands,	...	...	...	538	...	...	
	50	,,	,,	,,	Achmore Grazings (part of), (Little Assynt,)	...	...	...	...	9	2,034	
	51	,,	,,	,,	,, ,, ,, (lying South of Loch-an-Leathaid),	...	...	...	1,210	...	...	
	52	,,	,,	,,	Ardvar ,, ,, (Glenleraig),	...	...	...	...	...	3,031	
	53	,,	,,	,,	Achmore ,, ,, (Ardvar Hirsel),	...	...	...	...	17	2,551	
	54	,,	,,	,,	,, ,, ,, (Unapool Hirsel),	10	1,463	...	...	...	...	
	55	,,	,,	,,	,, ,, ,, (Liath-Bhad and Unapool Hirsels),	...	...	...	...	...	2,215	
	56	,,	,,	,,	,, ,, ,, (Achmore Hirsel),	67	2,577	...	...	..	..	
	57	,,	,,	Eddrachilles,	Glendhu Deer Forest (part of), (Duartmore and Callascaig),	...	...	...	...	11	1,477	
	58	,,	,,	,,	Duartbeg Grazings (part of), (Geisgeil),	...	...	...	752	...	...	
					Carry forward,	1,230	35,321	163	47,787	1,110	60,432	

BOOK OF REFERENCE TO MAPS SHOWING LANDS SCHEDULED—(4) COUNTY OF SUTHERLAND—(*continued*).

No. of Sheet.	No. of Scheduled Land on Sheet.	Proprietor.	Estate.	Parish.	Description,	Extent of Land Scheduled.						Remarks.
						Yellow.		Pink.		Brown.		
						Old Arable.	Pasture.	Old Arable.	Pasture.	Old Arable.	Pasture.	
						Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	
					Brought forward, . .	1,230	35,321	163	47,787	1,110	60,432	
CVII.	59	His Grace the Duke and Earl of Sutherland,	Sutherland, .	Eddrachilles, .	Scourie Inn Grazings (part of), (Island of Handa) [Eilean Shannda],	...	776	...	...	...	...	
	60	,,	,,	,,	Scourie Grazings, . . .	...	...	...	3,187	...	...	
	61	,,	,	,,	Reay Deer Forest (part of), (Badnabay),	...	...	...	...	8	1,110	
	62	,,	,,	,,	,, ,, ,, (East of Laxford Bridge),	...	...	...	...	...	2,267	
CVIII.	63	,,	,,	Farr,	Loch-a'-Choire Deer Forest (part of), Glenfearna,	...	...	...	...	14	5,543	
	64	,,	,,	,,	Cleithbric ,, (part of), (Alltnaba and Alltalaird),	...	..	...	...	16	7,032	
	65	,,	,,	,,	,, ,, ,, (Achaneas and Ruigh-na-sealbhaig),	26	7,941	...	..	...	...	
	66	,,	,,	,,	,, ,, ,, (Achaneas and Taobhmor),	...	...	...	...	33	4,777	
CVIII. CIX. CXIV. CIV.	67	,,	,,	,,	Mudale Grazings, . . .	57	7,386	...	..	...	...	
	68	,,	,,	,,	Syre ,, . . .	92	29,524	...	...	...	...	
CVIII. CIX. and CXV.	69	,,	,,	,,	Rhifail ,, (part of), .	135	15,401	...	...	...	...	
CVIII. and CXIV.	70	,,	,,	Durness, . .	Eiriboll ,, ,, (Badna-guine and Foinnebheinn Mhor),	...	...	...	...	53	4,655	
	71	,,	,,	,,	Kinloch Deer Forest (part of), (East side of Strathmore),	145	3,099	...	...	...	...	
					Carry forward, . .	1,685	99,448	163	50,974	1,234	85,816	

BOOK OF REFERENCE TO MAPS SHOWING LANDS SCHEDULED—(4) COUNTY OF SUTHERLAND—(*continued*).

No. of Sheet.	No. of Scheduled Land on Sheet.	Proprietor.	Estate.	Parish.	Description.	Extent of Land Scheduled.						Remarks.
						Yellow.		Pink.		Brown.		
						Old Arable.	Pasture.	Old Arable.	Pasture.	Old Arable.	Pasture.	
						Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	
					Brought forward, . .	1,685	99,448	163	50,974	1,234	85,816	
CVIII. and CXIV.	72	His Grace the Duke and Earl of Sutherland,	Sutherland, .	Tongue, . .	Ribigill Grazings (part of), (Innis-ceann-an-locha),	6	4,078	...	...	...	...	
CIX.	73	,,	,,	Kildonan, .	Borrobol Grazings (part of), (Auchandun Hirsel),	..	...	...	...	40	5,294	
	74	,,	,,	,,	,, ,, ,, (Ceannabheithe Hirsel),	...	...	...	...	53	2,378	
	75	,,	,,	,,	,, ,, ,, (Learable),	...	...	...	...	...	3,264	
	76	,,	,,	,,	,, ,, ,, (Dalcharn Hirsel),	...	...	...	...	69	5,150	
	77	,,	,,	,,	,, ,, ,, (Auchrumisdal),	...	...	...	...	25	5,582	
	78	,,	,,	,,	Baddenloch Deer Forest (part of), (Auchnamoine),	...	...	...	...	55	5,041	
	79	,,	,,	,,	Suisgill Grazings, . . .	7	6,324	...	...	...	...	
	80	,,	,,	,,	Kildonan and Navidale Grazings (part of), (Duible, Torrish and Cille-Pheadair),	70	9,580	...	...	...	...	
	81	,,	,,	,,	Navidale Grazings (part of), (Caen),	...	...	88	3,521	...	...	
	82	,,	,,	,,	Lochside Grazings, . . .	51	5,015	...	...	...	...	
CVII. CXIII.	83	,,	,,	Eddrachilles, .	Skeircha ,, . . .	...	...	4	5,103	...	...	
CXIII.	84	,,	,,	,,	Rhimichie ,, . . .	39	1,796	...	...	...	...	
					Carry forward, . .	1,858	126,241	255	59,598	1,476	112,525	

BOOK OF REFERENCE TO MAPS SHOWING LANDS SCHEDULED—(4) COUNTY OF SUTHERLAND—(*continued*).

No. of Sheet.	No. of Scheduled Land on Sheet.	Proprietor.	Estate.	Parish.	Description.	Extent of Land Scheduled.						Remarks.
						Yellow.		Pink.		Brown.		
						Old Arable.	Pasture.	Old Arable.	Pasture.	Old Arable.	Pasture.	
						Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	
					Brought forward, . . .	1,858	126,241	255	59,598	1,476	112,525	
CXIII.	85	His Grace the Duke and Earl of Sutherland,	Sutherland, .	Eddrachilles, .	Sandwood [Seanabhad] Grazings,	4	2,132	...	...	...	...	
	86	,,	,,	,,	Keoldale ,, (part of), (Strath-na-caillich),	...	...	11	8,419	...	...	
CXIV.	87	,,	,,	Durness, . .	,, ,, ,, (Sithean-mor),	34	565	...	...	...	...	
	88	,,	,,	,,	Baile-na-cille Grazings ,,	...	...	19	3,272	...	...	
	89	,,	,,	,,	Keoldale ,, ,,	...	...	...	613	...	...	
	90	,,	,,	,,	,, ,, ,,	243	...	...	...	...	...	
	91	,,	,,	,,	Baile-na-cille ,, ,,	...	...	...	70	...	...	
	92	,,	,,	,,	,, ,, ,, (Grass Parks),	14	...	...	...	...	...	
	93	,,	,,	,,	,, ,, ,, (east from Baile-na-cille House),	...	...	...	115	...	...	
	94	,,	,,	,,	Eiriboll Grazings (part of), (Polla Hirsel),	...	...	...	6,757	...	...	
CVIII. and CXIV.	95	,,	,,	,,	,, ,, ,, (Ferry Hirsel),	...	...	...	...	19	3,912	
CXIV.	96	,,	,,	,,	,, ,, ,, (An Corr-Eilean),	...	...	33	30	...	...	
	97	,,	,,	,,	,, ,, ,, (Poll-Ath-Roinn, Rudh-a-mhuilt and Heilem),	76	2,111	...	...	...	...	
	98	,,	,,	,,	Melness Grazings (part of), (Inverhope, and Freasgeal),	...	...	16	6,616	...	...	
					Carry forward, . .	2,229	131,049	334	85,490	1,495	116,437	

BOOK OF REFERENCE TO MAPS SHOWING LANDS SCHEDULED—(4) COUNTY OF SUTHERLAND—(*continued.*)

No. of Sheet.	No. of Scheduled Land on Sheet.	Proprietor.	Estate.	Parish.	Description.	Extent of Land Scheduled.						Remarks.
						Yellow.		Pink.		Brown.		
						Old Arable.	Pasture.	Old Arable.	Pasture.	Old Arable.	Pasture.	
					Brought forward,	Acres. 2,229	Acres. 131,049	Acres. 334	Acres. 85,490	Acres. 1,495	Acres. 116,437	
CVIII. and CXIV.	99	His Grace the Duke and Earl of Sutherland,	Sutherland,	Tongue,	Ribigill Grazings (part of), (Leitir-mhor Hirsel),	...	...	...	...	5	2,039	
	100	,,	,,	,,	,, ,, ,, (Scrabster, Folmhaisaite),	...	...	26	3,389	...	...	
CXIV.	101	,,	,,	,,	Borgie Grazings (part of),	7	1,498	...	...	...	...	
CXIV. and CV.	102	,,	,,	Farr,	Achnabourin Grazings (part of),	4	2,643	...	...	...	...	
CXV.	103	,,	,,	,,	Skelpick ,, ,, (Achanellan, &c.),	56	3,452	...	...	...	...	
	104	,,	,,	,,	,, ,, ,, (hill pasture near Loch Meadie),	...	...	...	718	...	...	
CIX. & CXV.	105	,,	,,	,,	Armadale Grazings (part of),	...	...	...	29,294	...	...	
CXV.	106	,,	,,	,,	,, ,, ,, (field near Armadale) (Township),	...	...	10	1	...	...	Scheduled as suitable for the Armadale small tenants.
	107	,,	,,	,,	Bighouse Grazings (part of), (Craggy and Dyke Hirsel),	29	6,037	...	...	...	...	
	108	,,	,,	,,	,, (east side of Halladale River),	11	1,370	...	...	...	...	
	109	,,	,,	,,	,, (Kirkton &c.),	85	3,107	...	...	...	...	
	110	,,	,,	,,	,, (Deasphollag Eadha, and Connagill),	...	2,261	...	...	...	...	
	111	,,	,,	,,	,, (Golval),	5	2,117	...	...	...	...	
					Total,	2,426	154,234	370	118,892	1,500	118,476	

BOOK OF REFERENCE TO MAPS SHOWING LANDS SCHEDULED—(5) COUNTY OF CAITHNESS.

No. of Sheet.	No. of Scheduled Land on Sheet.	Proprietor.	Estate.	Parish.	Description.	Extent of Land Scheduled.						Remarks.
						Yellow.		Pink.		Brown.		
						Old Arable.	Pasture.	Old Arable.	Pasture.	Old Arable.	Pasture.	
						Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	
CIX. and CXV.	1	Sir John G. T. Sinclair, Bart.,	Ulbster, . .	Halkirk, . .	Dalgnalaton Grazings (part of),	...	...	...	...	147	4,750	
	2	,,	,,	,,	Dalnaha ,, ,,	...	...	...	...	58	2,137	
CIX. CX. CXV. and CXVI.	3	,,	,,	,,	Dirlot ,, ,,	150	3,292	...	...	...	...	
CXV.	4	Commissioners of Her Majesty's Woods and Forests, London,	Dorrery, . .	,,	Dorrery ,, ,,	...	...	...	...	...	6,100	
	5	,,	,,	,,	,, ,, (Low ground),	127	827	...	...	...	...	
	6	Trustees of the late James Sinclair of Forss,	Forss, . .	Reay, . .	Brawlbin ,, (Lambsdale),	...	...	...	859	...	...	
	7	Thomas Pilkington, . .	Sandside, .	,,	Shurrary ,, (part of),	...	...	...	374	...	...	
	8	,,	,,	,,	,, ,, ,,	...	...	...	...	...	11,487	
	9	,,	,,	,,	Sandside and Borlum Grazings (part of),	...	...	23	1,057	..	...	
	10	,,	,,	,,	Shebster Grazings, . . .	103	1,014	...	...	...	...	
	11	Sir Robert Charles Sinclair, Bart.,	Murkle, . .	,,	Brubster ,, . . .	66	4,044	...	...	...	...	
	12	,,	,,	,,	Upper Downreay Grazings (part of),	...	...	20	108	...	...	
	13	,,	,,	,,	Skail Grazings (part of), . .	...	...	...	52	...	...	
	14	,,	,,	,,	Lower Downreay Grazings (part of),	...	...	...	67	...	...	
	15	,,	,,	,,	,, ,, ,,	121	42	...	...	...	...	
					Carry forward, . .	567	9,219	43	2,517	205	24,474	

BOOK OF REFERENCE TO MAPS SHOWING LANDS SCHEDULED—(5) COUNTY OF CAITHNESS—(*continued*).

No. of Sheet.	No. of Scheduled Land on Sheet.	Proprietor.	Estate.	Parish.	Description.	Extent of Land Scheduled.						Remarks.
						Yellow.		Pink.		Brown.		
						Old Arable.	Pasture.	Old Arable.	Pasture.	Old Arable.	Pasture.	
					Brought forward, . .	Acres. 567	Acres. 9,219	Acres. 43	Acres. 2,517	Acres. 205	Acres. 24,474	
CXV.	16	Trustees of the late James Sinclair of Forss,	Forss, . .	Halkirk, . .	Forsie Grazings (part of), (Achaeter),	68	1,257	...	...	...	...	
	17	,,	,,	Reay, . .	Carviside Grazings, . . .	24	600	...	...	...	...	
CXV. and CXVI.	18	Trustees of Charles S. J. L. Guthrie of Scotscalder,	Scotscalder, .	Halkirk, . .	Hill of Calder, . . .	51	410	...	...	...	...	
CXV.	19	Commissioners of Her Majesty's Woods and Forests, London,	Stempster, .	Reay, . .	Stempster Grazings (part of), .	10	174	...	...	...	...	
	20	,,	Lythmore, .	Thurso, . .	Lythmore ,, ,, .	28	23	...	...	...	...	
	21	Sir Robert Charles Sinclair, .	Murkle, . .	Reay, . .	Hallam Grazings (part of), .	...	73	...	...	...	...	
	22	Trustees of the late James Sinclair of Forss,	Forss, . .	Thurso . .	Mains of Forss Grazing (part of), (Hill of Forss),	...	380	...	...	...	...	
	23	,,	,,	,,	,, ,, ,,	...	...	...	446	...	...	
CIX. & CX.	24	His Grace the Duke of Portland,	Berriedale, .	Latheron, .	Ousdale Grazings (part of), (Achnacraig),	...	...	51	492	...	...	
CX.	25	Lieut. Edwyn S. A. Sinclair, R.N.,	Freswick, .	,,	Mains of Dunbeath Grazings (part of),	37	249	...	...	...	...	Found necessary to include certain portions of land under cultivation.
	26	,,	,,	,,	,, ,, ,,	...	...	...	69	...	...	
	27	,,	,,	,,	,, ,, ,,	...	...	...	1,548	...	...	
	28	,,	,,	,,	,, ,, ,,	...	...	...	510	...	...	
	29	,,	,,	,,	,, ,, ,, North side of Dunbeath River),	185	9,440	...	...	...	...	
					Carry forward, , ,	970	21,825	94	5,582	205	24,474	

BOOK OF REFERENCE TO MAPS SHOWING LANDS SCHEDULED—(5) COUNTY OF CAITHNESS—(*continued*).

No. of Sheet.	No. of Scheduled Land on Sheet.	Proprietor.	Estate.	Parish.	Description.	Extent of Land Scheduled.						Remarks.
						Yellow.		Pink.		Brown.		
						Old Arable.	Pasture.	Old Arable.	Pasture.	Old Arable.	Pasture.	
						Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	
					Brought forward, . .	970	21,825	94	5,582	205	24,474	
CX. and CXVI.	30	Sir John G. T. Sinclair, Bart.,	Ulbster, . .	Halkirk, . .	Achscorricléte & Croik Grazings,	...	...	...	...	133	6,233	
	31	,,	,,	,,	Dalmore Grazings (part of), (Knockdoo and Dalnacher),	196	2,956	...	...	...	...	
CX.	32	Adam Sharp, . . .	Clyth, . .	Latheron, .	Occumster Grazings (part of), .	...	...	...	13	...	...	
	33	,,	,,	,,	Torravaich ,, . .	56	...	...	...	...	...	
	34	,,	,,	,,	Newlands of Mid-Clyth Grazings,	...	...	88	55	...	..	
CX. & CXVI.	35	Trustees of Leonard Strong of Camster,	Camster, . .	,,	Camster Grazings, . . .	...	...	...	...	85	4,540	
CXVI.	36	Sir Ralph William Anstruther, Bart.,	Balcaskie and Watten,	Watten, . .	Halsary and Torran Grazings, .	...	...	...	...	35	1,660	
	37	His Grace the Duke of Portland,	Watten, . .	,,	Shelton Grazings, . . .	...	...	...	...	41	1,942	
	38	,,	,,	,,	West Watten Grazings (part of),	196	2,399	...	...	...	...	
	39	William Murray Thriepland of Fingask and Toftingall,	Toftingall, .	Halkirk, . .	Dale Grazings (part of), (Achkeepster),	...	...	...	...	...	542	
	40	,,	,,	,,	Spittal Grazings (part of), .	10	30	...	...	...	...	
	41	,,	,,	,,	,, ,, ,,	...	151	...	...	...	...	
	42	Trustees of the late James Williamson,	Banniskirk, .	,,	Banniskirk Grazings (part of), .	...	216	...	...	...	...	
	43	Sir Ralph William Anstruther, Bart.,	Balcaskie and Watten,	Bower and Watten,	Oldhall ,, ,,	260	523	...	...	...	...	Found necessary to include in this scheduling certain portions of land under cultivation.
	44	Sir John G. T. Sinclair, Bart.,	Ulbster, . .	Halkirk, . .	Gerston ,, ,,	80	644	...	...	...	...	
	45	,,	,,	,,	,, ,, ,,	...	79	...	...	...	...	
	46	,,	,,	,,	Skinnet ,, ,,	77	235	...	...	...	...	
	47	,,	,,	Thurso, . .	Aimster ,, ,,	16	20	...	...	...	...	
					Carry forward, . .	1,861	29,078	182	5,650	499	39,391	

BOOK OF REFERENCE TO MAPS SHOWING LANDS SCHEDULED—(5) COUNTY OF CAITHNESS—(*continued*).

No. of Sheet.	No. of Scheduled Land on Sheet.	Proprietor.	Estate.	Parish.	Description.	Extent of Land Scheduled.						Remarks.
						Yellow.		Pink.		Brown.		
						Old Arable.	Pasture.	Old Arable.	Pasture.	Old Arable.	Pasture.	
					Brought forward, . .	Acres. 1,861	Acres. 29,078	Acres. 182	Acres. 5,650	Acres. 499	Acres. 39,391	
CXVI.	48	Thomas Adam, . . .	Lynegar, . .	Watten, . .	Lynegar Grazings (part of), .	58	44	...	...	...	...	
	49	Mrs Ellen Annie Sinclair Wemyss, as Curator for Miss H. Sinclair Wemyss of Southdunn,	Stanstill, . .	Bower, . .	Stanstill ,, ,,	55	260	...	...	...	...	
	50A	Alexander Clyne, . . .	Tister, . .	,,	Tister ,, ,,	...	311	...	...	...	...	
	50	Swarclette Trustees, *per* John Miller of Scrabster,	Swarclette, .	Olrig, . .	Swarclette ,, ,,	124	87	...	...	...	...	
	51	James Christie Traill, . .	Rattar, . .	,,	Lochside ,, ,,	109	...	...	..	...	...	
	52	Francis Tress Barry, M.P., .	Keiss, . .	Wick, . .	Auckhorne ,, ,, (Longreen),	27	36	...	...	...	...	
	53	,,	,,	,,	,, ,, ,, (Moor Pasture),	...	...	...	1,137	...	...	
	54	Lieut. Edwyn S. A. Sinclair, R.N.,	Freswick, .	Canisbay, .	Stroupster Grazings, . .	...	...	88	3,952	...	...	
	55	Frederick Granville Sinclair .	Mey, . .	,,	Brabstermire ,, (part of),	...	583	...	...	...	...	
	56	,,	,,	,,	Hollandmey ,, ,,	...	...	...	420	...	...	
	57	James Christie Traill, . .	Rattar, . .	Dunnet, . .	Lucifer Moss ,,	...	692	...	...	...	...	
	58	,,	,,	,,	Greenland ,, ,,	...	125	...	...	...	...	
	59	,,	,,	,,	,, ,, ,,	...	205	...	...	...	...	
	60	,,	,,	,,	Dunnet Links (part of), . .	...	...	...	368	...	...	
	61	,,	,,	,,	Pasture of Dunnet Head, . .	...	...	...	1,068	...	...	
					Total, . . .	2,234	31,421	270	12,595	499	39,391	

BOOK OF REFERENCE TO MAPS SHOWING LANDS SCHEDULED—(6) COUNTY OF ORKNEY.

No. of Sheet.	No. of Scheduled Land on Sheet.	Proprietor.	Estate.	Parish.	Description.	Extent of Land Scheduled.						Remarks.
						Yellow.		Pink.		Brown.		
						Old Arable.	Pasture.	Old Arable.	Pasture.	Old Arable.	Pasture.	
						Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acr	Acres.	
CXVII.	1	Trustees of J. G. Moodie Heddle of Melsetter,	Melsetter, .	Walls & Flotta,	Melsetter Grazings (part of), .	...	...	...	1,517	...	...	
CXVIII. and CXX.	2	A. M. Sutherland Græme, .	Græmeshall, .	Holm, . .	Græmeshall ,, ,, .	...	...	4	182	...	...	
CXIX.	3	Colonel Balfour and the Trustees of A. J. Fortescue and others,	Brough, &c., .	Orphir, . .	Windhill ,, (Hackla and Grufhill),	...	...	260	2,866	...	...	The ground here under cultivation is already occupied as small Holdings.
	4	W. D. Baikie, ...		Firth & Stennes,	Ethergrass and Burrey Brae Grazings,	...	...	12	476	...	...	
	5	W. D. Baikie and Col. Wm. Cumming,		Firth and St Ola,	Rennibister and Quarterness Grazings (part of),	8	486	...	...	...	...	
	6	Trustees of E. S. Cameron, .	Eynhallow, .	Rousay, . .	Eynhallow Grazings, . . .	...	...	39	133	...	...	
CXIX. and CXXI.	7	General F. W. T. Burroughs, .	Rousay, . .	,,	Westness Grazings (part of), (Quandale),	258	716	...	...	...	...	
CXIX.	8	,,	,,	,,	Trumbland ,, (part of), .	...	...	...	1,333	...	...	
	9	,,	,,	,,	Holm of Skockness Grazings, .	...	...	...	53	...	..	
CXIX. and CXXI.	10	,,	,,	,,	Langskail Grazings (part of), .	...	...	...	268	...	...	
CXX.	11	Trustees of J. G. Moodie Heddle of Melsetter,	Melsetter, .	Stronsay & Eday,	Rothiesholm ,, ,, .	...	954	...	...	...	...	
	12	J. Christie Traill of Rattar,	Housebay, .	,,	Housebay Grazings (part of), (Clett),	432	269	...	...	...	...	Found necessary to include certain portions of land under cultivation in this scheduling.
	13	Col. J. W. Balfour, . . .	Balfour, . .	,,	Whitehall Grazings (part of), (Griceness),	125	11	...	...	...	...	
	14	,,	,,	,,	Huip Grazings (part of) (Huipness),	64	26	...	...	...	...	Found necessary to include certain portions of land under cultivation in this scheduling.
					Carry forward, . .	887	2,462	315	6,828			

BOOK OF REFERENCE TO MAPS SHOWING LAND SCHEDULED—(6) COUNTY OF ORKNEY—(*continued*).

No. of Sheet.	No. of Scheduled Land on Sheet.	Proprietor.	Estate.	Parish.	Description.	Extent of Land Scheduled.						Remarks,
						Yellow.		Pink.		Brown.		
						Old Arable.	Pasture.	Old Arable.	Pasture.	Old Arable.	Pasture.	
					Brought forward, . .	Acres. 887	Acres. 2,462	Acres. 315	Acres. 6,828	Acres. ...	Acres. ...	
CXXI.	15	T. S. Omond, ...	Tirlot, . .	Westray, . . .	Tuquoy Grazings (part of), (Fittyhill),	...	...	5	368	...	...	
	16	Marquis of Zetland, . . .	Zetland, . .	,,	,, ,, ,,	...	...	...	340	...	...	
CXXII.	17	H. C. Hebden, ...	Eday, . .	Stronsay & Eday,	Skaill Grazings (part of), . .	...	...	6	558	...	...	
	18	,,	,,	,,	,, ,, ,,	46	296	...	...	...	...	
	19	,,	,,	,,	Carrick House Grazings (part of),	...	...	30	263	...	...	
	20	J. T. Balfour-Kinnear, . .	Balfour, . .	Cross, Sanday,	Stove ,, ,, (Spur Ness),	147	106	...	...	...	...	
	21	,,	,,	,,	,, ,, ,, (North end),	145	67	...	...	...	...	
	22	Marquis of Zetland, . . .	Zetland, . .	,,	Backaskaill Grazings (part of), .	89	27	...	...	...	...	Found necessary to include certain portions of land under cultivation in this scheduling.
					Total, .	1,314	2,958	356	8,357	...	...	

BOOK OF REFERENCE TO MAPS SHOWING LAND SCHEDULED—(7) COUNTY OF SHETLAND.

No. of Sheet.	No. of Scheduled Land on Sheet.	Proprietor.	Estate.	Parish.	Description.	Extent of Land Scheduled.						Remarks.
						Yellow.		Pink.		Brown.		
						Old Arable.	Pasture.	Old Arable.	Pasture.	Old Arable.	Pasture.	
						Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	
CXXIV.	1	A. J. Grierson, . . .	Quendale, .	Dunrossness, .	Garthbanks Grazings, Garthness and Siggarness,	118	495	...	...	...	...	
	2	,,	,,	,,	Grazings in the angle between Sumburgh Road and Quendale Road,	192	177	...	...	...	...	
CXXVI.	3	John Bruce, ...	Sumburgh, .	,,	Verdifield Grazings, . .	...	...	12	456	...	...	
	4	,,	,,	,,	Noness ,, Sandwick,	...	...	...	120	...	...	
	5	Lieut. Bruce, ...	Burraland, .	,,	Burraland ,, ,,	21	74	...	...	...	...	
	6	John Bruce, ...	Sumburgh, .	,,	Island of Mousa Grazings, ,,	...	...	3	410	...	...	
	7	,,	,,	,,	Cliff, Cunningsburgh (part of), (between Road and Sea),	13	49	...	...	...	...	
	8	,,	,,	,,	Roylfield Cliffs and Hoofield Grazings,	...	...	4	2,269	...	...	
	9	,,	,,	,,	Skeomire, &c., Grazings, . .	23	68	...	...	...	...	
	10	,,	,,	,,	Beolka Park ,, . .	4	...	...	...	...	...	
	11	Marquis of Zetland, . . .	Zetland, . .	Bressay & Quarff,	Quarff ,, . .	...	...	12	142	...	...	
	12	Lewis F. U. Garriock, . .	Scalloway, .	Tingwall, .	West Shore ,, (near Scalloway),	...	...	...	94	...	...	
	13	Arthur J. Hay, Lerwick, . .	Hayfield, .	,,	Veensgarth ,, ,, (Frakkafield, Claycruss and Mosseyhill, east of Public Road via Dales Voe from Veensgarth to Scalloway),	40	1882	...	...	...	...	
CXXVI. and CXXVIII.	14	,,	,,	,,	,, ,, ,, (lying south of the Tingwall and Whiteness Road),	16	381	...	...	...	...	
					Carry forward, . .	427	3,126	31	3,491	...	...	

BOOK OF REFERENCE TO MAPS SHOWING LAND SCHEDULED—(7) COUNTY OF SHETLAND—(*continued*).

No. of Sheet.	No. of Scheduled Land on Sheet.	Proprietor.	Estate.	Parish.	Description.	Extent of Land Scheduled.						Remarks.
						Yellow.		Pink.		Brown.		
						Old Arable.	Pasture.	Old Arable.	Pasture.	Old Arable.	Pasture.	
						Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	
					Brought forward, . .	427	3,126	31	3,491			
CXXVI. and CXXVIII.	15	Arthur J. Hay, Lerwick, .	Hayfield . .	Tingwall, .	Veensgarth Grazings (part of), . (West of Laxfirth Road),	53	107	...	...	...	...	
CXXVI.	16	Miss Annie Cameron Mouat of Bressay,	Gardie, . .	Bressay & Quarff,	Hoversta ,, ,, (Bard Head),	...	...	...	381	...	...	
	17	,,	,,	,,	Maryfield ,, ,, (Uphouse),	36	36	...	...	...	...	
	18	,,	,,	,,	,, ,, ,, (Cruester and Heogan),	20	240	...	...	...	...	
CXXVI. and CXXVIII.	19	,,	,,	,,	Setter ,, ,, (Brecks of Airth, Aithsness, Erneshill, and Scorehead),	48	358	...	...	...	...	
	20	,,	,,	,,	Maryfield ,, ,, (Cullingsburgh and Rulesness),	53	149	...	...	...	...	
	21	,,	,,	,,	,, ,, ,, (Island of Noss),	146	618	...	...	...	...	
CXXVIII.	22	Andrew Leslie, . . .	Laxfirth, . .	Tingwall, .	Laxfirth ,, Hammersland, Scord of Wabister,	101	492	...	...	...	...	
	23	,,	,,	,,	,, ,, ,, (Vatster),	...	...	10	298	...	...	
	24	David Inglis, ...	Flemington, .	,, .	Flemington ,, ,, (South end),	149	464	...	...	...	...	Excluding site of Free Church and Free Church Manse and premises.
	25	,,	,,	,, .	,, ,, ,, (Skurrow and Sandwater),	...	...	19	542	...	...	
	26	,,	,,	,,	,, ,, ,, (Kergord and Waafield),	60	3,012	...	...	...	...	
					Carry forward, . .	1,093	8,602	60	4,712			

BOOK OF REFERENCE TO MAPS SHOWING LAND SCHEDULED—(7) COUNTY OF SHETLAND—(*continued*).

No. of Sheet.	No. of Scheduled Land on Sheet.	Proprietor.	Estate.	Parish.	Description.	Extent of land Scheduled.						Remarks.
						Yellow.		Pink.		Brown.		
						Old Arable.	Pasture.	Old Arable.	Pasture.	Old Arable.	Pasture.	
					Brought forward,	Acres. 1,093	Acres. 8,602	Acres. 60	Acres. 4,712	Acres. ...	Acres. ...	
CXXVIII.	27	The Busta Trustees,	Busta,	Delting,	Marrowfield Grazings,	...	...	14	76	...	...	
	28	,,	,,	,,	Tagon ,, (on the north shore of Olna Firth),	77	96	...	...	...	...	
	29	,,	,,	,,	Clubb of Mulla, Grazings (north shore of Olna Firth),	...	...	...	406	...	...	
	30	,,	,,	,,	Busta Grazings (Houll Ward of Runafirth, Ness of Culsetter and Maidenhaa),	...	...	26	759	...	...	
	31	Robert Hunter Bruce, Amoy, China, per John Bruce of Sumburgh,	Lunna,	Lunnasting,	Vidlin-ness, Southhill of Lunna, Culness, and Muddyloch Grazings,	...	...	57	1,035	...	...	
	32	W. A. Bruce,	Symbister,	Whalsay,	Islands of West Linga, Hunder Holm, Bruse Holm, Little Linga, Score Holm, and Wether Holm,	...	...	2	337	...	...	
	33	,,	,,	,,	Symbister Grazings (part of), (Field at Little Sodom),	...	...	16	1	...	...	
	34	,,	,,	,,	,, ,, ,, (Ward of Clett),	...	...	...	139	...	...	
	35	,,	,,	,,	,, ,, ,, (Islands of East Linga, Grif Skerry, Isbister Holm, Mooa, Nista, and Trota Stack),	...	...	...	89	...	...	
	36	Rev. William M. Cameron,	Garth,	Delting,	Island of Foraness,	...	344	...	...	...	...	
	37	,,	,,	,,	Rugg, Southlee Grazings (lying between the road to Mossbank and sea),	13	206	...	...	...	...	
CXXVIII. and CXXX.	38	,,	,,	,,	Hill of Swinister, Stenswall, and Bordigarth Grazings,	...	...	54	1,554	...	...	
					Carry forward,	1,183	9,248	229	9,108	...	...	

BOOK OF REFERENCE TO MAPS SHOWING LAND SCHEDULED—(7) COUNTY OF SHETLAND—(*continued*).

No. of Sheet.	No. of Scheduled Land on Sheet.	Proprietor.	Estate.	Parish.	Description.	Extent of Land Scheduled.						Remarks.
						Yellow.		Pink.		Brown.		
						Old Arable.	Pasture.	Old Arable.	Pasture.	Old Arable.	Pasture.	
					Brought forward, . .	Acres. 1,183	Acres. 9,248	Acres. 229	Acres. 9,108	Acres. ...	Acres. ...	
CXXX.	39	Rev. William M. Cameron, .	Garth, . .	Delting, . .	Tronaster Grazings, . . .	...	...	...	572	...	...	
	40	,,	,,	,,	Calbackness and Vats of Houllands Grazings,	...	...	...	764	...	...	
	41	Mrs Eliza Russell, . . .	Ollaberry, .	Northmavine, .	Leean, Mugapool, Hill of Ollaberry, and Calfpund Grazings,	50	315	...	...	...	...	
	42	,,	,,	,,	Back of Ollaberry ,,	...	88	...	...	...	...	
	43	Basil H. H. Robertson, . .	Gravehouse, .	Yell, . .	Graveland, Stany Hill, Mass-John's House, and Stuis of Graveland Grazings,	24	1,056	...	...	...	...	
	44	Rev. William. M. Cameron and North of Scotland Bank,	Garth, &c., .	,,	Hill of Windhouse, Little Swart-Houll, Lumbister, Gorset Hill, Clapper, and Vollister Grazings,	31	3,740	...	...	...	...	
	45	Rev. William M. Cameron, .	,,	,,	Halsagarth and Setter Grazings,	27	263	...	...	...	...	
	46	,,	,,	,,	Kirkabister, Dale, and Burraness Grazings,	54	422	...	...	...	...	
	47	Sir Arthur Nicolson, Bart., .	Brough, . .	Fetlar,	Velzie Croft Grazings, . .	22	91	...	...	...	...	
	48	,,	,,	,,	Lamb Hoga ,, . .	...	...	16	1,390	...	...	
	49	,,	,,	,,	Clothin and Tiptoby Grazings,	38	53	...	...	...	...	
	50	,,	,,	,,	Russetter and Mires of Setter, .	...	...	50	152	...	...	
	51	Sir Arthur Nicolson. Bart., and the Marquis of Zetland,	,,	,,	Lands round the Wick of Gruting, Toften, Strand, Gruting, Swart Houll, Mongirsdale, and Busta Hill Grazings,	234	1,148	...	...	...	...	
	52	The Marquis of Zetland, .	Zetland, . .	,,	Hestaness ,, . .	29	155	...	...	...	...	
					Carry forward, .	1,692	16,579	295	11,986	...	...	

BOOK OF REFERENCE TO MAPS SHOWING LAND SCHEDULED—(7) COUNTY OF SHETLAND—(*continued*).

No. of Sheet.	No. of Scheduled Land on Sheet.	Proprietor.	Estate.	Parish.	Description.	Extent of Land Scheduled.						Remarks.
						Yellow.		Pink.		Brown.		
						Old Arable.	Pasture.	Old Arable.	Pasture.	Old Arable.	Pasture.	
					Brought forward, . .	Acres. 1,692	Acres. 16,579	Acres. 295	Acres. 11,986	...	...	
CXXX.	53	Miss Annie Cameron Mouat, .	Gardie, . .	Unst, . .	Clipprigarth Grazings, . .	26	135	...	...	...	...	
	54	,,	,,	,,	Rockfield ,, . .	43	56	...	...	...	...	
CXXXI.	55	,,	,,	,,	Burga Wick, and Framgord Grazings,	60	86	...	...	...	...	
	56	Rev. William M. Cameron, .	Garth, . .	,,	Collaster and Hagdale's Nest Grazings,	32	608	...	...	...	...	
	57	Mrs Ursula Edmonston, . .	Buness, . .	,,	Mailand and Engiston Grazings,	99	695	...	...	...	...	Excluding all ands presently occupied as Crofters' Holdings, if any, within the area scheduled.
	58	Rev. William M. Cameron, .	Garth, . .	,,	Caldback and Watlee Grazings,	50	339	...	...	...	...	Excluding all lands presently occupied as Crofters Holdings, if any, within the area scheduled.
	59	The Marquis of Zetland, .	Zetland, . .	,,	Gerdie Grazings (Hill of Colvadale),	...	...	...	826	...	...	
	60	,, .	,, . .	,,	Upswall Grazing, . . .	108	317	...	...	...	...	Excluding the sites and premises of all curing stations along the shore.
	61	Rev. William M. Cameron, .	Garth, . .	,,	Island of Huney, . . .	...	...	9	28	...	...	
	62	Mrs Ursula Edmonston, . .	Buness, . .	,,	Island of Balta, . . .	...	...	...	207	...	...	
	63	Rev. William M. Cameron, .	Garth, . .	,,	Houlland Grazings, . . .	54	1,427	...	...	...	...	
	64	Mrs Ursula Edmonston, . .	Buness, . .	,,	Cliff ,, (Ness of Queyhouse, North Setter, Croganness, and Dalling),	78	251	...	...	...	...	
	65	,,	,,	,,	Crussafield Hill Grazings .	...	...	...	637	...	...	
	66	,,	,,	,,	Muckle Heog ,, . .	...	...	...	700	...	...	
					Carry forward, . .	2,242	20,493	304	14,384	...	...	

BOOK OF REFERENCE TO MAPS SHOWING LAND SCHEDULED—(7) COUNTY OF SHETLAND—(*continued*).

No. of Sheet.	No. of Scheduled Land on Sheet.	Proprietor.	Estate.	Parish.	Description.	Extent of Land Saheduled.						Remarks.
						Yellow.		Pink.		Brown.		
						Old Arable.	Pasture.	Old Arable.	Pasture.	Old Arable.	Pasture.	
						Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	
					Brought forward, . .	2,246	20,493	304	14,384			
CXXXI.	67	James B. Duncan as factor to the Misses Spence, Auckland, New Zealand,	Spence, . .	Unst, . .	Hamar Grazings (part of) (Keen of Hamar and Swinnaness),	4	287	...	...		...	
	68	Mrs Ursula Edmonstone, . .	Buness, . .	,,	Promontory of Hermaness, Fiska Wick, Hoide, and Lingarth Grazings,	. .	...	33	2,436	...	...	
	69	Rev. William M. Cameron, .	Garth, . . .	,,	Skaw and the Holm of Skaw Grazings,	...	...	31	634	...	..	
					Total, .	2,246	20,780	368	17 454	...	...	

ROYAL COMMISSION (HIGHLANDS AND ISLANDS, 1892).

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE

TAKEN BEFORE THE

ROYAL COMMISSION

(HIGHLANDS AND ISLANDS, 1892).

VOL. I.

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1895.

[C. 7668.]—*Price* 6*s.*

LIST OF WITNESSES.

FIRST SITTING—PORTREE, SKYE, TUESDAY, APRIL 18, 1893.

Name of Witness.	Description.	Question.	Page.
John G. Mackay,	Merchant, Portree,	1	2
Archibald Stewart,	Slignach, Portree,	54	8
Farquhar Macleod,	Labourer, Portree,	71	8
John Nicolson,	Salmon-fisher, Craiglea, Portree,	81	9
Henry Mackay,	Crofter, Sconser, Skye,	131	9
Murdo Macleod,	Crofter, Sconser, Skye,	192	10
John Mackinnon,	Crofter, Sconser, Skye,	210	11
Ronald Nicolson,	Crofter, Island of Rona, Skye,	265	12
Alexander Macswan,	Crofter, Acairseid-thioram, Island of Rona, Skye,	304	12
Ronald Maclennan,	Boatman, Island of Rona, Skye,	332	13
Ronald Gillies,	Crofter, Fladday, Raasay,	368	14
Alexander Gillies,	Crofter, Kyle-Rona, Raasay,	397	14
John Gillies,	Crofter, Torran, Raasay,	437	15
Alexander Gillies,	Crofter, Kyle-Rona, Raasay,	470	15
John Macleod,	Crofter, Braes of Raasay,	492	16
Donald Macrae,	Crofter, Baile-'chuirn, Raasay,	529	17
Murdo Mackenzie,	Crofter, Bailemeanach, Raasay,	532	17
Norman Gillies,	Crofter, Oskaig, Raasay,	565	18
SECOND SITTING—PORTREE, SKYE, WEDNESDAY, APRIL 19, 1893.			
Neil Macleod,	Cottar, Eyre, Snizort, Skye,	568	18
Norman Maclachlan,	Cottar, Kingsburgh, Skye,	733	21
William Beaton,	Cottar, Kensaleyre, Snizort, Skye,	810	23
Neil Shaw,	Crofter, Eyre, Snizort, Skye,	858	23
John Beaton,	Crofter, Eyre, Snizort, Skye,	924	25
John Nicolson,	Army Pensioner, Tote, Skye,	952	25
James Mackintosh,	Factor for Lord Macdonald, Ostaig, Sleat, Skye,	1009	26
John Taylor,	Land Surveyor, Ebost, Skye,	1226	34
Donald Nicolson,	Crofter, Bernisdale, Skaebost, Skye,	1231	34
Archibald Beaton,	Crofter, Aird, Skaebost, Skye,	1247	34
Allan Macleod,	Crofter, Treaslane, Skye,	1275	35
Roderick Macrae,	Crofter, Lynedale, Skye,	1311	35
Donald Stewart,	Crofter, Fanks, Lynedale, Skye,	1359	36
Lachlan Macleod,	Crofter, Flashadder, Lynedale, Skye,	1423	37
John Mackenzie,	Mossbank, Portree, Factor for Lynedale, Skye,	1440	37
Duncan Kelly,	Crofter, Drumuie, Skye,	1502	38
THIRD SITTING—STRUAN, BRACADALE, SKYE, FRIDAY, APRIL 21, 1893.			
Duncan Mackinnon,	Crofter, Struanmore, Bracadale, Skye,	1519	39
Donald Campbell,	Crofter, Struanmore, Bracadale, Skye,	1704	44
Hugh Macdonald,	Fisherman, Struanmore, Bracadale, Skye,	1717	44
Donald Macdonald,	Crofter, Ose, Bracadale, Skye,	1744	45
John Maclean,	Crofter, Ebost, Bracadale, Skye,	1770	45
Donald Maclean,	Cottar, Carbost, Minginish, Skye,	1814	46
" "	" "	1997	49
Alexander Matheson,	Sub-tenant, Carbost, Minginish, Skye,	1901	47
John Campbell,	Cottar, Fiscavaig, Minginish, Skye,	1947	48
John Macaskill,	Cottar, Fernilea, Minginish, Skye,	1979	49
John Tolmie Mackenzie,	Factor for Macleod of Macleod, Dunvegan, Skye,	2003	49

FOURTH SITTING—UIG, SKYE, FRIDAY, APRIL 28, 1893.

Name of Witness.	Description.	Question.	Page.
John Murchison,	Crofter, Glenhaultin, Skye,	2282	56
Donald Macinnes,	Crofter's son, Renetra, Snizort, Skye,	2317	57
James Mackintosh,	Factor for Lord Macdonald, Ostaig, Sleat, Skye,	2326	57
Donald Alexander Clow,	Farmer, Cuidreach, Skye,	2396	59
" "	" "	2588	63
Alexander Lamont, jun.,	Crofter, Keistle, Skye,	2489	61
Alexander Macmillan,	Crofter, Herbusta, Kilmuir, Skye.	2593	63
Murdo Mackinnon,	Crofter, Hungladder, Kilmuir, Skye,	2709	65
John Martin,	Crofter, Upper Bornaskitaig, Kilmuir, Skye,	2776	67
Murdo Gillies,	Crofter, Lower Bornaskitaig, Kilmuir, Skye,	2795	67
John Macpherson,	Cottar, Upper Bornaskitaig, Kilmuir, Skye,	2824	67
John Gillies,	Crofter, Balgown, Kilmuir, Skye,	2873	68
John Graham,	Crofter, Peingown, Kilmuir, Skye,	2891	68
Alexander Macdonald,	Crofter, Kilvaxter, Kilmuir, Skye,	2912	69
Donald Matheson,	Crofter, Kilvaxter, Kilmuir, Skye,	2980	70
Donald Macdonald,	Crofter, Totescore, Kilmuir, Skye,	3042	72
Donald Mackinnon,	Cottar, Linicro, Monkstadt, Kilmuir, Skye,	3054	72
Donald Macpherson,	Crofter, Lower Glen-Hinisdale, Skye,	3066	72
Charles Mackinnon,	Crofter, Upper Glen-Hinisdale, Skye,	3086	73
Alexander Matheson,	Crofter's son, Earlish, Uig, Skye,	3130	73
Donald Maclean,	Crofter, Earlish, Uig, Skye,	3171	74
Catherine Macdonald,	Cottar, Earlish, Uig, Skye,	3185	74
Malcolm Nicolson,	Crofter, Sheader, Glenuig, Skye,	3197	74
Angus Macleod,	Crofter, Idrigil, Uig, Skye,	3221	75
John Graham,	Cottar, Idrigil, Uig, Skye,	3304	76
Roderick Dingwall,	Uig, Skye,	3331	77
Donald Nicolson,	Crofter, Solitote, Kilmuir, Skye,	3336	77

FIFTH SITTING—STAFFIN, SKYE, SATURDAY, APRIL 29, 1893.

Malcolm Ross,	Crofter and Catechist, Kendram, Kilmuir, Skye,	3343	77
John Macdonald,	Crofter, Solitote, Kilmuir, Skye,	3387	78
Charles Macdonald,	Crofter, Baile-Mhic-Cuithein, Kilmuir, Skye,	3424	79
Murdo Lamont,	Crofter, Connista, Kilmuir, Skye,	3467	80
John Lamont,	Cottar's son, Connista, Kilmuir, Skye,	3554	81
Kenneth Macdonald,	Cottar, Brogaig, Kilmuir, Skye,	3580	81
Archibald Macdonald,	Merchant, Garrafad, Kilmuir, Skye,	3635	82
Charles Macarthur,	Crofter, Ellishadder, Kilmuir, Skye,	3866	87
Peter Macdonald,	Crofter, Garros, Kilmuir, Skye,	3894	87
William Nicolson,	Crofter, Marrishadder, Kilmuir, Skye,	3910	88
Alexander Macleod,	Crofter, Cul-nan-cnoc, Kilmuir, Skye,	3943	88
William Mackenzie,	Teacher, Valtos, Kilmuir, Skye,	3957	88
Archibald Graham,	Cottar, Valtos, Kilmuir, Skye,	4055	90
Murdo Maclean,	Crofter, Lealt, Kilmuir, Skye,	4063	90
William Macleod,	Crofter, Clachan, Kilmuir, Skye,	4074	90
Roderick Macinnes,	Cottar, Digg, Kilmuir, Skye,	4092	91
Lachlan Macqueen,	Crofter, Stenscholl, Kilmuir, Skye,	4138	92
Malcolm Mackenzie,	Crofter, Maligar, Kilmuir, Skye,	4156	92
Alexander Macleod,	Crofter, Greraline, Kilmuir, Skye,	4178	92
John Macdonald,	Cottar, Baile-Mhic-Cuithein, Kilmuir, Skye,	4189	92
Malcolm Martin,	Crofter, Digg, Kilmuir, Skye,	4202	92
John Mackenzie,	Factor, Kilmuir, Skye,	4210	93

SIXTH SITTING—DUNVEGAN, SKYE, FRIDAY, MAY 5, 1893.

John Macpherson,	Crofter, Glendale, Skye,	4356	99
Neil Macpherson,	Crofter, Upper Milivaig, Glendale, Skye,	4487	103
Donald Campbell,	Farm labourer, Hamara, Glendale, Skye,	4512	104
John Maclean,	Crofter, Fasach, Glendale, Skye,	4628	106
Neil Mackay,	Fisherman, Colbost, Glendale, Skye,	4706	108
Peter Macdonald,	Crofter, Holmisdale, Glendale, Skye,	4729	108
Norman Ross,	Crofter, Glasvein, Glendale, Skye,	4742	109
Donald Macdonald,	Crofter, Skinidin, Glendale, Skye,	4767	109
Donald Macpherson,	Crofter, Lephin, Glendale, Skye,	4845	110

SIXTH SITTING—DUNVEGAN, SKYE, FRIDAY, MAY 5, 1893—*continued.*

Name of Witness.	Description.	Question.	Page.
John Robertson,	Orbost, Factor for Glendale, Skye,	4857	110
John Macleod,	Crofter, Harlosh, Duirinish, Skye,	5068	116
Malcolm Macleod,	Crofter, Harlosh, Duirinish, Skye,	5119	118
John Macphie,	Crofter, Harlosh, Duirinish, Skye,	5163	119
John Macdonald,	Tailor and Crofter, Roskhill, Duirinish, Skye,	5171	119
Lachlan Mackay,	Crofter, Kilmuir, Dunvegan, Skye,	5189	120
Murdoch Montgomery,	Crofter, Vatten, Duirinish, Skye,	5317	122
John Taylor,	Land Surveyor, Ebost, Skye,	5410	124

SEVENTH SITTING—DUNVEGAN, SKYE, SATURDAY, MAY 6, 1893.

Macleod of Macleod,	Dunvegan, Skye,	5637	129
Alexander Mackenzie,	Crofter, Boreraig, Duirinish, Skye,	5814	138
Neil Mackinnon,	Cottar, Ferrinvicquire, Duirinish, Skye,	5829	139
Donald Maclean,	Crofter, Galtrigill, Duirinish, Skye,	5879	140
Donald Shaw,	Crofter, Edinbane, Duirinish, Skye,	5896	140
Kenneth Macaskill,	Crofter, Edinbane, Duirinish, Skye,	5901	141
John Robertson,	Orbost, Factor for Glendale, Skye,	5914A	141
Fergus Ferguson,	Crofter, Dunhallin, Waternish, Skye,	5915	141
Donald M. Macleod,	Crofter's son, Geary, Waternish, Skye,	5933	142
John Martin, jun.	Crofter, Geary, Waternish, Skye,	6049	144
John Macaskill,	Crofter, Geary, Waternish, Skye,	6129	146
Peter Macnab,	Crofter, Gillen, Waternish, Skye,	6152	147
Alexander Macleod,	Crofter, Gillen, Waternish, Skye,	6158	147
Donald Macswan,	Crofter, Knockbreck, Waternish, Skye,	6167	147
John Macleod,	Crofter, Knockbreck, Waternish, Skye,	6181	147
Donald Mackinnon,	Crofter, Halistra, Waternish, Skye,	6185	147
John Finlayson,	Crofter, Hallin Park, Waternish, Skye,	6204	148
Donald Beaton,	Cottar, Stein, Waternish, Skye,	6232	148
John Macswan,	Cottar, Stein, Waternish, Skye,	6249	148
Ronald Macphie,	Crofter, Lusta, Waternish, Skye,	6268	149
Isabella Campbell,	Cottar, The Glebe, Duirinish, Skye,	6299	149
Captain Allan Macdonald,	of Waternish, Skye,	6315	149
John Taylor,	Land Surveyor, Ebost, Skye,	6438	152
John Macpherson,	Crofter, Glendale, Skye,	6463	153

EIGHTH SITTING—BROADFORD, SKYE, FRIDAY, MAY 19, 1893.

Donald Nicolson,	Crofter, Torrin, Strath, Skye,	6467	154
John Mackinnon,	Crofter, Torrin, Strath, Skye,	6695	158
Lachlan Mackinnon,	Cottar, Torrin, Strath, Skye,	6775	160
Neil Grant,	Fisherman, Kilbride, Strath, Skye,	6797	160
Farquhar Kelly,	Crofter, Heast, Strath, Skye,	6931	162
Donald Macarthur,	Fisherman, Luib, Strath, Skye,	7007	164
Peter Robertson,	Cottar, Luib, Strath, Skye,	7087	165
Kenneth Macrae,	Crofter, Dunan, Strath, Skye,	7155	167
Norman Macrae,	Crofter and Fisherman, Dunan, Strath, Skye,	7182	167
Alexander Macleod,	Crofter, Ardorch, Strath, Skye,	7222	168
Alexander Grant,	Seaman, Ardorch, Strath, Skye,	7241	168
Joseph Macpherson,	Cottar, Kyleakin, Strath, Skye,	7266	168
Kenneth Mackay,	Cottar, Kyleakin, Strath, Skye,	7321	169
Donald Mackinnon,	Cottar, Ashaig, Strath, Skye,	7324	169
John Robertson,	Cottar, Ashaig, Strath, Skye,	7328	170
Donald Mackenzie,	Cottar, Ashaig, Strath, Skye,	7333	170
Angus Macleod,	Crofter, Upper Breakish, Strath, Skye,	7338	170
Archibald Mackintosh,	Crofter, Upper Breakish, Strath, Skye,	7453	173
Hugh Macrae,	Crofter, Upper Breakish, Strath, Skye,	7504	173
William Munro,	Crofter, Lower Breakish, Strath, Skye,	7509	174
John Macinnes,	Crofter, Lower Breakish, Strath, Skye,	7520	174
Myles Maclean,	Crofter, Harrapol, Strath, Skye,	7525	174
John Maclean,	Crofter, Lower Harrapol, Strath, Skye,	7581	175
Lachlan Mackinnon,	Cottar, Elgol, Strath, Skye,	7587	176
Neil Mackinnon,	Cottar, Elgol, Strath, Skye,	7609	176
James Mackintosh,	Factor for Lord Macdonald, Ostaig, Sleat, Skye,	7634	177
Alexander Macdonald,	Solicitor, Portree, Factor for Sir William Mackinnon,	7765	183

NINTH SITTING—ISLEORNSAY, SKYE, SATURDAY, MAY 20, 1893.

Name of Witness.	Description.	Question.	Page.
Myles Macinnes,	Merchant, Portree,	7768	183
Donald Macpherson,	Crofter, Saasaig, Sleat, Skye,	8021	193
Peter Macdonald,	Sub-tenant, Saasaig, Sleat, Skye,	8030	194
Donald Macgillivray,	Crofter, Aird, Sleat, Skye,	8065	194
Hugh Macdonald,	Calligary, Sleat, Skye,	8124	195
Jonathan Macdonald,	Crofter, Achnacloich, Sleat, Skye,	8151	196
Alexander Macdonald,	Crofter, 13 Achnacloich, Sleat, Skye,	8194	197
Alexander Macdonald,	Crofter, Tarskavaig, Sleat, Skye,	8219	197
Allan Campbell,	Crofter, Teangue, Sleat, Skye,	8244	198
John Mackinnon,	Crofter and Fisherman, Camuscross, Sleat, Skye,	8269	198
Lachlan Macdonald,	Crofter and Seaman, Duisdalebeag, Sleat, Skye,	8284	199
" "	" "	8338	200
Alexander Macinnes,	Crofter, Drumfearn, Sleat, Skye,	8307	200
James Mackintosh,	Factor for Lord Macdonald, Ostaig, Sleat, Skye,	8342	201
Dugald Maclachlan,	Bank Agent, Portree,	8615	209

TENTH SITTING—BEAULY, TUESDAY, JUNE 13, 1893.

Colin Chisholm,	Namur Cottage, Inverness,	8621	213
Duncan Cameron,	Church Park, Kirkhill, by Inverness,	8975	224
Duncan Macrae,	Torgormack, Kilmorack, Beauly,	9221	229
Duncan Chisholm,	Waterloo Place, Inverness,	9451	233
Farquhar Macrae,	Farmer, Rebeg, Kirkhill, by Inverness,	9744	238

ELEVENTH SITTING—BEAULY, WEDNESDAY, JUNE 14, 1893.

John Brown Grant,	Factor, Chisholm Estates, Erchless, Strathglass,	9921	241
James Campbell,	Crofter, Druim-an-dorsair, Kilmorack, Beauly,	10,778	262
Duncan Campbell,	Labourer, Beauly,	11,007	266

TWELFTH SITTING—BEAULY, THURSDAY, JUNE 15, 1893.

Roderick Maclean,	Manse Cottage, Fasnakyle, Strathglass,	11,177	270
William Burns,	Solicitor, Inverness, Agent for Chisholm Estates,	11,763	281
Duncan Robertson,	Farmer, Comar, Strathglass,	11,828	283
Donald Mackay,	Cottar, Camuiltmuir, Kiltarlity,	11,993	286
Roderick Matheson,	Crofter, Torran-na-h-eirig, Kiltarlity,	12,300	291
Murdoch Cameron,	Torrangorm, Kiltarlity,	12,302	291
John Macdonald,	Labourer, Balliemore of Dochgarroch, Inverness,	12,306	291
John Peter,	Factor for Lord Lovat, Beauly,	12,444	294
John Brown Grant,	Factor, Chisholm Estates, Erchless, Strathglass,	12,690	301
James Smith,	Factor for Strathconan, Inverness,	12,693	301

THIRTEENTH SITTING—CANNICH, STRATHGLASS, WEDNESDAY, JUNE 21, 1893.

Roderick Maclennan,	Fasnakyle Bridge, Strathglass,	12,757	303
Angus Cameron,	Invercannich, Strathglass,	12,801	304

FOURTEENTH SITTING—DRUMNADROCHIT, GLEN-URQUHART, INVERNESS-SHIRE, TUESDAY, JULY 4, 1893.

Name of Witness.	Description.	Question.	Page.
Hugh Macdougall,	Blacksmith and Crofter, Milton, Glen-Urquhart,	12,829	304
Alexander Macdonald,	Wester Bunloit, Glen-Urquhart,	13,288	313
John Macdougall,	Crofter, Bunloit, Glen-Urquhart,	13,395	315
John Mackintosh,	Crofter, Easter Bunloit, Glen-Urquhart,	13,438	315
Donald Fraser,	Crofter, Lenie, Glen-Urquhart,	13,540	317
Duncan Macmillan,	Crofter, Easter Bunloit, Glen-Urquhart,	13,552	317
Donald Fraser,	Crofter, Lots, Bunloit, Glen-Urquhart,	13,564	318
James Cameron,	Crofter, Lots, Bunloit, Glen-Urquhart,	13,620	318
William Mackay,	Solicitor, Inverness, Agent for the Countess Dowager of Seafield,	13,651	319

FIFTEENTH SITTING—DRUMNADROCHIT, GLEN-URQUHART, INVERNESS-SHIRE, WEDNESDAY, JULY 5, 1893.

William Mackay,	Solicitor, Inverness (*Examination resumed*),	14,171	337
Major William Grant,	Factor for the Countess Dowager of Seafield, Drumnadrochit,	14,330	341
William Garland,	Manager, Balmacaan Home Farm, Glen-Urquhart,	14,395	343
Donald Macrae,	('Balallan'), Plockton,	14,432	343
Donald Mackintosh,	Cattle Dealer, Bunloit, Glen-Urquhart,	14,485	345
Duncan Grant,	Mason, Lewiston, Glen-Urquhart,	14,600	347
John Chisholm,	Labourer, Lewiston, Glen-Urquhart,	14,630	348
John Macleod,	Merchant, Invermoriston,	14,635	348
Charles Macdonald,	Farmer, Knocknangeal, Inverness, and Baile-nan-carn, Glenmoriston,	14,690	350
Allan Cameron,	Crofter, Dundreggan, Glenmoriston,	14,914	355
Alexander Macdonald,	Crofter, Dalchreichard, Glenmoriston,	15,143	359
Peter Burgess,	Drumnadrochit, Factor for Glenmoriston,	15,153	359

SIXTEENTH SITTING—GLENSHIEL, ROSS-SHIRE, TUESDAY, JULY 11, 1893.

Alexander Macrae,	Crofter, Inverinate, Kintail,	15,437	367
Murdo Macrae,	Crofter, Camuslunie, Kintail,	16,400	385
Christopher Macrae,	Crofter, Camuslunie, Kintail,	16,462	386
Ewan Maclennan,	Crofter, Dornie, Kintail,	16,471	386
William Grant,	Cottar, Letterfearn, Glenshiel,	16,483	386
Farquhar Macrae,	Cottar, Letterfearn, Glenshiel,	16,531	387
Sir Henry C. Macandrew,	Solicitor, Inverness, Factor and Commissioner for Sir Kenneth J. Matheson of Lochalsh,	16,602	388

SEVENTEENTH SITTING—GLENSHIEL, ROSS-SHIRE, WEDNESDAY, JULY 12, 1893.

Donald Macrae,	Morvich, Kintail,	16,767	396
Duncan Macrae,	Cottar, Allt-a'-chruinn, Morvich, Kintail,	17,170	404
William Mackay,	Solicitor, Inverness, Agent for Sir James T. Mackenzie's Trustees,	17,212	405
Donald Grant,	Solicitor, Grantown, Factor for Glenelg,	17,466	413

EIGHTEENTH SITTING—GLENELG, INVERNESS-SHIRE, FRIDAY, JULY 14, 1893.

Duncan Maccrimmon,	Crofter, Kirkton, Glenelg,	17,470	413
Angus Macleod,	Cattle and Sheep Dealer, Glen-Bernera, Glenelg,	17,628	416
Donald Macleod	Retired Shepherd, Kirkton, Glenelg,	17,696	417
William Maccrimmon,	Crofter, Glen-Bernera, Glenelg,	17,785	419
Augustus Baillie,	Dochfour, Inverness,	17,985	423
Donald Grant,	Solicitor, Grantown, Factor for Glenelg,	17,992	423
Archibald Fraser,	Crofter, Camusban, Loch Hourn,	18,365	431
Donald Campbell,	Crofter, Camusban, Loch Hourn,	18,414	432
Robert Birkbeck,	20 Berkeley Square, London, Proprietor of the Estate of Arnisdale,	18,460	434

NINETEENTH SITTING—BALMACARA, LOCHALSH, ROSS-SHIRE, MONDAY, JULY 24, 1893.

Name of Witness.	Description.	Question.	Page.
Kenneth Matheson,	Ferryman, Glaick, Balmacara, Lochalsh,	18,609	438
Donald Matheson,	Labourer, Glaick, Balmacara, Lochalsh,	18,660	439
Alexander Macrae,	Cottar, Avernish, Lochalsh,	18,678	439
Finlay Macrae,	Crofter, Duirinish, Lochalsh,	18,736	440
John Maclennan,	Crofter, Duirinish, Lochalsh,	18,951	444
John Macrae,	Crofter, Duirinish, Lochalsh,	19,051	446
Donald Cameron,	Cottar, Duirinish, Lochalsh,	19,058	446
Duncan Gillies,	Cottar, Conchra, Lochalsh,	19,113	447
Colin Mackenzie,	Cottar, Conchra, Lochalsh,	19,153	448
Margaret Macrae,	Ardelve, Lochalsh,	19,199	449
Donald Macrae,	Crofter, Camuslongart, Lochalsh,	19,212	449
Sir Henry C. Macandrew,	Inverness, Factor and Commissioner for Sir Kenneth J. Matheson of Lochalsh,	19,230	449

TWENTIETH SITTING—LOCHCARRON, ROSS-SHIRE, FRIDAY, JULY 28, 1893.

Roderick Mackenzie,	Retired Farmer, Strathcarron,	19,426	461
Kenneth Murchison,	Ground Officer, Strathcarron,	19,992	471
Kenneth Macdonald,	Crofter, Coulags, Lochcarron,	20,036	471
Duncan Maclean,	Crofter, Balnacra, Lochcarron,	20,160	473
Alexander Macnair,	Crofter, Jeantown, Lochcarron,	20,296	476
William Mackenzie,	Crofter, Jeantown, Lochcarron,	20,356	477
John Mackenzie,	Crofter, Strome-More, Lochcarron,	20,386	477
William Mackintosh,	Crofter, Kishorn, Lochcarron,	20,434	478
John Maclean,	Labourer, Arineckaig, Lochcarron,	20,468	479
Kenneth Maclean,	Crofter, Arineckaig, Lochcarron,	20,558	480
Duncan Shaw,	W. S., Inverness, Factor for Lochcarron,	20,582	480
Charles James Murray,	Proprietor of the Estate of Lochcarron,	20,895	491

TWENTY-FIRST SITTING—WICK, WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 23, 1893.

Donald Reid,	Crofter, Slickly, Canisbay, Caithness,	20,942	494
Thomas Innes,	Fisherman and Crofter, Gills, Canisbay, Caithness,	21,132	498
David Mackay,	Crofter, Auckingill, Canisbay, Caithness,	21,277	501
William Reid,	Boat-Builder, Keiss, Caithness,	21,379	502
Donald Sinclair,	Crofter, Roster, Clyth, Caithness,	21,569	506
Donald Macleod,	Crofter, Mid Clyth, Caithness,	21,814	510
Alexander Sutherland,	Latheronwheel, Caithness,	21,911	512
Alexander Polson,	Teacher, Dunbeath, Caithness,	21,961	513
George Henderson,	Dunbeath, Caithness,	22,163	518
Alexander Gunn,	Killimster, Wick, Caithness,	22,169	518
Joseph Harling Turner,	Kilmarnock, Factor for the Duke of Portland,	22,218	520

TWENTY-SECOND SITTING—THURSO, MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 4, 1893.

Hugh Campbell,	Blacksmith, Reay, Caithness,	22,321	525
Donald Campbell,	Reayside, Caithness,	22,556	529
Donald Mackay,	Crofter, Buldoo, Reay, Caithness,	22,557	529
Robert Manson,	Crofter, Achreamie, Reay, Caithness,	22,691	532
William Farquhar,	Crofter, Broubster, Reay, Caithness,	22,809	534
William Reid Tait,	Thurso, Factor for Sir Robert C. Sinclair of Murkle,	22,989	537
Surgeon-General Alexander Maclean,	Thurso,	23,213	543
John Manson,	Farmer, Dunnet, Caithness,	23,313	548
Donald Henderson,	Farmer, Tannach, near Wick,	23,476	550
John Miller,	Crofter, Brabsterdorran, Caithness,	23,560	552

TWENTY-THIRD SITTING—THURSO, TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 5, 1893.

Name of Witness.	Description.	Question.	Page.
Hugh Donaldson,	Late Farm Manager, Strath, Watten, Caithness,	23,647	554
William Taylor,	Carrier, Halkirk, Caithness,	23,862	560
Donald Henderson,	Crofter, Geise, Caithness,	23,945	561
George Logan,	Factor for Sir Tollemache Sinclair of Ulbster, Thurso,	24,104	565
Peter Keith,	Solicitor, Thurso, Factor for Mey Estate,	24,453	577
James Mackidd,	Farmer, Thurso East,	24,497	580

TWENTY-FOURTH SITTING—HELMSDALE, SUTHERLANDSHIRE, MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 11, 1893.

William Macdonald,	Crofter, Navidale, Kildonan,	24,600	583
William Matheson,	Tailor, Badanloch, Kildonan,	24,902	591
Donald Watson,	Crofter, Gartymore, Kildonan,	24,933	592
Alexander Gunn,	Crofter, West Helmsdale,	25,125	595
John Thomson Murray,	Crofter, Portgower,	25,222	597
Donald Maclean,	Golspie, Factor at Dunrobin for His Grace the Duke of Sutherland,	25,320	599

TWENTY-FIFTH SITTING—GOLSPIE, SUTHERLANDSHIRE, TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 19, 1893

George Grant Fraser,	Farmer, Achvaich, Dornoch,	25,338	603
William Macleay,	Crofter, Clashmore, Dornoch,	25,667	610
Thomas Grant,	Crofter, Evelix, near Dornoch,	25,737	614
Alexander Bannerman,	Crofter, Langwell, Rogart,	25,756	614
John Sutherland,	Merchant, Pittentrail, Rogart,	26,006	620
Joseph Macleod,	Sub-tenant, Brora,	26,146	623
John Mackenzie,	Crofter, East Brora,	26,215	626
Alexander Mackay,	Crofter's son, Wester Clyne, Brora,	26,227	626
Angus Murray,	Crofter, Achrimsdale, Clyne, Brora,	26,241	626
Robert Matheson,	Labourer, Rogart,	26,251	626
Donald Sutherland,	Farmer, Burnfoot, Kinbrace,	26,261	627

TWENTY-SIXTH SITTING—LAIRG, SUTHERLANDSHIRE, WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 27, 1893.

David Mackay,	Crofter, Rheanbreck, Lairg,	26,403	629
Alexander Shaw,	Farmer, Balindialish, Lairg,	26,610	634
Donald Maclean,	Golspie, Factor at Dunrobin for His Grace the Duke of Sutherland,	26,783	637
William Black,	Crofter, Gruids, Lairg,	27,067	645
John Sutherland,	Crofter, Doirecha, Rosehall,	27,122	647
Malcolm Munro,	Crofter, Achintoul, Rosehall,	27,265	650
William Munro,	Crofter, Altas, Rosehall,	27,287	651
William Mackintosh,	Cottar, Tullich, Rosehall,	27,303	651
David Munro,	Cottar, Altas, Rosehall,	27,355	652
William Macleod,	Cottar, Rosehall,	27,374	652
John Forsyth,	Balintraid, Invergordon, Factor for Rosehall Estate,	27,407	653
James Sutherland,	Spinningdale, Bonar Bridge,	27,427	654
Alexander Mackay,	Merchant, Bonar Bridge,	27,458	656
William Anderson,	Factor for Balnagown Estate, Parkhill, Ross-shire	27,484	657

TWENTY-SEVENTH SITTING—MELVICH, SUTHERLANDSHIRE, WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 4, 1893.

Name of Witness.	Description.	Question.	Page.
William Mackenzie,	Crofter, Trantlemore, Strath-Halladale,	27,513	659
Hugh Macdonald,	Crofter, Ashall, Strath-Halladale,	27,730	665
Robert Campbell,	Crofter, Portskerra,	27,739	666
William Macleod,	Crofter, Achina, Farr,	27,823	667
John Mackay,	Crofter's son, Newlands, Farr,	27,952	671
Alexander Mackay,	Crofter, Kirtomy, Farr,	28,031	673
Hugh Gunn,	Crofter, Baligill, Strathy,	28,114	675
John Mackay,	Crofter's son, Strathy,	28,118	675

TWENTY-EIGHTH SITTING—TONGUE, SUTHERLANDSHIRE, MONDAY, OCTOBER 9, 1893.

Hugh Mackay,	Crofter, Melness, Tongue,	28,224	677
Donald Hugh Mackay,	Merchant, Ach-na-h-uaighe, Melness, Tongue,	28,509	686
Alexander Barnetson,	Cottar, Skinnid, Melness, Tongue,	28,565	687
James William Morrison,	Late Teacher, Torrisdale, Tongue,	28,633	689
William Mackay,	Crofter's son, Torrisdale, Tongue,	28,827	694
John Box,	Factor at Tongue for His Grace the Duke of Sutherland,	28,862	695

TWENTY-NINTH SITTING—DURNESS, SUTHERLANDSHIRE, MONDAY, OCTOBER 16, 1893.

Donald Whyte,	Crofter, Durine, Durness,	29,115	704
James Sutherland,	Crofter, Sangomore, Durness,	29,367	709
Robert Mackay,	Crofter and Blacksmith, Sangomore, Durness,	29,433	710
Alexander Sutherland,	Crofter's son, Durine, Durness,	29,464	711
Roderick Campbell,	Crofter's son, Durine, Durness,	29,517	712
Kenneth Sutherland,	Cottar, Sangomore, Durness,	29,589	713
George Campbell,	Fisherman, Laid, Durness,	29,600	713
Thomas Mackay,	Fisherman, Laid, Durness,	29,652	714
George Campbell,	Crofter, Durine, Durness,	29,697	715
Evander Maciver,	Factor at Scourie for His Grace the Duke of Sutherland,	29,703	715

THIRTIETH SITTING—RHICONICH, SUTHERLANDSHIRE, THURSDAY, OCTOBER 19, 1893.

Donald Morrison,	Crofter, Balchrieck, Rhiconich,	29,932	723
Lachlan Ross,	Crofter, Achreisgill, Rhiconich,	30,065	727

THIRTY-FIRST SITTING—SCOURIE, SUTHERLANDSHIRE, FRIDAY, OCTOBER 20, 1893.

Alexander Macleod,	Crofter, Scourie Village,	30,169	729
Hector Morrison,	Crofter, Badcall, Scourie,	30,505	735
James Mackay,	Ground Officer, Scourie,	30,600	737
Evander Maciver,	Factor at Scourie for His Grace the Duke of Sutherland,	30,621	738

THIRTY-SECOND SITTING—LOCHINVER, SUTHERLANDSHIRE, MONDAY, OCTOBER 23, 1893.

Robert Menzies,	Crofter, Elphin, Assynt,	30,651	739
Donald Macleod,	Crofter, Knockan, Assynt,	30,843	743
John Macleod,	Crofter, Knockan, Assynt,	30,919	744
Murdo Macleod (Finlay),	Crofter's son, Culkein-Drumbaig, Assynt,	30,967	745

THIRTY-SECOND SITTING—LOCHINVER, SUTHERLANDSHIRE, MONDAY, OCTOBER 23, 1893—*continued.*

Name of Witness.	Description.	Question.	Page.
John Maclean,	Crofter, Nedd, Assynt,	31,091	747
William Matheson,	Crofter's son, Badnamban, Assynt,	31,171	748
Angus Matheson,	Crofter, Baddidarach, Assynt,	31,228	750
John Mackenzie,	Baddidarach, Assynt,	31,289	751
John Matheson,	Crofter, Baddidarach, Assynt,	31,333	752
Evander Maciver,	Factor at Scourie for His Grace the Duke of Sutherland,	31,345	752

THIRTY-THIRD SITTING—TAIN, THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 2, 1893.

John J. R. Meiklejohn,	Factor for Novar Estate, Evanton,	31,463	756
Donald Robertson,	Forester, Novar, Evanton,	31,533	759
John Laing,	Timber Merchant, Nairn,	31,812	768
John Campbell,	Wood Merchant, Inverness,	31,896	770
Charles R. Manners,	C.E., Inverness, Factor for Lord Wimborne, Achnashellach,	31,905	770
Alexander Ross,	Crofter, Ochto Falls, Strathoykel,	31,916	772
James Murray,	Doune, Strathoykel,	32,207	777
John Ross,	Crofter, Syal, Strathcarron,	32,219	778
Donald Rose,	Crofter, Baddaroch, Strathoykell,	32,321	779
David Ross,	Crofter, Torroy, Strathoykell,	32,375	780
William Campbell,	Crofter, Amat-na-tuath, Strathoykell,	32,401	781
Kenneth Macrae,	Cottar, Corrieblair, Edderton,	32,485	783
Robert Ross,	Cottar, Ardgay,	32,587	784
Alexander Ross,	Crofter, Fendom, near Tain,	32,610	784
William Ross,	Wire-fencer, Pitmaduthie,	32,621	785

THIRTY-FOURTH SITTING—PORT-ELLEN, ISLAY, ARGYLLSHIRE, WEDNESDAY, MARCH 28, 1894.

John Campbell,	Cottar, Oa, Islay,	32,643	785
Neil Macewan,	Crofter, Oa, Islay,	32,735	787
Archibald Campbell,	Carter, Port-Ellen,	32,789	788
Angus Macnab,	Carter, Port-Ellen,	32,953	791
James Anderson,	Fisherman, Port-Ellen,	33,037	793
Peter Reid,	Factor on Kildalton Estate, Islay,	33,120	794

THIRTY-FIFTH SITTING—PORT-CHARLOTTE, ISLAY, ARGYLLSHIRE, MONDAY, APRIL 2, 1894.

Dugald Ferguson Macfadyen,	Merchant, Port-Charlotte, Islay,	33,295	799
Neil Macdermid,	Farmer, Nerabus, Rhinns,	33,445	803
Alexander Macdermid,	Farmer, Nerabus, Rhinns,	33,544	805
Gilbert Macarthur,	Fisherman, Port-Charlotte,	33,566	805
Donald Macarthur,	Port-Charlotte,	33,657	807
William Mackechnie,	Fish-dealer, Conispy,	33,687	807
Neil Macnab,	Fisherman, Port-Wemyss,	33,723	808
James Macnab,	Fisherman, Port-Wemyss,	33,810	809
Hector Bell,	Fisherman, Portnahaven,	33,818	809
Dugald Duncan,	Fisherman, Portnahaven,	33,881	810
Duncan Campbell Macewan,	Feuar, Bowmore,	33,933	811
Duncan Carmichael,	Feuar, Bowmore,	34,041	813
Donald Macgillivray,	Mason Contractor, Bowmore,	34,082	814
Malcolm Macmillan,	Steamboat Agent, Bowmore	34,145	815
George Campbell,	Port-Charlotte,	34,173	816
James S. R. Ballingal,	Bridgend, Islay, Factor for Charles Morrison of Islay	34,180	816

THIRTY-SIXTH SITTING—JURA, ARGYLLSHIRE, FRIDAY, APRIL 6, 1894.

Name of Witness.	Description.	Question.	Page.
John Keith or Mac-Cìch,	Crofter, Knockrome, Jura,	34,183	817
Neil Darroch,	Crofter, Knockrome, Jura,	34,255	818
John Keith or Mac-Cìch, senior	Crofter, Keils, Jura,	34,291	819
John Keith or Mac-Cìch, junior,	Crofter, Keils, Jura,	34,358	820
Alexander Keith or Mac-Cìch,	Crofter, Keils, Jura,	34,366	820
John Black,	Crofter, Keils, Jura,	34,472	822
Neil Clark	Care-taker, Learganbreac, Jura,	34,482	822
Miss Isabella H. Campbell,	of Jura,	34,523	823

THIRTY-SEVENTH SITTING—BRIDGEND, ISLAY, ARGYLLSHIRE, MONDAY, APRIL 9, 1894.

John A. Nicholls,	Mines Manager, Robolls, Islay,	34,636	827
Donald Orr,	Millwright, Starchmill, Islay,	34,802	832
Hugh Carmichael,	Crofter, Keills, Islay,	34,892	834
Neil Macarthur,	Crofter, Mulrees, Islay,	34,952	835
John Macdonald,	Cottar, Keills, Islay,	34,999A	836
Gilbert Lamont,	Retired Crofter, Crowbush, Islay,	35,020	836
Duncan Macindeor,	Roadman, Kilmeny, Islay,	35,023	836

THIRTY-EIGHTH SITTING—TARBERT, LOCHFYNE, ARGYLLSHIRE, TUESDAY, APRIL 17, 1894.

Peter Whyte,	Fisherman and Crofter, Silvercraigs, Lochgilphead,	35,041	837
Archibald Mactavish,	Arivore, Whitehouse, Kintyre,	35,192	841
Dugald Mackinnon,	Crofter, Whitehouse, Kintyre,	35,193	841
John Maclean,	Cottar, Grassfield, Whitehouse, Kintyre,	35,312	843
Coll Mackechnie,	Carpenter, Clachan, Kintyre,	35,379	845
John Macgugan,	Fisherman, Castlehill, Tarbert,	35,472	847

THIRTY-NINTH SITTING—LISMORE, ARGYLLSHIRE, WEDNESDAY, MAY 2, 1894.

John Maccoll,	Post-runner, Killean, Lismore,	35,543	848
John Buchanan,	Mason, Killean, Lismore,	35,640	850
Donald Maccoll,	Farmer's son, Balnagown,	35,679	851

FORTIETH SITTING—BUNESSAN, MULL, ARGYLLSHIRE, THURSDAY, MAY 10, 1894.

Archibald Macfadyen,	Cottar, Lochbuy, Mull,	35,687	852
Robert Macinnes,	Crofter's son, Lochbuy, Mull,	35,739	853
Duncan Livingston,	Dalnaha, Lochbuy, Mull,	35,759	853
John Livingston,	Dalnaha, Lochbuy, Mull,	35,801	854
Allan Livingston,	Fisherman, Dalnaha, Lochbuy, Mull,	35,809	854
" "	" "	35,956	856
Archibald Macfadyen,	Fisherman, Gribun, Mull,	35,835	854
Dugald Maclean,	Sub-tenant, Torrans, Pennygael, Mull,	35,905	855
James Beaton,	Cottar, Creich, Ross of Mull,	35,974	856
Charles Macneill,	Ardachy, Ross of Mull,	35,983	857
Malcolm Beaton,	Crofter, Aird-chiabhaig, Ross of Mull,	35,998	857
John Mackinnon,	Crofter, Caitchean, Ross of Mull,	36,032	858
Donald Macgillivray,	Cottar, Aird-alanais, Ross of Mull,	36,139	859
Hugh Campbell,	Crofter, Creich, Ross of Mull,	36,160	860
Robert Graham,	Cottar, Ardtun, Ross of Mull	36,180	860
Duncan Campbell,	Contractor, Bunessan, Ross of Mull,	36,196	860
Duncan Cameron,	Ground Officer, Bunessan, Ross of Mull,	36,221	861

FORTY-FIRST SITTING—TIREE, ARGYLLSHIRE, SATURDAY, MAY 12, 1894.

Name of Witness.	Description.	Question.	Page.
Hector Stewart,	Moss, Tiree,	36,224A	861
Donald Sinclair,	Crofter, Barrapoll, Tiree,	36,321	865
Donald Campbell,	Fisherman, Kilmaluag, Tiree,	36,417	867
Archibald Macneill,	Smith, Kenovay, Tiree,	36,442	867
Alexander Campbell,	Fisherman, Balevulin, Tiree,	36,470	867
Angus Munn,	Crofter, Hianish, Tiree,	36,485	868
Duncan Mackinnon,	Cottar, Scarinish, Tiree,	36,490	868
Donald Macneill,	Tailor, Barrapoll, Tiree,	36,514	868
Alexander Maclean,	Crofter, Balemartin, Tiree,	36,529	868
Hector Mackinnon,	Fisherman, Kilmaluag, Tiree,	36,533	869

FORTY-SECOND SITTING—COLL, ARGYLLSHIRE, TUESDAY, MAY 15, 1894.

Rev. Roderick Ross,	Free Church Minister, Coll,	36,598	870
John Johnston,	Crofter, Totamore Cottage, Coll,	36,648	873
Donald Macinnes,	Mason, Uig, Coll,	36,773	878
Hugh Macinnes,	Airidh-nan-gobhar, Coll,	36,794	879
Charles Macfadyen,	Airidh-nan-gobhar, Coll,	36,824	880
Donald Maclean,	Airidh-an-t-sluic, Coll,	36,854	881
Angus Macfarlane,	Soddisdale, Coll,	36,861	881

FORTY-THIRD SITTING—TOBERMORY, MULL, FRIDAY, MAY 18, 1894.

Duncan Cameron,	Portioner, Tobermory,	36,895	881
James Nisbet,	Crofter, Ormsaigbeg, Ardnamurchan,	37,061	884
Alexander Macdiarmid,	Crofter's son, Ormsaigbeg, Ardnamurchan,	37,293	890
Duncan Livingston,	Crofter, Port-Uarick, Ardnamurchan,	37,298	890
Archibald Gray,	Crofter's son, Port-Uarick, Ardnamurchan,	37,347	891
" "	" "	37,472	893
David Macphee,	Achosnich, Ardnamurchan,	37,364	891
Malcolm Macmillan	Crofter, Achosnich, Ardnamurchan,	37,373	891
Archibald Macgillivray,	Crofter's son, Plocaig, Ardnamurchan,	37,428	893
Duncan Maccoll,	Crofter's son, Ockle, Ardnamurchan,	37,455	893
John Campbell,	Army Pensioner, Dervaig, Mull,	37,522	894
Lachlan Maclachlan,	Crofter, Dervaig, Mull,	37,692	899
Malcolm Gillies,	Labourer, Dervaig, Mull	37,722	900
Donald Maclean,	Labourer, Dervaig, Mull,	37,739	900
Duncan Mackillop,	Cottar, Penmore, Mull,	37,765	901
John Macphail,	Shepherd, Achronich, Mull,	37,789	901
George Willison,	Farmer, Island of Luing, Lorne, Argyll,	37,812	901

FORTY-FOURTH SITTING—ACHARACLE, ARDNAMURCHAN, TUESDAY, MAY 22, 1894.

Colin Nisbet,	Crofter, Ardtoe, Ardnamurchan,	38,158	912
John Cameron,	Sub-tenant, Gortan-fearna, Ardnamurchan,	38,240	914

FORTY-FIFTH SITTING—CASTLEBAY, BARRA, SATURDAY, JUNE 16, 1894.

Michael Macneil,	Crofter, Bruernish, Barra,	38,272	914
Murdoch Mackinnon,	Crofter, Ault, Earsary, Barra,	38,461	918
John Macneil,	Crofter, Breivig, Barra,	38,629	922
Duncan Campbell,	Cottar, Glen, Barra,	38,731	924
Michael Campbell,	Crofter, Garrygall, Barra,	38,855	927
Duncan Campbell,	Cottar, Kentangaval, Barra,	38,881	928
Anthony Campbell,	Crofter, Kentangaval, Barra,	38,893	928

FORTY-FIFTH SITTING—CASTLEBAY, BARRA, SATURDAY, JUNE 16, 1894—*continued.*

Name of Witness.	Description.	Question.	Page.
Allan Macneil,	Crofter, Tangasdale, Barra,	38,900	928
Murdoch Mackinnon,	Crofter, Tangasdale, Barra,	38,920	929
Hugh Maclean,	Crofter, Borve, Barra,	38,927	929
Donald Macintyre,	Fisherman, Castlebay, Barra,	38,962	929
Malcolm Johnston,	Fisherman, Garrygall, Barra,	39,001	930
Ranald Macdonald,	Cluny Castle, Aberdeen, Commissioner for Lady Gordon Cathcart,	39,019	931

FORTY-SIXTH SITTING—DALIBROG, SOUTH UIST, WEDNESDAY, JUNE 20, 1894.

Neil Macphee,	Crofter, Kilpheder, South Uist,	39,257	946
Donald Paterson,	Askernish, Factor for Lady Gordon Cathcart, South Uist,	39,588 & 40,330	952 & 967
Hector Macintyre,	Cottar, South Lochboisdale, South Uist,	39,693	955
John Campbell,	Crofter, North Boisdale, South Uist,	39,761	956
Angus Walker, senior,	Crofter, Dalibrog, South Uist,	39,852	958
Donald Maclellan,	Crofter, Garraheillie, South Uist,	39,903	959
John Macmillan,	Crofter, Smerclette, South Uist,	39,948	960
Donald Currie,	Crofter, South Lochboisdale, South Uist,	39,970	960
Ronald Macdonald,	Crofter, North Lochboisdale, South Uist,	39,997	960
Angus Campbell,	Crofter, North Lochboisdale, South Uist,	40,061	962
Donald Maccormick,	Crofter, North Lochboisdale, South Uist,	40,063	962
Angus Maclellan,	Fisherman, Loch Eynort, South Uist,	40,079	962
James Maclean,	Crofter, Stoneybridge, South Uist,	40,108	963
John Macdonald,	Cottar, Stoneybridge, South Uist,	40,150	963
Peter Macintyre,	Crofter, Howbeg, South Uist,	40,156	963
Neil Johnston,	Cottar, Howbeg, South Uist,	40,186	964
Donald Macintyre,	Crofter, Snishival, South Uist,	40,212	964
Donald Macintyre,	Cottar, Snishival, South Uist,	40,226	965
Hector Macintyre,	Crofter, Howmore, South Uist,	40,232	965
Donald Beaton,	Cottar, Loch Skipport, South Uist,	40,240	965
John Campbell,	Crofter, Eriskay, South Uist,	40,252	965
Ranald Macdonald,	Cottar, Lochboisdale, South Uist,	40,312	966

FORTY-SEVENTH SITTING—IOCHDAR, SOUTH UIST, FRIDAY, JUNE 22, 1894.

Alexander Og Macdonald,	Crofter, Airdnamoine, South Uist,	40,331	968
Angus Campbell,	Crofter, Stilligarry, South Uist,	40,442	969
John Macinnes,	Crofter, Stilligarry, South Uist,	40,510	971
Hector Maceachan,	Cottar, Geirinish, South Uist,	40,515	971
Angus Macdonald,	Crofter, Viewfield, Griminish, Benbecula,	40,541	971
John Gordon Macintyre,	Crofter, Griminish, Benbecula,	40,707	974
Donald Paterson,	Askernish, Factor for South Uist,	40,764	976
Catherine Morrison or Maclellan,	Milton, South Uist,	40,825	984

FORTY-EIGHTH SITTING—LOCHMADDY, NORTH UIST, TUESDAY, JUNE 26, 1894.

Donald Mackinnon,	Cottar, Baleshare, North Uist,	40,853	984
Angus Cameron,	Cottar, Claddach Kyles, North Uist,	40,978	987
Alexander Maccuish,	Cottar, Claddach Kirkibost, North Uist,	41,028	988
Archibald Macdonald,	Cottar, Kyles Paible, North Uist,	41,032	988
Archibald Macdonald,	Cottar, Claddach Kirkibost, North Uist,	41,043	988
Donald Macdonald,	Crofter, Illeray, North Uist,	41,170	991
Donald Maccorquodale,	Cottar, Illeray, North Uist,	41,214	991
Alexander Maclean,	Cottar, Claddach Carinish, North Uist,	41,252	992
Widow Margaret Robertson or Macdonald, Mrs Margaret Morrison or Macdonald, and Miss Margaret Fraser,	Cottars, Claddach Illeray, North Uist,	41,288	993
John Cameron,	Cottar, Claddach Kirkibost, North Uist,	41,305	993

FORTY-EIGHTH SITTING—LOCHMADDY, NORTH UIST, TUESDAY, JUNE 26, 1894—*continued.*

Name of Witness.	Description.	Question.	Page.
Archibald Macdonald,	Cottar, Carinish, North Uist,	41,332	994
Alexander Maclellan,	Crofter, Loch Efort, North Uist,	41,372	995
Alexander Morrison,	Crofter, Loch Efort, North Uist,	41,471	997
Farquhar Macdonald,	Herd, Tighary, North Uist,	41,500	997
Alexander Macdonald,	Agricultural Labourer, Houghary, North Uist,	41,538	998
Donald Maclean,	Cottar, Kallin, Grimsay, North Uist,	41,558	998
Alexander Fraser,	Crofter, Boreray Island, North Uist,	41,574	998
John Macaskill,	Crofter, Malaclett, North Uist,	41,645	1000
John Macaskill,	Crofter, Berneray, South Harris,	41,667	1000
Malcolm Macleod,	Cottar, Berneray, South Harris,	41,697	1001
Thomas Wilson,	Solicitor, Lochmaddy.	41,740	1004

FORTY-NINTH SITTING—TARBERT, HARRIS, THURSDAY, JUNE 28, 1894.

Norman Macleod,	Crofter, Borsham, South Harris,	41,870	1018
Donald Maclennan,	Cottar, Scarasta, South Harris,	42,123	1023
John Mackay,	Cottar, Scarasta, South Harris,	42,252	1025
Norman Macdonald,	Cottar, Rodel, South Harris,	42,392	1027
Alexander Macleod,	Cottar, Obe, South Harris,	42,474	1028
Donald Mackenzie,	Cottar, Strond, South Harris,	42,497	1029
Kenneth Maclennan,	Crofter, Finsbay, South Harris,	42,551	1030
Alexander Campbell,	Crofter, Scadabay, South Harris,	42,633	1031
Norman Cunningham,	Crofter, Scalpay, North Harris,	42,676	1032
John Macleod,	Cottar, Ardhasig, North Harris,	42,729	1033
Duncan Macleod,	Crofter, Ardhasig, North Harris,	42,850	1035
Donald Morrison,	Crofter, Mol-na-Herradh, North Harris,	42,853	1035
Robert Finlayson Matheson,	Tarbert, Harris, Factor for Lady Scott,	42,896	1036
Thomas Wilson,	Solicitor, Lochmaddy, Agent for the Earl of Dunmore's Trustees,	43,086	1041

FIFTIETH SITTING—INVERIE, KNOYDART, INVERNESS-SHIRE, THURSDAY, JULY 5, 1894.

Gillies Mackissock,	Labourer, Inverie, Knoydart,	43,087	1043
William Macinnes,	Crofter, Airor, Knoydart,	43,309	1046
Neil Macinnes,	Crofter, Airor, Knoydart,	43,413	1048
Jonathan Macinnes,	Crofter, Airor, Knoydart,	43,419	1048
Hugh Macmaster,	Crofter, Airor, Knoydart,	43,444	1049
William Mackay,	Solicitor, Inverness, Agent for Mr Bowlby of Knoydart,	43,454	1049

FIFTY-FIRST SITTING—APPLECROSS, ROSS-SHIRE, FRIDAY, JULY 6, 1894.

Roderick Macbeath,	Cottar, Torgarve, Applecross,	43,690	1056
Donald Bain,	Manager at Applecross for the Right Hon. Lord Middleton,	43,748	1057

FIFTY-SECOND SITTING—STORNOWAY, LEWIS, MONDAY, JULY 9, 1894.

Alexander Maclennan,	Crofter, Maravaig, Lochs, Lewis,	43,873	1061
Roderick Finlayson,	Crofter, Maravaig, Lochs, Lewis,	44,016	1065
Murdo Mackenzie,	Cottar, Grabhir, Lochs, Lewis,	44,058	1065
Kenneth Mackay,	Cottar, Calbost, Lochs, Lewis,	44,106	1066
Roderick Mackenzie,	Cottar, Calbost, Lochs, Lewis,	44,128	1067
Kenneth Mackenzie,	Crofter's son, Habost, Lochs, Lewis,	44,154	1067
Murdo Macleod,	Crofter, Habost, Lochs, Lewis,	44,233	1068
Donald Mackay,	Cearshader, Lochs, Lewis,	44,251	1069

FIFTY-SECOND SITTING—STORNOWAY, LEWIS, MONDAY, JULY 9, 1894—*continued.*

Name of Witness.	Description.	Question.	Page.
John Maclennan,	Cottar, Balallan, Lochs, Lewis,	44,309	1070
Malcolm Smith,	Cottar, Balallan, Lochs, Lewis,	44,397	1071
Rev. Donald Maccallum,	Minister of the Parish of Lochs, Lewis,	44,427	1072
John Graham,	Crofter, Fivepenny Borve, Barvas, Lewis,	44,575	1078
Robert Saunders,	Crofter, Fivepenny Borve, Barvas, Lewis,	44,613	1079
Angus Morrison,	Crofter, Fivepenny Borve, Barvas, Lewis,	44,618	1079
John Smith,	Crofter, Fivepenny Borve, Barvas, Lewis,	44,626	1079
Peter Peterson Slater,	Solicitor, Edinburgh, representing Agents for Lady Matheson of the Lews,	44,634	1079
Donald Macleod,	Squatter, Laxdale, Stornoway, Lewis,	44,723	1085
Duncan Macdonald,	Cottar, Newmarket, near Stornoway,	44,742	1085

FIFTY-THIRD SITTING—WHALSEY, SHETLAND, TUESDAY, JULY 17, 1894.

James Rendall,	Crofter, Clett, Whalsey,	44,772 & 45,392	1086 & 1097
James Arthur,	Crofter, Nisthouse, Whalsey,	44,840	1087
Peter Gilbertson,	Crofter's son, Brough, Whalsey,	44,919	1089
Robert Wishart,	Joiner, Symbister, Whalsey,	45,050	1091
William Johnston,	Labourer, Sodom, Whalsey,	45,084	1091
John Johnson,	Labourer, Sodom, Whalsey,	45,146	1092
Robert Anderson,	Fisherman, Whitefield, Whalsey,	45,194	1093
Zachary Macaulay Hamilton,	Factor on Garth Estate, Baltasound, Unst,	45,240	1093
Thomas Adie,	Farmer, Symbister, Whalsey,	45,374	1096

FIFTY-FOURTH SITTING—LERWICK, SHETLAND, TUESDAY, JULY 24, 1894.

Andrew Smith,	Crofter, Vadsgarth, Cunningsburgh,	45,395	1097
George Smith,	Villans, Cunningsburgh,	45,521	1101
Laurence Laurenson,	Mail, Cunningsburgh,	45,555	1102
Laurence Tulloch,	Labourer, Blett, Cunningsburgh,	45,632	1104
John Malcolmson,	Crofter, Flanderstown, Cunningsburgh,	45,656	1104
Robert Cogle,	Fisherman, Quee, Cunningsburgh,	45,664	1104
John Nicolson,	Sandwick, Shetland,	45,721	1108
James Robertson,	Crofter, Willil, Levenwick, Shetland,	45,730	1108
John Bruce,	of Sumburgh, Dunrossness,	45,758A	1109
Charles Thomson,	Crofter, Quoyhouse, Unst,	45,901	1114
David Stickle,	Crofter's son, Pettester, Baltasound, Unst,	45,943	1115
Zachary Macaulay Hamilton,	Baltasound, Unst, Factor on estates of Garth and Bressay, Shetland,	46,053	1117
James Cullen Grierson,	Younger of Quendale, Shetland,	46,222	1121
John Sandison,	Farmer, Coldback, Unst,	46,262	1122

FIFTY-FIFTH SITTING—KIRKWALL, ORKNEY, WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 1, 1894.

William George Lennox,	Solicitor, Kirkwall,	46,292	1123
Peter Yorston,	Crofter, Old Man, Sourin, Rousay,	46,496	1130
Malcolm Corsie,	Crofter, Faro, Rousay,	46,673	1133
Donald Sutherland	Crofter, Saltness, Longhope,	46,761	1135
David Esson,	Crofter, Chalkhoull, Holm,	46,837	1136
Peter Pratt,	Crofter, Drury, Holm,	46,896	1137
James Gorn,	Crofter, Towerhill, Holm,	46,925	1138
James Cumming,	Crofter, Sutherland, Burray,	46,954	1138
Donald Duncan,	Crofter, Sutherland, Burray,	46,983	1139
James Cormack,	Stonecutter, Kirkwall, for (Island of Eday),	46,989	1139
John Hay,	Crofter, Waterhall, Sanday,	47,031	1139
William Peace,	Crofter, Barrowfield, Sanday,	47,136	1142
Rev. Matthew Armour,	Free Church Manse, Sanday,	47,178	1143
James Leslie,	Crofter, Westray,	47,264	1145
William Pratt,	Crofter, Braehead, St Andrews,	47,319	1146
Duncan John Robertson,	Solicitor, Kirkwall, Agent for General Burroughs of Rousay,	47,332	1146

FIFTY-SIXTH SITTING—KINGUSSIE, TUESDAY, AUGUST 14, 1894.

Name of Witness.	Description.	Question.	Page.
Donald Campbell,	Merchant, Kingussie,	47,455	1150
Donald Cattanach,	Merchant, Newtonmore,	47,686	1156
Donald Macpherson,	Late Shepherd, Newtonmore,	47,970	1163
John Macdonald,	Mason, Newtonmore,	48,000	1164
„ „	„ „	48,317	1171
Malcolm Cattanach,	Slater, Newtonmore,	48,091	1165
Alexander Cattanach,	Mason, Newtonmore,	48,256	1169
Sir George Macpherson-Grant,	of Ballindalloch, Bart.,	48,337	1171
Charles Bowman Logan,	W.S., Edinburgh, Commissioner for the Countess Dowager of Seafield,	48,417	1175
Donald Grant,	Solicitor, Grantown, Agent for Dochfour, Rothiemurchus and Belleville Estates,	48,497	1178
William Marshall Skinner,	Drumin, Ballindalloch, Factor for His Grace the Duke of Richmond and Gordon,	48,498	1178
Alexander Macpherson,	Solicitor, Kingussie, Factor for Cluny and Glentruim,	48,500	1179
Alexander Macdougall,	Bank Agent, Kingussie, Factor for Sir John Ramsden.	48,574	1181
Allan Macdonald,	Solicitor, Inverness, Commissioner for Mackintosh of Mackintosh,	48,582	1182

FIFTY-SEVENTH SITTING—FORT-WILLIAM, SATURDAY, AUGUST 18, 1894.

Donald Macphee,	Solicitor, Fort-William,	48,652	1184
Donald Macdonald,	Late Shepherd, 5 Fassifern Road, Fort-William,	48,877	1196
John Macmaster,	Dairyman, 17 Low Street, Fort-William,	49,027	1198
Donald Cameron,	Woodbine Cottage, Fort-William,	49,046	1199
William Macphee,	Crofter, North Ballachulish,	49,113	1200
John Campbell,	Crofter, Murlagan, Achaluachrach,	49,248	1202
John Kennedy,	Crofter, Garvan, Conaglen,	49,333	1203
Widow Ann Macmillan or Maclachlan,	Crofter, Garvan, Conaglen,	49,369	1204
Donald Macmillan,	Crofter's son, Duisky, Conaglen,	49,385	1204
Donald Cameron,	Middle Street, Fort-William,	49,419	1205
Harold Yorke Lidderdale Smith,	Solicitor, Fort-William, Factor for Lord Abinger,	49,506	1206

FIFTY-EIGHTH SITTING—ARISAIG, INVERNESS-SHIRE, TUESDAY, AUGUST 21, 1894.

Allan Maceachan,	Crofter, Kinsadel, South Morar, Arisaig,	49,826	1219
John Macmillan,	Crofter, Morach, Arisaig,	49,960	1221
James Macdonald,	Mason, Strath, Arisaig,	50,094	1224
Æneas Ronald Macdonell,	of Camusdarroch, Arisaig,	50,296	1228
James Macdonald,	Peanmeanach, Ardnish, Arisaig,	50,336	1230
Arthur William Nicholson,	of Arisaig,	50,414	1232
Ranald Macdonald,	Crofter, Samalaman, Glenuig,	50,596	1238
Ewan Macmaster,	Shepherd, Letter-Morar, Glen-Alladale Estate,	50,660	1240

FIFTY-NINTH SITTING—INVERNESS, THURSDAY, AUGUST 30, 1894.

William Macgillivray,	Farmer, Balnaberran, Errogie, Stratherrick,	50,677	1241
John Macdonald,	Crofter, Wester Muirnich, Mussady, Stratherrick,	50,891	1246
James Macdonald,	Pensioner, Duhallow, Aberarder, Stratherrick,	51,163	1250
John Grant,	Blacksmith, Dalarossie, Strathnairn,	51,234	1251
John Macdonald,	Labourer, late Balliemore, Dochfour,	51,662	1259
James Ross,	Solicitor, Inverness, Factor for Raasay,	51,669	1259

SIXTIETH SITTING—INVERNESS, FRIDAY, AUGUST 31, 1894.

Donald Cameron,	of Lochiel, Achnacarry, Fort-William,	51,855	1269
Roderick Maclean,	Fasnakyle, Strathglass,	52,258	1289
George Malcolm,	Factor, Invergarry,	52,296	1290

SIXTY-FIRST SITTING—INVERNESS, SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 1, 1894.

Name of Witness.	Description.	Question.	Page.
George Malcolm,	Factor, Invergarry (*Examination resumed*),	52, 563A	1329

SIXTY-SECOND SITTING—DINGWALL, TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 4, 1894.

Duncan Darroch,	of Torridon,	53,635	1362
J. J. R. Meiklejohn,	Factor for Novar, Evanton,	54,141	1380
Donald Maclennan,	Bog of Cullicudden, by Dingwall,	54,145	1380
Donald Munro,	Farmer, Knockan-caoirin, by Evanton,	54,158	1381
John Macdonald, senior,	Tailor, Evanton,	54,251	1383
John Matheson,	Grieve, Swordale,	54,320	1384
Charles Macdonald,	Crofter, Amat-na-tuath, Ardgay,	54,391	1385
David Mackay,	Crofter, Heights of Fodderty, Dingwall,	54,427	1386
William Gunn,	Factor on the Cromartie Estates, Strathpeffer,	54,579	1389
Henry Vary Maccallum,	Solicitor, Inverness, representing Major Jackson of Swordale,	54,647	1392
Hugh Fraser,	Writer, Inverness, factor for Dunmaglas,	54,702	1394
William Allis Smith,	of Glencalvie, Ross-shire,	54,706	1395

SIXTY-THIRD SITTING—POOLEWE, ROSS-SHIRE, FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 7, 1894.

Malcolm Urquhart,	Crofter, Sand, Aultbea,	54,709	1396
John Macleod,	Crofter, Sand, Aultbea,	54,867	1399
Roderick Mackenzie,	Crofter, Laide, Aultbea,	54,891	1399
Roderick Mackenzie,	Merchant, Laide, Aultbea,	54,983	1401
John Urquhart,	Crofter, Badfern, Aultbea,	55,016	1402
Kenneth Macleod,	Crofter, Tigh-na-faoilinn, Aultbea,	55,024	1402
Alexander Maciver,	Crofter, Tigh-na-faoilinn, Aultbea,	55,053	1403
Duncan Urquhart,	Crofter and Miller, Aultbea,	55,060	1403
Murdo Mackenzie,	Cottar, Laide, Aultbea,	55,193	1405
Alexander Mackenzie,	Crofter, Achgarve, Aultbea,	55,263	1406
Alexander Maclean,	Fisherman, Mellon-Udrigil, Aultbea,	55,307	1407
Murdo Mackenzie,	Crofter, Buaile-na-luib, Aultbea,	55,315	1407
Angus Stewart,	Drumchork, Aultbea, Factor for Letterewe and Gruinard Estate,	55,326	1407

SIXTY-FOURTH SITTING—ULLAPOOL, ROSS-SHIRE, MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 10, 1894.

Thomas Mackenzie,	Doire-nam-Muc, Dundonell,	55,572	1413
Alexander Mackenzie,	Crofter, Badluachrach, Dundonell,	55,657	1414
Kenneth Mackenzie,	Crofter, Badluachrach, Dundonell,	55,872	1419
John Maclean,	Crofter, Badluachrach, Dundonell,	55,882	1419
John Mackenzie,	Crofter, Badluachrach, Dundonell,	55,887	1419
Alexander Mackenzie,	Fisherman, Badluachrach, Dundonell,	55,895	1419
Donald Maciver,	Crofter, Doire-nam-Muc, Dundonell,	55,902	1419
Murdo Macgregor,	Crofter, Doire-nam-Muc, Dundonell,	55,911	1420
Kenneth Mackenzie,	Crofter, Badcall, Dundonell,	55,924	1420
Donald Mackenzie,	Crofter's son, Badcall, Dundonell,	56,034	1422
Duncan Campbell,	Crofter and fisherman, Ardcharnich, Coul Estate,	56,038	1422
Donald Ross,	Crofter and labourer, Ardcharnich, Coul Estate,	56,186	1425
Alexander Munro,	Road Contractor, Ardcharnich, Coul Estate,	56,191	1425
William Gunn,	Strathpeffer, Factor on Cromartie Estates,	56,195	1425

Statement by Charles Innes, Solicitor, Inverness, Commissioner on Foyers Estate, . . . 1426

Declaration by Donald Macphee, Solicitor, Fort-William, ... 1428

ALPHABETICAL LIST OF WITNESSES.

Name of Witness.	Description.	Question.	Page.
Adie, Thomas,	Farmer, Symbister, Whalsey, Shetland,	45,374	1096
Anderson, James,	Fisherman, Port Ellen, Islay,	33,037	793
Anderson, Robert,	Fisherman, Whitefield, Whalsey, Shetland,	45,194	1093
Anderson, William,	Factor for Balnagown Estate, Parkhill, Ross-shire,	27,484	657
Armour, Rev. Matthew,	Free Church Manse, Sanday, Orkney,	47,178	1143
Arthur, James,	Crofter, Nisthouse, Whalsey, Shetland,	44,840	1087
Baillie, Augustus,	Dochfour, Inverness,	17,985	423
Bain, Donald,	Manager at Applecross for the Right Hon. Lord Middleton,	43,748	1057
Ballingal, James S. R.	Bridgend, Islay, Factor for Charles Morrison of Islay,	34,180	816
Bannerman, Alexander,	Crofter, Langwell, Rogart,	25,756	614
Barnetson, Alexander,	Cottar, Skinnid, Melness, Sutherlandshire,	28,565	687
Beaton, Archibald,	Crofter, Aird, Skaebost, Skye,	1,247	34
Beaton, Donald,	Cottar, Loch Skipport, South Uist,	40,240	965
Beaton, Donald,	Cottar, Stein, Waternish, Skye,	6,232	148
Beaton, James,	Cottar, Creich, Ross of Mull,	35,974	856
Beaton, John,	Crofter, Eyre, Snizort, Skye,	924	25
Beaton, Malcolm,	Crofter, Aird-chiabhaig, Ross of Mull,	35,998	857
Beaton, William,	Cottar, Kensaleyre, Snizort, Skye,	810	23
Bell, Hector,	Fisherman, Portnahaven, Islay,	33,818	809
Birkbeck, Robert,	20 Berkeley Square, London, Proprietor of the Estate of Arnisdale,	18,460	434
Black, John,	Crofter, Keils, Jura,	34,472	822
Black, William,	Crofter, Gruids, Lairg,	27,067	645
Box, John,	Factor at Tongue for His Grace the Duke of Sutherland,	28,862	695
Bruce, John,	of Sumburgh, Dunrossness, Shetland,	45,758A	1109
Buchanan, John,	Mason, Killean, Lismore,	35,640	850
Burgess, Peter,	Drumnadrochit, Factor for Glenmoriston,	15,153	359
Burns, William,	Solicitor, Inverness,	11,763	281
Cameron, Allan,	Crofter, Dundreggan, Glenmoriston,	14,914	355
Cameron, Angus,	Cottar, Claddach Kyles, North Uist,	40,978	987
Cameron, Angus,	Invercannich, Strathglass,	12,801	304
Cameron, Donald,	Cottar, Duirinish, Lochalsh,	19,058	446
Cameron, Donald,	of Lochiel,	51,855	1269
Cameron, Donald,	Middle Street, Fort-William,	49,419	1205
Cameron, Donald,	Woodbine Cottage, Fort-William,	49,046	1199
Cameron, Duncan,	Church Park, Kirkhill, by Inverness,	8,975	224
Cameron, Duncan,	Ground Officer, Bunessan, Ross of Mull,	36,221	861
Cameron, Duncan,	Portioner, Tobermory,	36,895	881
Cameron, James,	Crofter, Lots, Bunloit, Glen-Urquhart,	13,620	318
Cameron, John,	Cottar, Claddach Kirkibost, North Uist,	41,305	993
Cameron, John,	Sub-tenant, Gortan-fearna, Ardnamurchan,	38,240	914
Cameron, Murdoch,	Torrangorm, Kiltarlity,	12,302	291
Campbell, Alexander,	Crofter, Scadabay, South Harris,	42,633	1031
Campbell, Alexander,	Fisherman, Balevulin, Tiree,	36,470	867
Campbell, Allan,	Crofter, Teangue, Sleat, Skye,	8,244	198
Campbell, Angus,	Crofter, North Lochboisdale, South Uist,	40,061	962
Campbell, Angus,	Crofter, Stilligarry, South Uist,	40,442	969
Campbell, Anthony,	Crofter, Kentangaval, Barra,	38,893	928
Campbell, Archibald,	Carter, Port Ellen, Islay,	32,789	788
Campbell, Donald,	Crofter, Camusban, Loch Hourn,	18,414	432
Campbell, Donald,	Crofter, Struanmore, Bracadale, Skye,	1,704	44
Campbell, Donald,	Farm labourer, Hamara, Glendale, Skye,	4,512	104
Campbell, Donald,	Fisherman, Kilmaluag, Tiree,	36,417	867
Campbell, Donald,	Merchant, Kingussie,	47,455	1150
Campbell, Donald,	Reayside, Caithness,	22,556	529
Campbell, Duncan,	Contractor, Bunessan, Ross of Mull,	36,196	860
Campbell, Duncan,	Cottar, Glen, Barra,	38,731	924
Campbell, Duncan,	Cottar, Kentangaval, Barra,	38,881	928

Name of Witness.	Description.	Question.	Page.
Campbell, Duncan,	Crofter and fisherman, Ardcharnich, Coul Estate,	56,038	1422
Campbell, Duncan,	Labourer, Beauly,	11,007	266
Campbell, George,	Crofter, Durine, Durness, Sutherlandshire,	29,697	715
Campbell, George,	Fisherman, Laid, Durness, Sutherlandshire,	29,600	713
Campbell, George,	Port Charlotte, Islay,	34,173	816
Campbell, Hugh,	Blacksmith, Reay, Caithness,	22,321	525
Campbell, Hugh,	Crofter, Creich, Ross of Mull,	36,160	860
Campbell, Isabella,	Cottar, The Glebe, Duirinish, Skye,	6,299	149
Campbell, Miss Isabella H.,	of Jura,	34,523	823
Campbell, James,	Crofter, Druim-an-dorsair, Kilmorack, Beauly,	10,778	262
Campbell, John,	Army Pensioner, Dervaig, Mull,	37,522	894
Campbell, John,	Cottar, Fiscavaig, Minginish, Skye,	1,947	48
Campbell, John,	Cottar, Oa, Islay,	32,643	785
Campbell, John,	Crofter, Eriskay, South Uist,	40,252	965
Campbell, John,	Crofter, Murlagan, Achaluachrach, Fort-William,	49,248	1202
Campbell, John,	Crofter, North Boisdale, South Uist,	39,761	956
Campbell, John,	Wood Merchant, Inverness,	31,896	770
Campbell, Michael,	Crofter, Garrygall, Barra,	38,855	927
Campbell, Robert,	Crofter, Portskerra, Sutherlandshire,	27,739	666
Campbell, Roderick,	Crofter's son, Durine, Durness, Sutherlandshire,	29,517	712
Campbell, William,	Crofter, Amat-na-tuath, Strathoykell,	32,401	781
Carmichael, Duncan,	Feuar, Bowmore, Islay,	34,041	813
Carmichael, Hugh,	Crofter, Keills, Islay,	34,892	834
Cattanach, Alexander,	Mason, Newtonmore,	48,256	1169
Cattanach, Donald,	Merchant, Newtonmore,	47,686	1156
Cattanach, Malcolm,	Slater, Newtonmore,	48,091	1165
Chisholm, Colin,	Namur Cottage, Inverness,	8,621	213
Chisholm, Duncan,	Waterloo Place, Inverness,	9,451	233
Chisholm, John,	Labourer, Lewiston, Glen-Urquhart,	14,630	348
Clark, Neil,	Caretaker, Learganbreac, Jura,	34,482	822
Clow, Donald Alexander,	Farmer, Cuidreach, Skye,	2,396	59
" "	" "	2,588	63
Cogle, Robert,	Fisherman, Quee, Cunningsburgh, Shetland,	45,664	1104
Cormack, James,	Stonecutter, Kirkwall,	46,989	1139
Corsie, Malcolm,	Crofter, Faro, Rousay, Orkney,	46,673	1133
Cumming, James,	Crofter, Sutherland, Burray, Orkney,	46.954	1138
Cunningham, Norman,	Crofter, Scalpay, North Harris,	46,676	1032
Currie, Donald,	Crofter, South Lochboisdale, South Uist,	39,970	960
Darroch, Duncan,	of Torridon,	53,635	1362
Darroch, Neil,	Crofter, Knockrome, Jura,	34,255	818
Dingwall, Roderick,	Uig, Skye,	3,331	77
Donaldson, Hugh,	late Farm Manager, Strath, Watten, Caithness,	23,647	554
Duncan, Donald,	Crofter, Sutherland, Burray, Orkney,	46,983	1139
Duncan, Dugald,	Fisherman, Portnahaven, Islay,	33,881	810
Esson, David,	Crofter, Chalkhoull, Holm, Orkney,	46,837	1136
Farquhar, William	Crofter, Broubster, Reay, Caithness,	22,809	534
Ferguson, Fergus,	Crofter, Dunhallin, Waternish, Skye,	5,915	141
Finlayson, John,	Crofter, Hallin Park, Waternish, Skye,	6,204	148
Finlayson, Roderick,	Crofter, Maravaig, Lochs, Lewis,	44,016	1065
Forsyth, John,	Balintraid, Invergordon, Factor for Rosehall Estate,	27,407	653
Fraser, Alexander,	Crofter, Boreray Island, North Uist,	41,574	998
Fraser, Archibald,	Crofter, Camusban, Loch Hourn,	18,365	431
Fraser, Donald,	Crofter, Lenie, Glen-Urquhart,	13,540	317
Fraser, Donald,	Crofter, Lots, Bunloit, Glen-Urquhart,	13,564	318
Fraser, George Grant,	Farmer, Achvaich, Dornoch,	25,338	603
Fraser, Hugh,	Writer, Inverness, Factor for Dunmaglas,	54,702	1394
Fraser, Miss Margaret,	Cottar, Claddach Illeray, North Uist,	41,288	993
Garland, William,	Manager, Balmacaan Home Farm, Glen-Urquhart,	14,395	343
Gilbertson, Peter,	Crofter's son, Brough, Whalsey, Shetland,	44,919	1089
Gillies, Alexander,	Crofter, Kyle-Rona, Raasay,	397	14
Gillies, Alexander,	Crofter, Kyle-Rona, Raasay,	470	15
Gillies, Duncan,	Crofter, Conchra, Lochalsh,	19,113	447
Gillies, John,	Crofter, Balgown, Kilmuir, Skye,	2,873	68
Gillies, John,	Crofter, Torran, Raasay,	437	15
Gillies, Malcolm,	Labourer, Dervaig, Mull,	37,722	900
Gillies, Murdo,	Crofter, Lower Bornaskitaig, Kilmuir, Skye,	2,795	67
Gillies, Norman,	Crofter, Oskaig, Raasay,	565	18
Gillies, Ronald,	Crofter, Fladday, Raasay,	368	14
Gorn, James,	Crofter, Towerhill, Holm, Orkney,	46,925	1138
Graham, Archibald,	Cottar, Valtos, Kilmuir, Skye,	4,055	90
Graham, John,	Cottar, Idrigil, Uig, Skye,	3,304	76
Graham, John,	Crofter, Fivepenny Borve, Barvas, Lewis,	44,575	1078

Name of Witness.	Description.	Question.	Page.
Graham, John,	Crofter, Peingown, Kilmuir, Skye,	2,891	68
Graham, Robert,	Cottar, Ardtun, Ross of Mull,	36,180	860
Grant, Alexander,	Seaman, Ardorch, Strath, Skye,	7,241	168
Grant, Donald,	Solicitor, Grantown, Factor for Glenelg, &c.,	17,466	413
" "	" "	17,992	423
" "	" "	48,497	1178
Grant, Duncan,	Mason, Lewiston, Glen-Urquhart,	14,600	347
Grant, John,	Blacksmith, Dalarossie, Strathnairn,	51,234	1251
Grant, John Brown,	Factor, Chisholm Estates, Erchless, Strathglass,	9,921	241
" "	" "	12,690	301
Grant, Neil,	Fisherman, Kilbride, Strath, Skye,	6,797	160
Grant, Thomas,	Crofter, Evelix, near Dornoch,	25,737	614
Grant, William,	Cottar, Letterfearn, Glenshiel,	16,483	386
Grant, Major William,	Factor for the Countess Dowager of Seafield,	14,330	341
Gray, Archibald,	Crofter's son, Port-Uarick, Ardnamurchan,	37,347	891
" "	" "	37,472	893
Grierson, James Cullen,	Younger of Quendale, Shetland,	46,222	1121
Gunn, Alexander,	Crofter, West Helmsdale, Sutherlandshire,	25,125	595
Gunn, Alexander,	Killimster, Wick,	22,169	518
Gunn, Hugh,	Crofter, Baligill, Strathy, Sutherlandshire,	28,114	675
Gunn, William,	Factor on the Cromartie Estates, Strathpeffer,	54,579	1389
" "	" "	56,195	1425
Hamilton, Zachary Macaulay,	Baltasound, Unst, Shetland, Factor on Estates of Garth and Bressay,	45,240	1093
" "	" "	46,053	1117
Hay, John,	Crofter, Waterhall, Sanday, Orkney,	47,031	1139
Henderson, Donald,	Crofter, Geise, Caithness,	23,945	561
Henderson, Donald,	Farmer, Tannach, near Wick,	23,476	550
Henderson, George,	Dunbeath, Caithness,	22,163	518
Innes, Charles,	Solicitor, Inverness, Commissioner on Foyers Estate, (Statement by),	...	1426
Innes, Thomas,	Fisherman and Crofter, Gills, Canisbay, Caithness,	21,132	498
Johnston, John,	Crofter, Totamore Cottage, Coll,	36,648	873
Johnston, John,	Labourer, Sodom, Whalsey, Shetland,	45,146	1092
Johnston, Malcolm,	Fisherman, Garrygall, Barra,	39,001	930
Johnston, Neil,	Cottar, Howbeg, South Uist,	40,186	964
Johnston, William,	Labourer, Sodom, Whalsey, Shetland,	45,084	1091
Keith or Mac-Cich, Alexander,	Crofter, Keils, Jura,	34,366	820
Keith or Mac-Cich, John,	Crofter, Knockrome, Jura,	34,183	817
Keith or Mac-Cich, John, junior,	Crofter, Keils, Jura,	34,358	820
Keith or Mac-Cich, John, senior,	Crofter, Keils, Jura,	34,291	819
Keith, Peter,	Solicitor, Thurso, Factor for Mey Estate,	24,453	577
Kelly, Duncan,	Crofter, Drumuie, Skye,	1,502	38
Kelly, Farquhar,	Crofter, Heast, Strath, Skye,	6,931	162
Kennedy, John,	Crofter, Garvan, Conaglen,	49,333	1203
Laing, John,	Timber Merchant, Nairn,	31,812	768
Lamont, Alexander, junior,	Crofter, Keistle, Skye,	2,489	61
Lamont, Gilbert,	Retired crofter, Crowbush, Islay,	35,020	836
Lamont, John,	Cottar's son, Connista, Kilmuir, Skye,	3,554	81
Lamont, Murdo,	Crofter, Connista, Kilmuir, Skye,	3,467	80
Laurenson, Laurence,	Mail, Cunningsburgh, Shetland,	45,555	1102
Lennox, William George,	Solicitor, Kirkwall,	46,292	1123
Leslie, James,	Crofter, Westray, Orkney,	47,264	1145
Livingston, Allan,	Fisherman, Dalnaha, Lochbuy, Mull,	35,809	854
" "	" "	35,956	856
Livingston, Duncan,	Crofter, Port-Uarick, Ardnamurchan,	37,298	890
Livingston, Duncan,	Dalnaha, Lochbuy, Mull,	35,759	853
Livingston, John,	Dalnaha, Lochbuy, Mull,	35,801	854
Logan, Charles Bowman,	W.S., Edinburgh, Commissioner for the Countess Dowager of Seafield,	48,417	1175
Logan, George,	Factor for Sir Tollemache Sinclair of Ulbster, Thurso,	24,104	565
Macandrew, Sir Henry C.,	Inverness, Factor and Commissioner for Sir Kenneth Matheson of Lochalsh,	16,602	388
" "	" "	19,230	449
Macarthur, Charles,	Crofter, Ellishadder, Kilmuir, Skye,	3,866	87
Macarthur, Donald,	Fisherman, Luib, Strath, Skye,	7,007	164
Macarthur, Donald,	Port Charlotte, Islay,	33,657	807
Macarthur, Gilbert,	Fisherman, Port Charlotte, Islay,	33,566	805
Macarthur, Neil,	Crofter, Mulrees, Islay,	34,952	835
Macaskill, John,	Cottar, Fernilea, Minginish, Skye,	1,979	49

Name of Witness.	Description.	Question.	Page.
Macaskill, John,	Crofter, Berneray, South Harris,	41,667	1000
Macaskill, John,	Crofter, Geary, Waternish, Skye,	6,129	146
Macaskill, John,	Crofter, Malaclett, North Uist,	41,645	1000
Macaskill, Kenneth,	Crofter, Edinbane, Duirinish, Skye,	5,901	141
Macbeath, Roderick,	Cottar, Torgarve, Applecross,	43,690	1056
Maccallum, Henry Vary,	Solicitor, Inverness, representing Major Jackson of Swordale,	54,647	1392
Maccallum, Rev. Donald,	Minister of the Parish of Lochs, Lewis,	44,427	1072
Maccoll, Donald,	Farmer's son, Balnagown, Lismore,	35,679	851
Maccoll, Duncan,	Crofter's son, Ockle, Ardnamurchan,	37,455	893
Maccoll, John,	Post-runner, Killean, Lismore,	35,543	848
Maccrimmon, Duncan,	Crofter, Kirkton, Glenelg,	17,470	413
Maccrimmon, William,	Crofter, Glen-Berneva, Glenelg,	17,785	419
Maccormick, Donald,	Crofter, North Lochboisdale, South Uist,	40,063	962
Maccorquodale, Donald,	Cottar, Illeray, North Uist,	41,214	991
Maccuish, Alexander,	Cottar, Claddach Kirkibost, North Uist,	41,028	988
Macdonald, Alexander,	Agricultural labourer, Houghary, North Uist,	41,538	998
Macdonald, Alexander Og,	Crofter, Airdnamoine, South Uist,	40,331	968
Macdonald, Alexander,	Crofter, Dalchreichard, Glenmoriston,	15,143	359
Macdonald, Alexander,	Crofter, Tarskavaig, Sleat, Skye,	8,219	197
Macdonald, Alexander,	Crofter, 13 Achuacloich, Sleat, Skye,	8,194	197
Macdonald, Alexander,	Crofter, Kilvaxter, Kilmuir, Skye,	2,912	69
Macdonald, Alexander,	Solicitor, Portree, Factor for Sir William Mackinnon,	7,765	183
Macdonald, Alexander,	Wester Bunloit, Glen-Urquhart,	13,288	313
Macdonald, Captain Allan,	of Waternish, Skye,	6,315	149
Macdonald, Allan,	Solicitor, Inverness, Commissioner for Mackintosh of Mackintosh,	48,582	1182
Macdonald, Angus,	Crofter, Viewfield, Griminish, Benbecula,	40,541	971
Macdonald, Archibald,	Cottar, Carinish, North Uist,	41,332	994
Macdonald, Archibald,	Cottar, Claddach Kirkibost, North Uist,	41,043	988
Macdonald, Archibald,	Cottar, Kyles Paible, North Uist,	41,032	988
Macdonald, Archibald,	Merchant, Garrafad, Kilmuir, Skye,	3,635	82
Macdonald, Catherine,	Cottar, Earlish, Uig, Skye,	3,185	74
Macdonald, Charles,	Crofter, Amat-na-tuath, Ardgay,	54,391	1385
Macdonald, Charles,	Crofter, Baile-Mhic-Cuithein, Kilmuir, Skye,	3,424	79
Macdonald, Charles,	Farmer, Knocknangeal, Inverness, and Baile-nan-carn, Glenmoriston,	14,690	350
Macdonald, Donald,	Crofter, Illeray, North Uist,	41,170	991
Macdonald, Donald,	Crofter, Ose, Bracadale, Skye,	1,744	45
Macdonald, Donald,	Crofter, Skinidin, Glendale, Skye,	4,767	109
Macdonald, Donald,	Crofter, Totescore, Kilmuir, Skye,	3,042	72
Macdonald, Donald,	late Shepherd, 5 Fassifern Road, Fort-William,	48,877	1196
Macdonald, Duncan,	Cottar, Newmarket, near Stornoway,	44,742	1085
Macdonald, Farquhar,	Herd, Tighary, North Uist,	41,500	997
Macdonald, Hugh,	Calligary, Sleat, Skye,	8,124	195
Macdonald, Hugh,	Crofter, Ashall, Strath-Halladale, Sutherlandshire,	27,730	665
Macdonald, Hugh,	Fisherman, Struanmore, Bracadale, Skye,	1,717	44
Macdonald, James,	Mason, Strath, Arisaig,	50,094	1224
Macdonald, James,	Peanmeanach, Ardnish, Arisaig,	50,336	1230
Macdonald, James,	Pensioner, Duhallow, Aberarder, Stratherrick,	51,163	1250
Macdonald, John,	Cottar, Keills, Islay,	34,999A	836
Macdonald, John,	Cottar, Stoneybridge, South Uist,	40,150	963
Macdonald, John,	Cottar, Baile-Mhic-Cuithein, Kilmuir, Skye,	4,189	92
Macdonald, John,	Crofter, Solitote, Kilmuir, Skye,	3,387	78
Macdonald, John,	Crofter, Wester Muirnich, Mussady, Stratherrick,	50,891	1246
Macdonald, John,	Labourer, Balliemore of Dochgarroch, Inverness,	12,306	291
,, ,,	,, ,,	51,662	1259
Macdonald, John,	Mason, Newtonmore,	48,000	1164
,, ,,	,, ,,	48,317	1171
Macdonald, John,	Tailor and Crofter, Roskhill, Duirinish, Skye,	5,171	119
Macdonald, John, senior,	Tailor, Evanton,	54,251	1383
Macdonald, Jonathan,	Crofter, Achnacloich, Sleat, Skye,	8,151	196
Macdonald, Kenneth,	Cottar, Brogaig, Kilmuir, Skye,	3,580	81
Macdonald, Kenneth,	Crofter, Coulags, Lochcarron,	20,036	471
Macdonald, Lachlan,	Crofter and Seaman, Duisdalebeg, Sleat, Skye,	8,284	199
,, ,,	,, ,,	8,338	200
Macdonald, Mrs Margaret Morrison or,	Cottar, Claddach Illeray, North Uist,	41,288	993
Macdonald, Widow Margaret Robertson or,	Cottar, Claddach Illeray, North Uist,	41,288	993
Macdonald, Norman,	Cottar, Rodel, South Harris,	42,392	1027
Macdonald, Peter,	Crofter, Garros, Kilmuir, Skye,	3,894	87
Macdonald, Peter,	Crofter, Holmisdale, Glendale, Skye,	4,729	108
Macdonald, Peter,	Sub-tenant, Saasaig, Sleat, Skye,	8,030	194
Macdonald, Ranald,	Cluny Castle, Aberdeen, Commissioner for Lady Gordon Cathcart,	39,019	931

Name of Witness.	Description.	Question.	Page.
Macdonald, Ranald,	Cottar, Lochboisdale, South Uist,	40,312	966
Macdonald, Ranald,	Crofter, Samalaman, Glenuig,	50,596	1238
Macdonald, Ronald,	Crofter, North Lochboisdale, South Uist,	39,997	960
Macdonald, William,	Crofter, Navidale, Kildonan, Sutherlandshire,	24,600	583
Macdermid, Alexander,	Farmer, Nerabus, Rhinns, Islay,	33,544	805
Macdermid, Neil,	Farmer, Nerabus, Rhinns, Islay,	33,445	803
Macdiarmid, Alexander,	Crofter's son, Ormsaigbeg, Ardnamurchan,	37,293	890
Macdonell, Æneas Ronald,	of Camusdarroch, Arisaig,	50,296	1228
Macdougall, Alexander,	Bank Agent, Kingussie, Factor for Sir John Ramsden,	48,574	1181
Macdougall, Hugh,	Blacksmith and Crofter, Milton, Glen-Urquhart,	12,829	304
Macdougall, John,	Crofter, Bunloit, Glen-Urquhart,	13,395	315
Maceachan, Allan,	Crofter, Kinsadel, South Morar, Arisaig,	49,826	1219
Maceachan, Hector,	Cottar, Geirinish, South Uist,	40,515	971
Macewan, Duncan Campbell,	Feuar, Bowmore, Islay,	33,933	811
Macewan, Neil,	Crofter, Oa, Islay,	32,735	787
Macfadyen, Archibald,	Cottar, Lochbuy, Mull,	35,687	852
Macfadyen, Archibald,	Fisherman, Gribun, Mull,	35,835	854
Macfadyen, Charles,	Airidh-nan-gobhar, Coll,	36,824	880
Macfadyen, Dugald Ferguson,	Merchant, Port Charlotte, Islay,	33,295	799
Macfarlane, Angus,	Soddisdale, Coll,	36,861	881
Macgillivray, Archibald,	Crofter's son, Plocaig, Ardnamurchan,	37,428	893
Macgillivray, Donald,	Cottar, Aird-alanais, Ross of Mull,	36,139	859
Macgillivray, Donald,	Crofter, Aird, Sleat, Skye,	8,065	194
Macgillivray, Donald,	Mason Contractor, Bowmore, Islay,	34,082	814
Macgillivray, William,	Farmer, Balnaberran, Errogie, Stratherrick,	50,677	1241
Macgregor, Murdo,	Crofter, Doire-nam-Muc, Dundonell,	55,911	1420
Macgugan, John,	Fisherman, Castlehill, Tarbert, Lochfyne,	35,472	847
Macindeor, Duncan,	Roadman, Kilmeny, Islay,	35,023	836
Macinnes, Alexander,	Crofter, Drumfearn, Sleat, Skye,	8,307	200
Macinnes, Donald,	Crofter's son, Renetra, Snizort, Skye,	2,317	57
Macinnes, Donald,	Mason, Uig, Coll,	36,773	878
Macinnes, Hugh,	Airidh-nan-gobhar, Coll,	36,794	879
Macinnes, John,	Crofter, Lower Breakish, Strath, Skye,	7,520	174
Macinnes, John,	Crofter, Stilligarry, South Uist,	40,510	971
Macinnes, Jonathan,	Crofter, Airor, Knoydart,	43,419	1048
Macinnes, Myles,	Merchant, Portree,	7,768	183
Macinnes, Neil,	Crofter, Airor, Knoydart,	43,413	1048
Macinnes, Robert,	Crofter's son, Lochbuy, Mull,	35,739	853
Macinnes, Roderick,	Cottar, Digg, Kilmuir, Skye,	4,092	91
Macinnes, William,	Crofter, Airor, Knoydart,	43,309	1046
Macintyre, Donald,	Cottar, Snishival, South Uist,	40,226	965
Macintyre, Donald,	Crofter, Snishival, South Uist,	40,212	964
Macintyre, Donald,	Fisherman, Castlebay, Barra,	38,962	929
Macintyre, Hector,	Cottar, South Lochboisdale, South Uist,	39,693	955
Macintyre, Hector,	Crofter, Howmore, South Uist,	40,232	965
Macintyre, John Gordon,	Crofter, Griminish, Benbecula,	40,707	974
Macintyre, Peter,	Crofter, Howbeg, South Uist,	40,156	963
Maciver, Alexander,	Crofter, Tigh-na-faoilinn, Aultbea,	55,053	1403
Maciver, Donald,	Crofter, Doire-nam-Muc, Dundonell,	55,902	1419
Maciver, Evander,	Factor at Scourie for His Grace the Duke of Sutherland,	29,703	715
,, ,,	,, ,,	30,621	738
,, ,,	,, ,,	31,345	752
Mackay, Alexander,	Crofter, Kirtomy, Farr, Sutherlandshire,	28,031	673
Mackay, Alexander,	Crofter's Son, Wester Clyne, Brora,	26,227	626
Mackay, Alexander,	Merchant, Bonar Bridge	27,458	656
Mackay, David,	Crofter, Heights of Fodderty, Dingwall,	54,427	1386
Mackay, David,	Crofter, Auckingill, Canisbay, Caithness,	21,277	501
Mackay, David,	Crofter, Rheanbreck, Lairg,	26,403	629
Mackay, Donald,	Cearshader, Lochs, Lewis,	44,251	1069
Mackay, Donald,	Cottar, Camuiltmuir, Kiltarlity,	11,993	286
Mackay, Donald,	Crofter, Buldoo, Reay, Caithness,	22,557	529
Mackay, Donald Hugh,	Merchant, Ach-na-h-uaighe, Melness, Sutherlandshire,	28,509	686
Mackay, Henry,	Crofter, Sconser, Skye,	131	9
Mackay, Hugh,	Crofter, Melness, Tongue, Sutherlandshire,	28,224	677
Mackay, James,	Ground Officer, Scourie, Sutherlandshire,	30,600	737
Mackay, John,	Cottar, Scarasta, South Harris,	42,252	1025
Mackay, John,	Crofter's son, Newlands, Farr, Sutherlandshire,	27,952	671
Mackay, John,	Crofter's son, Strathy, Sutherlandshire,	28,118	675
Mackay, John G.,	Merchant, Portree,	1	2
Mackay, Kenneth,	Cottar, Calbost, Lochs, Lewis,	44,106	1066
Mackay, Kenneth,	Cottar, Kyleakin, Strath, Skye,	7,321	169
Mackay, Lachlan,	Crofter, Kilmuir, Dunvegan, Skye,	5,189	120
Mackay, Neil,	Fisherman, Colbost, Glendale, Skye,	4,706	108
Mackay, Robert,	Crofter and blacksmith, Sangomore, Durness, Sutherlandshire,	29,433	710

Name of Witness.	Description.	Question.	Page.
Mackay, Thomas,	Fisherman, Laid, Durness, Sutherlandshire,	29,652	714
Mackay, William,	Crofter's son, Torrisdale, Tongue, Sutherlandshire,	28,827	694
Mackay, William,	Solicitor, Inverness (Seafield Estate),	13,651	319
,, ,,	,, ,, (,,),	14,171	337
,, ,,	,, ,, (Kintail Estate),	17,212	405
,, ,,	,, ,, (Knoydart Estate),	43,454	1049
Mackechnie, Coll,	Carpenter, Clachan, Kintyre,	35,379	845
Mackechnie, William,	Fish-dealer, Conispy, Islay,	33,687	807
Mackenzie, Alexander,	Crofter, Achgarve, Aultbea,	55,263	1406
Mackenzie, Alexander,	Crofter, Badluachrach, Dundonell,	55,657	1414
Mackenzie, Alexander,	Crofter, Boreraig, Duirinish, Skye,	5,814	138
Mackenzie, Alexander,	Fisherman, Badluachrach, Dundonell,	55,895	1419
Mackenzie, Colin,	Cottar, Conchra, Lochalsh,	19,153	448
Mackenzie, Donald,	Cottar, Ashaig, Strath, Skye,	7,333	170
Mackenzie, Donald,	Cottar, Strond, South Harris,	42,497	1029
Mackenzie, Donald,	Crofter's son, Badcall, Dundonell,	56,034	1422
Mackenzie, John,	Baddidarach, Assynt, Sutherland hire,	31,289	751
Mackenzie, John,	Crofter, Badluachrach, Dundonell,	55,887	1419
Mackenzie, John,	Crofter, East Brora,	26,215	626
Mackenzie, John,	Crofter, Stromemore, Lochcarron,	20,386	477
Mackenzie, John,	Factor, Kilmuir, Skye,	4,210	93
Mackenzie, John,	Mossbank, Portree, Factor for Lynedale,	1,440	37
Mackenzie, John Tolmie,	Factor for Macleod of Macleod, Dunvegan, Skye,	2,003	49
Mackenzie, Kenneth,	Crofter, Badcall, Dundonell,	55,924	1420
Mackenzie, Kenneth,	Crofter, Badluachrach, Dundonell,	55,872	1419
Mackenzie, Kenneth,	Crofter's son, Habost, Lochs, Lewis,	44,154	1067
Mackenzie, Malcolm,	Crofter, Maligar, Kilmuir, Skye,	4,156	92
Mackenzie, Murdo,	Cottar, Grabhir, Lochs, Lewis,	44,058	1065
Mackenzie, Murdo,	Cottar, Laide, Aultbea,	55,193	1405
Mackenzie, Murdo,	Crofter, Bailemeanach, Raasay,	532	17
Mackenzie, Murdo,	Crofter, Buaile-na-luib, Aultbea,	55,315	1407
Mackenzie, Roderick,	Cottar, Calbost, Lochs, Lewis,	44,128	1067
Mackenzie, Roderick,	Crofter, Laide, Aultbea,	54,891	1399
Mackenzie, Roderick,	Merchant, Laide, Aultbea,	54,983	1401
Mackenzie, Roderick,	Retired Farmer, Strathcarron,	19,426	461
Mackenzie, Thomas,	Doire-nam-Muc, Dundonell,	55,572	1413
Mackenzie, William,	Crofter, Jeantown, Lochcarron,	20,356	477
Mackenzie, William,	Crofter, Trantlemore, Strath-Halladale, Sutherlandshire,	27,513	659
Mackenzie, William,	Teacher, Valtos, Kilmuir, Skye,	3,957	88
Mackidd, James,	Farmer, Thurso East, Caithness,	24,497	580
Mackillop, Duncan,	Cottar, Penmore, Mull,	37,765	901
Mackinnon, Charles,	Crofter, Upper Glen-Hinisdale, Skye,	3,086	73
Mackinnon, Donald,	Cottar, Ashaig, Strath, Skye,	7,324	169
Mackinnon, Donald,	Cottar, Baleshare, North Uist,	40,853	984
Mackinnon, Donald,	Cottar, Linicro, Monkstadt, Kilmuir, Skye,	3,054	72
Mackinnon, Donald,	Crofter, Halistra, Waternish, Skye,	6,185	147
Mackinnon, Dugald,	Crofter, Whitehouse, Kintyre,	35,193	841
Mackinnon, Duncan,	Cottar, Scarinish, Tiree,	36,490	868
Mackinnon, Duncan,	Crofter, Struanmore, Bracadale, Skye,	1,519	39
Mackinnon, Hector,	Fisherman, Kilmaluag, Tiree,	36,533	869
Mackinnon, John,	Crofter, Caitchean, Ross of Mull,	36,032	858
Mackinnon, John,	Crofter and fisherman, Camuscross, Sleat, Skye,	8,269	199
Mackinnon, John,	Crofter, Sconser, Skye,	210	11
Mackinnon, John,	Crofter, Torrin, Strath, Skye,	6,695	158
Mackinnon, Lachlan,	Cottar, Elgol, Strath, Skye,	7,587	176
Mackinnon, Lachlan,	Cottar, Torrin, Strath, Skye,	6,775	160
Mackinnon, Murdo,	Crofter, Hungladder, Kilmuir, Skye,	2,709	65
Mackinnon, Murdoch,	Crofter, Ault, Earsary, Barra,	38,461	918
Mackinnon, Murdoch,	Crofter, Tangasdale, Barra,	38,920	929
Mackinnon, Neil,	Cottar, Elgol, Strath, Skye,	7,609	176
Mackinnon, Neil,	Cottar, Ferrinvicquire, Duirinish, Skye,	5,829	139
Mackintosh, Archibald,	Crofter, Upper Breakish, Strath, Skye,	7,453	173
Mackintosh, Donald,	Cattle-dealer, Bunloit, Glen-Urquhart,	14,485	345
Mackintosh, James,	Factor for Lord Macdonald, Ostaig, Sleat, Skye,	1,009	26
,, ,,	,, ,,	2,326	57
,, ,,	,, ,,	7,634	177
,, ,,	,, ,,	8,342	201
Mackintosh, John,	Crofter, Easter Bunloit, Glen-Urquhart,	13,438	315
Mackintosh, William,	Cottar, Tullich, Rosehall,	27,303	651
Mackintosh, William,	Crofter, Kishorn, Lochcarron,	20,434	478
Mackissock, Gillies,	Labourer, Inverie, Knoydart,	43,087	1043
Maclachlan, Dugald,	Bank Agent, Portree,	8,615	209
Maclachlan, Lachlan,	Crofter, Dervaig, Mull,	37,692	899
Maclachlan, Norman,	Cottar, Kingsburgh, Skye,	733	21

Name of Witness.	Description.	Question.	Page.
Maclachlan, Widow Ann Macmillan or,	Crofter, Garvan, Conaglen,	49,369	1204
Maclean, Alexander,	Cottar, Claddach Carinish, North Uist,	41,252	992
Maclean, Alexander,	Crofter, Balemartin, Tiree,	36,529	868
Maclean, Alexander,	Fisherman, Mellon-Udrigil, Aultbea,	55,307	1407
Maclean, Surgeon-General Alexander	Thurso,	23,213	543
Maclean, Donald,	Airidh-an-t-sluic, Coll,	36,854	881
Maclean, Donald,	Cottar, Carbost, Minginish, Skye,	1,814	46
Maclean, Donald,	Cottar, Carbost, Minginish, Skye,	1,997	49
Maclean, Donald,	Cottar, Kallin, Grimsay, North Uist,	41,558	998
Maclean, Donald,	Crofter, Earlish, Uig, Skye,	3,171	74
Maclean, Donald,	Crofter, Galtrigill, Duirinish, Skye,	5,879	140
Maclean, Donald,	Golspie, Factor for the Dunrobin Estates of His Grace the Duke of Sutherland,	25,320	599
,, ,,	,, ,,	26,783	637
Maclean, Donald,	Labourer, Dervaig, Mull,	37,739	900
Maclean, Dugald,	Sub-tenant, Torrans, Pennygael, Mull,	35,905	855
Maclean, Duncan,	Crofter, Balnacra, Lochcarron,	20,160	473
Maclean, Hugh,	Crofter, Borve, Barra,	38,927	929
Maclean, James,	Crofter, Stoneybridge, South Uist,	40,108	963
Maclean, John,	Cottar, Grassfield, Whitehouse, Kintyre,	35,312	843
Maclean, John,	Crofter, Badluachrach, Dundonell,	55,882	1419
Maclean, John,	Crofter, Ebost, Bracadale, Skye,	1,770	45
Maclean, John,	Crofter, Fasach, Glendale, Skye,	4,628	106
Maclean, John,	Crofter, Lower Harrapol, Strath, Skye,	7,581	175
Maclean, John,	Crofter, Nedd, Assynt, Sutherlandshire,	31,091	747
Maclean, John,	Labourer, Arineckaig, Lochcarron,	20,468	479
Maclean, Kenneth,	Crofter, Arineckaig, Lochcarron,	20,558	480
Maclean, Murdo,	Crofter, Lealt, Kilmuir, Skye,	4,063	90
Maclean, Myles,	Crofter, Harrapol, Strath, Skye,	7,525	174
Maclean, Roderick,	Manse Cottage, Fasnakyle, Strathglass,	11,177	270
,, ,,	,, ,,	52,258	1289
Macleay, William,	Crofter, Clashmore, Dornoch,	25,667	610
Maclellan, Alexander,	Crofter, Loch Efort, North Uist,	41,372	995
Maclellan, Angus,	Fisherman, Loch Eynort, South Uist,	40,079	962
Maclellan, Catherine Morrison or,	Milton, South Uist,	40,825	984
Maclellan, Donald,	Crofter, Garraheillie, South Uist,	39,903	959
Maclennan, Alexander,	Crofter, Maravaig, Lochs, Lewis,	43,873	1061
Maclennan, Donald,	Bog of Cullicudden, by Dingwall,	54,145	1380
Maclennan, Donald,	Cottar, Scarasta, South Harris,	42,123	1023
Maclennan, Ewen,	Crofter, Dornie, Kintail,	16,471	386
Maclennan, John,	Cottar, Balallan, Lochs, Lewis,	44,309	1070
Maclennan, John,	Crofter, Duirinish, Lochalsh,	18,951	444
Maclennan, Kenneth,	Crofter, Finsbay, South Harris,	42,551	1030
Maclennan, Roderick,	Fasnakyle Bridge, Strathglass,	12,757	303
Maclennan, Ronald,	Boatman, Island of Rona, Skye,	332	13
Macleod, Alexander,	Cottar, Obe, South Harris,	42,474	1028
Macleod, Alexander,	Crofter, Ardorch, Strath, Skye,	7,222	168
Macleod, Alexander,	Crofter, Cul-nan-cnoc, Kilmuir, Skye,	3,943	88
Macleod, Alexander,	Crofter, Gillen, Waternish, Skye,	6,158	147
Macleod, Alexander,	Crofter, Grealine, Kilmuir, Skye,	4,178	92
Macleod, Alexander,	Crofter, Scourie Village, Sutherlandshire,	30,169	729
Macleod, Allan,	Crofter, Treaslane, Skye,	1,275	35
Macleod, Angus,	Cattle and Sheep Dealer, Glen Bernera, Glenelg,	17,628	416
Macleod, Angus,	Crofter, Idrigil, Uig, Skye,	3,221	75
Macleod, Angus,	Crofter, Upper Breakish, Strath, Skye,	7,338	170
Macleod, Donald,	Crofter, Knockan, Assynt, Sutherlandshire,	30,843	743
Macleod, Donald,	Crofter, Mid Clyth, Caithness,	21,814	510
Macleod, Donald,	Retired Shepherd, Kirkton, Glenelg,	17,696	417
Macleod, Donald,	Squatter, Laxdale, Stornoway, Lewis,	44,723	1085
Macleod, Donald M.,	Crofter's Son, Geary, Waternish, Skye,	5,933	142
Macleod, Duncan,	Crofter, Ardhasig, North Harris,	42,850	1035
Macleod, Farquhar,	Labourer, Portree,	71	8
Macleod, John,	Cottar, Ardhasig, North Harris,	42,729	1033
Macleod, John,	Crofter, Braes of Raasay,	492	16
Macleod, John,	Crofter, Harlosh, Duirinish, Skye,	5,068	116
Macleod, John,	Crofter, Knockan, Assynt, Sutherlandshire,	30,919	744
Macleod, John,	Crofter, Knockbreck, Waternish, Skye,	6,181	147
Macleod, John,	Crofter, Sand, Aultbea,	54,867	1399
Macleod, John,	Merchant, Invermoriston,	14,635	348
Macleod, Joseph,	Sub-tenant, Brora,	26,146	623
Macleod, Kenneth,	Crofter, Tigh-na-faollin, Aultbea,	55,024	1402
Macleod, Lachlan,	Crofter, Flashadder, Lyndale, Skye,	1,423	37
Macleod of Macleod,	Dunvegan, Skye,	5,637	129
Macleod, Malcolm,	Cottar, Berneray, South Harris,	41,697	1001

Name of Witness.	Description.	Question.	Page.
Macleod, Malcolm,	Crofter, Harlosh, Duirinish, Skye,	5,119	118
Macleod, Murdo (Finlay),	Crofter's Son, Culkein-Drumbaig, Assynt, Sutherlandshire,	30,967	745
Macleod, Murdo,	Crofter, Habost, Lochs, Lewis,	44,233	1068
Macleod, Murdo,	Crofter, Sconser, Skye,	192	10
Macleod, Neil,	Cottar, Eyre, Snizort, Skye,	568	18
Macleod, Norman,	Crofter, Borsham, South Harris,	41,870	1018
Macleod, William,	Cottar, Rosehall,	27,374	652
Macleod, William,	Crofter, Achina, Farr, Sutherlandshire,	27,823	667
Macleod, William,	Crofter, Clachan, Kilmuir, Skye,	4,074	90
Macmaster, Ewan,	Shepherd, Letter-Morar, Glen-Alladale Estate,	50,660	1240
Macmaster, Hugh,	Crofter, Airor, Knoydart,	43,444	1049
Macmaster, John,	Dairyman, 17 Low Street, Fort William,	49,027	1198
Macmillan, Alexander,	Crofter, Herbusta, Kilmuir, Skye,	2,593	63
Macmillan, Donald,	Crofter's Son, Duisky, Conaglen,	49,385	1204
Macmillan, Duncan,	Crofter, Easter Bunloit, Glen-Urquhart,	13,552	317
Macmillan, John,	Crofter, Morach, Arisaig,	49,960	1221
Macmillan, John,	Crofter, Smerclette, South Uist,	39,948	960
Macmillan, Malcolm,	Crofter, Achosnich, Ardnamurchan,	37,373	891
Macmillan, Malcolm,	Steamboat Agent, Bowmore, Islay,	34,145	815
Macnab, Angus,	Carter, Port Ellen, Islay,	32,953	791
Macnab, James,	Fisherman, Port Wemyss, Islay,	33,810	809
Macnab, Neil,	Fisherman, Port Wemyss, Islay,	33,723	808
Macnab, Peter,	Crofter, Gillen, Waternish, Skye,	6,152	147
Macnair, Alexander,	Crofter, Jeantown, Lochcarron,	20,296	476
Macneil, Allan,	Crofter, Tangasdale, Barra,	38,900	928
Macneil, John,	Crofter, Breivig, Barra,	38,629	922
Macneil, Michael,	Crofter, Bruernish, Barra,	38,272	914
Macneill, Archibald,	Smith, Kenovay, Tiree,	36,442	867
Macneill, Charles,	Ardachy, Ross of Mull,	35,983	857
Macneill, Donald,	Tailor, Barrapoll, Tiree,	36,514	868
Macphail, John,	Shepherd, Achronich, Mull,	37,789	901
Macphee, David,	Achosnich, Ardnamurchan,	37,364	891
Macphee, Donald,	Solicitor, Fort William,	48,652	1184
" "	(Declaration by),		1428
Macphee, Neil,	Crofter, Kilpheder, South Uist,	39,257	946
Macphee, William,	Crofter, North Ballachulish,	49,113	1200
Macphie, John,	Crofter, Harlosh, Duirinish, Skye,	5,163	119
Macphie, Ronald,	Crofter, Lusta, Waternish, Skye,	6,268	149
Macpherson, Alexander,	Solicitor, Kingussie, Factor for Cluny and Glentruim,	48,500	1179
Macpherson, Donald,	Crofter, Lephin, Glendale, Skye,	4,845	110
Macpherson, Donald,	Crofter, Lower Glen-Hinisdale, Skye,	3,066	72
Macpherson, Donald,	Crofter, Saasaig, Sleat, Skye,	8,021	193
Macpherson, Donald,	Late Shepherd, Newtonmore,	47,970	1163
Macpherson, Joseph,	Cottar, Kyleakin, Strath, Skye,	7,266	168
Macpherson, John,	Cottar, Upper Bornaskitaig, Kilmuir, Skye,	2,824	67
Macpherson, John,	Crofter, Glendale, Skye,	4,356	99
" "	" "	6,463	153
Macpherson, Neil,	Crofter, Upper Milivaig, Glendale, Skye,	4,487	103
Macpherson-Grant, Sir George,	Of Ballindalloch, Bart.,	48,337	1171
Macqueen, Lachlan,	Crofter, Stenscholl, Kilmuir, Skye,	4,138	92
Macrae, Alexander,	Cottar, Avernish, Lochalsh,	18,678	439
Macrae, Alexander,	Crofter, Inverinate, Kintail,	15,437	367
Macrae, Christopher,	Crofter, Camuslunie, Kintail,	16,462	386
Macrae, Donald,	Crofter, Baile-'chuirn, Raasay,	529	17
Macrae, Donald,	Crofter, Camuslongart, Lochalsh,	19,212	449
Macrae, Donald,	Morvich, Kintail,	16,767	396
Macrae, Donald,	('Balallan') Plockton,	14,432	343
Macrae, Duncan,	Cottar, Allt-a'-chruinn, Morvich, Kintail,	17,170	404
Macrae, Duncan,	Torgormack, Kilmorack, Beauly,	9,221	229
Macrae, Farquhar,	Cottar, Letterfearn, Glenshiel,	16,531	387
Macrae, Farquhar,	Farmer, Rebeg, Kirkhill, by Inverness,	9,744	238
Macrae, Finlay,	Crofter, Duirinish, Lochalsh,	18,736	440
Macrae, Hugh,	Crofter, Upper Breakish, Strath, Skye,	7,504	173
Macrae, John,	Crofter, Duirinish, Lochalsh,	19,051	446
Macrae, Kenneth,	Cottar, Corrieblair, Edderton,	32,485	783
Macrae, Kenneth,	Crofter, Dunan, Strath, Skye,	7,155	167
Macrae, Margaret,	Ardelve, Lochalsh,	19,199	449
Macrae, Murdo,	Crofter, Camuslunie, Kintail,	16,400	385
Macrae, Norman,	Crofter and Fisherman, Dunan, Strath, Skye,	7,182	167
Macrae, Roderick,	Crofter, Lynedale, Skye,	1,311	35
Macswan, Alexander,	Crofter, Acairseid-thioram, Island of Rona, Skye,	304	12
Macswan, Donald,	Crofter, Knockbreck, Waternish, Skye,	6167	147
Macswan, John,	Cottar, Stein, Waternish, Skye,	6,249	148
Mactavish, Archibald,	Arivore, Whitehouse, Kintyre,	35,192	841

Name of Witness.	Description.	Question.	Page.
Malcolm, George,	Factor, Invergarry,	52,296	1290
Malcolmson, John,	Crofter, Flanderstown, Cunningsburgh, Shetland,	45,656	1104
Manners, Charles R.,	C.E., Inverness, Factor for Lord Wimborne, Achnashellach.	31,905	770
Manson, John,	Farmer, Dunnet, Caithness,	23,313	548
Manson, Robert,	Crofter, Achreamie, Reay, Caithness,	22,691	532
Martin, John,	Crofter, Upper Bornaskitaig, Kilmuir, Skye,	2,776	67
Martin, John, jun.,	Crofter, Geary, Waternish, Skye,	6,049	144
Martin, Malcolm,	Crofter, Digg, Kilmuir, Skye,	4,202	92
Matheson, Alexander,	Crofter's son, Earlish, Uig, Skye,	3,130	73
Matheson, Alexander,	Sub-tenant, Carbost, Minginish, Skye,	1,901	47
Matheson, Angus,	Crofter, Baddidarach, Assynt, Sutherlandshire,	31,228	750
Matheson, Donald,	Crofter, Kilvaxter, Kilmuir, Skye,	2,980	70
Matheson, Donald,	Labourer, Glaick, Balmacara, Lochalsh,	18,660	439
Matheson, John,	Crofter, Baddidarach, Assynt, Sutherlandshire,	31,333	752
Matheson, John,	Grieve, Swordale,	54,320	1384
Matheson, Kenneth,	Ferryman, Glaick, Balmacara, Lochalsh,	18,609	438
Matheson, Robert,	Labourer, Rogart,	26,251	626
Matheson, Robert Finlayson,	Tarbert, Harris, Factor for Lady Scott,	42,896	1036
Matheson, Roderick,	Crofter, Torran-na-h-eirig, Kiltarlity,	12,300	291
Matheson, William,	Crofter's Son, Badnamban, Assynt, Sutherlandshire,	31,171	748
Matheson, William,	Tailor, Badanloch, Kildonan, Sutherlandshire,	24,902	591
Meiklejohn, John J. R.,	Factor for Novar Estate, Evanton,	31,463	756
" "	" "	54,141	1380
Menzies, Robert,	Crofter, Elphin, Assynt, Sutherlandshire,	30,651	739
Miller, John,	Crofter, Brabsterdorran, Caithness,	23,560	552
Montgomery, Murdoch,	Crofter, Vatten, Duirinish, Skye,	5,317	122
Morrison, Alexander,	Crofter, Loch Efort, North Uist,	41,471	997
Morrison, Angus,	Crofter, Fivepenny Borve, Barvas, Lewis,	44,618	1079
Morrison, Donald,	Crofter, Balchrieck, Rhiconich, Sutherlandshire,	29,932	723
Morrison, Donald,	Crofter, Mol-na-Herradh, North Harris,	42,853	1035
Morrison, James William,	Late Teacher, Torrisdale, Tongue, Sutherlandshire,	28,633	689
Morrison, Hector,	Crofter, Badcall, Scourie, Sutherlandshire,	30,505	735
Munn, Angus,	Crofter, Hianish, Tiree,	36,485	868
Munro, Alexander,	Road contractor, Ardcharnich, Coul Estate,	56,191	1425
Munro, David,	Cottar, Altas, Rosehall,	27,355	652
Munro, Donald,	Farmer, Knockancaoirin, by Evanton,	54,158	1381
Munro, Malcolm,	Crofter, Achintoul, Rosehall,	27,265	650
Munro, William,	Crofter, Altas, Rosehall,	27,287	651
Munro, William,	Crofter, Lower Breakish, Strath, Skye,	7,509	174
Murchison, John,	Crofter, Glenhaultin, Skye,	2,282	56
Murchison, Kenneth,	Ground-officer, Strathcarron,	19,992	471
Murray, Angus,	Crofter, Achrimsdale, Clyne, Brora,	26,241	626
Murray, Charles James,	of Lochcarron,	20,895	491
Murray, James,	Doune, Strathoykel,	32,207	777
Murray, John Thomson,	Crofter, Portgower, Sutherlandshire,	25,222	597
Nicholls, John, A.,	Mines Manager, Robolls, Islay,	34,636	827
Nicholson, Arthur William,	of Arisaig,	50,414	1232
Nicolson, Donald,	Crofter, Bernisdale, Skaebost, Skye,	1,231	34
Nicolson, Donald,	Crofter, Solitote, Kilmuir, Skye,	3,336	77
Nicolson, Donald,	Crofter, Torrin, Strath, Skye,	6,467	154
Nicolson, John,	Army Pensioner, Tote, Skye,	952	25
Nicolson, John,	Salmon Fisher, Craiglea, Portree,	81	9
Nicolson, John,	Sandwick, Shetland,	45,721	1108
Nicolson, Malcolm,	Crofter, Sheader, Glenuig, Skye,	3,197	74
Nicolson, Ronald,	Crofter, Island of Rona, Skye	265	12
Nicolson, William,	Crofter, Marrishadder, Kilmuir, Skye,	3,910	88
Nisbet, Colin,	Crofter, Ardtoe, Ardnamurchan,	38,158	912
Nisbet, James,	Crofter, Ormsaigbeg, Arduamurchan,	37,061	884
Orr, Donald,	Millwright, Starchmill, Islay,	34,802	832
Paterson, Donald,	Askernish, South Uist, Factor for Lady Gordon Cathcart,	39,588	952
" "	" "	40,330	967
" "	" "	40,764	976
Peace, William,	Crofter, Barrowfield, Sanday, Orkney,	47,136	1142
Peter, John,	Factor for Lord Lovat, Beauly,	12,444	294
Polson, Alexander,	Teacher, Dunbeath, Caithness,	21,961	513
Pratt, Peter,	Crofter, Drury, Holm, Orkney,	46,896	1137
Pratt, William,	Crofter, Braehead, St Andrews, Orkney,	47,319	1146

Name of Witness.	Description.	Question.	Page.
Reid, Donald,	Crofter, Slickly, Canisbay, Caithness,	20,942	494
Reid, Peter,	Factor on Kildalton Estate, Islay,	33,120	794
Reid, William,	Boat Builder, Keiss, Caithness,	21,379	502
Rendall, James,	Crofter, Clett, Whalsey, Shetland,	44,772	1086
" "	" "	45,392	1097
Robertson, Donald,	Forester, Novar, Evanton,	31,533	759
Robertson, Duncan,	Farmer, Comar, Strathglass,	11,828	283
Robertson, Duncan John,	Solicitor, Kirkwall, Agent for General Burroughs of Rousay,	47,332	1146
Robertson, James,	Crofter, Willil, Levenwick, Shetland,	45,730	1108
Robertson, John,	Cottar, Ashaig, Strath, Skye,	7,328	170
Robertson, John,	Orbost, Factor for Glendale, Skye,	4,857	110
" "	" "	5,914A	141
Robertson, Peter,	Cottar, Luib, Strath, Skye,	7,087	165
Rose, Donald,	Crofter, Baddaroch, Strathoykel,	32,321	779
Ross, Alexander,	Crofter, Fendom, near Tain,	32,610	784
Ross, Alexander,	Crofter, Ochto Falls, Strathoykel,	31,916	772
Ross, David,	Crofter, Torroy, Strathoykel,	32,375	780
Ross, Donald,	Crofter and labourer, Ardcharnich, Coul Estate,	56,186	1425
Ross, James,	Solicitor, Inverness, Factor for Raasay,	51,669	1259
Ross, John,	Crofter, Syal, Strathcarron,	32,219	778
Ross, Lachlan,	Crofter, Achreisgill, Rhiconich, Sutherlandshire,	30,065	727
Ross, Malcolm,	Crofter and Catechist, Kendram, Kilmuir, Skye,	3,343	77
Ross, Norman,	Crofter, Glasvein, Glendale, Skye,	4,742	109
Ross, Robert,	Cottar, Ardgay,	32,587	784
Ross, Rev. Roderick,	Free Church Minister, Coll,	36,598	870
Ross, William,	Wire-fencer, Pitmaduthie,	32,621	785
Sandison, John,	Farmer, Coldback, Unst, Shetland,	46,262	1122
Saunders, Robert,	Crofter, Fivepenny Borve, Barvas, Lewis,	44,613	1079
Shaw, Alexander,	Farmer, Balindialish, Lairg,	26,610	634
Shaw, Donald,	Crofter, Edinbane, Duirinish, Skye,	5,896	140
Shaw, Duncan,	W.S., Inverness, Factor for Lochcarron,	20,582	480
Shaw, Neil,	Crofter, Eyre, Snizort, Skye,	858	23
Sinclair, Donald,	Crofter, Barrapoll, Tiree,	36,321	865
Sinclair, Donald,	Crofter, Roster, Clyth, Caithness,	21,569	506
Skinner, William Marshall,	Drumin, Ballindalloch, Factor for His Grace the Duke of Richmond and Gordon,	48,498	1178
Slater, Peter Peterson,	Solicitor, Edinburgh, representing Agents for Lady Matheson of the Lews,	44,634	1079
Smith, Andrew,	Crofter, Vadsgarth, Cunningsburgh, Shetland,	45,395	1097
Smith, George,	Villans, Cunningsburgh, Shetland,	45,521	1101
Smith, H. Y. L.,	Solicitor, Fort William, Factor for Lord Abinger,	49,506	1206
Smith, James,	Factor for Strathconan, Inverness,	12,693	301
Smith, John,	Crofter, Fivepenny Borve, Barvas, Lewis,	44,626	1079
Smith, Malcolm,	Cottar, Balallan, Lochs, Lewis,	44,397	1071
Smith, William Allis,	of Glencalvie, Ross-shire,	54,706	1395
Stewart, Angus,	Drumchork, Aultbea, Factor for Letterewe and Gruinard Estate,	55,326	1407
Stewart, Archibald,	Slignach, Portree,	54	8
Stewart, Donald,	Crofter, Fanks, Lynedale, Skye,	1,359	36
Stewart, Hector,	Moss, Tiree,	36,224A	861
Stickle, David,	Pettester, Baltasound, Unst, Shetland,	45,943	1115
Sutherland, Alexander,	Crofter's Son, Durine, Durness, Sutherlandshire,	29,464	711
Sutherland, Alexander,	Latheronwheel, Caithness,	21,911	512
Sutherland, Donald,	Crofter, Saltness, Longhope, Orkney,	46,761	1135
Sutherland, Donald,	Farmer, Burnfoot, Kinbrace,	26,261	627
Sutherland, James,	Crofter, Sangomore, Durness, Sutherlandshire,	29,367	709
Sutherland, James,	Spinningdale, Bonar Bridge,	27,427	654
Sutherland, John,	Crofter, Doirecha, Rosehall,	27,122	647
Sutherland, John,	Merchant, Pittentrail, Rogart,	26,006	620
Sutherland, Kenneth,	Cottar, Sangomore, Durness, Sutherlandshire,	29,589	713
Tait, William Reid,	Thurso, Factor for Sir Robert C. Sinclair of Murkle,	22,989	537
Taylor, John,	Land Surveyor, Ebost, Skye,	1,226	34
" "	" "	5,410	124
" "	" "	6,438	152
Taylor, William,	Carrier, Halkirk, Caithness,	23,862	560
Thomson, Charles,	Crofter, Quoyhouse, Unst, Shetland,	45,901	1114
Tulloch, Laurence,	Labourer, Blett, Cunningsburgh, Shetland,	45,632	1104
Turner, Joseph Harling,	Kilmarnock, Factor for the Duke of Portland,	22,218	520
Urquhart, Duncan,	Crofter and Miller, Aultbea,	55,060	1403
Urquhart, John,	Crofter, Badfern, Aultbea,	55,016	1402
Urquhart, Malcolm,	Crofter, Sand, Aultbea,	54,709	1396

Name of Witness.	Description.	Question.	Page.
Walker, Angus, Senior,	Crofter, Dalibrog, South Uist,	39,852	958
Watson, Donald,	Crofter, Gartymore, Kildonan, Sutherlandshire,	24,933	592
Whyte, Donald,	Crofter, Durine, Durness, Sutherlandshire,	29,115	704
Whyte, Peter,	Fisherman and Crofter, Silvercraigs, Lochgilphead,	35,041	837
Willison, George,	Farmer, Island of Luing, Lorne, Argyll,	37,812	901
Wilson, Thomas,	Solicitor, Lochmaddy,	41,740	1004
" "	" "	43,086	1041
Wishart, Robert,	Joiner, Symbister, Whalsey, Shetland,	45,050	1091
Yorston, Peter,	Crofter, Old Man, Sourin, Rousay, Orkney,	46,496	1130

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE

TAKEN BEFORE

THE ROYAL COMMISSION

(HIGHLANDS AND ISLANDS, 1892).

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tree, Skye.

FIRST SITTING.

PORTREE, SKYE, TUESDAY, APRIL 18, 1893.

Present:—

DAVID BRAND, Esq., Advocate, Sheriff of Ayr, and Chairman of the Crofters Commission, *Chairman.*
MICHAEL HUGH SHAW STEWART, Esq., M.P.
JAMES NOEL MULLER FORSYTH, Esq.
GEORGE GORDON, Esq.
Rev. MALCOLM MACCALLUM.
JOHN MACLEOD, Esq.
HENRY MUNRO, Esq.
WILLIAM MACKENZIE, Esq., *Secretary.*

irman.

The Chairman in opening the proceedings said—This inquiry, as the terms of the Commission show, differs in essential particulars, both from that made by the Highlands and Islands Commission 1883, and from the proceedings of the Crofters Commission commenced in 1886, and still going on. It is no part of our duty to take evidence of the scope and range submitted to the Commission of 1883; nor are we called upon or authorised to consider the cases of individual tenants, or grievances alleged to attach to particular holdings now, or which may have attached to them in the past. Further, we are not called upon, and have no power to assign, portions of land to individual crofters or to townships of crofters. As is doubtless well understood already, the subsisting power of enlarging holdings rests with the Crofters Commission, proceeding under and in accordance with the Act of 1886. Our duty is—adopting the words of our Warrant—to inquire whether any, and if any, what land presently occupied for the purposes of a deer forest, grouse moor, or other sporting purposes, or for grazing, and not already in the occupation of crofters or other small tenants, may be cultivated to profit, or otherwise advantageously occupied by crofters or other small tenants. In carrying out this inquiry, we, or any three or more of our number, are authorised and empowered to call before us such persons as we may judge necessary in order to our obtaining information from them of the matters submitted for our consideration. We are further authorised and empowered to call for and have access to and examine such books, documents, papers or records as we may judge likely to afford us the fullest information on the subject matter of inquiry; and likewise to inquire by all other lawful ways and means whatsoever. It is important to add that any three or more of our number are authorised and empowered to visit and personally inspect such places as we may deem expedient for the more effectual carrying out of the object in view. During these inquiries, we are authorised to certify our proceedings should it seem expedient to us to do so, and at the close to report to Her Majesty. It is matter of much satisfaction to the Commissioners that the parties on each side more immediately concerned in this inquiry have already indicated a desire to lend us their best aid to carry it on fairly and properly, and we trust that throughout our labours we may have the benefit of that aid. With regard to the mode of inquiry, it may be convenient to offer some explanations. It will be seen from the terms of the Commission already referred to, that we are not directed to lead evidence. Indeed, the word 'evidence' is not used, but we are to be the better informed by those who come before us of the matters submitted for our information. It is not only not the practice for a Royal Commission to take what is called 'evidence upon oath,' but without special parliamentary authority it is incompetent, and I need hardly say we possess no such authority. That incompetency arises in this way. By the Statute 5 & 6 William IV. c. 62 it was enacted that, 'from and after the commencement of this Act, it shall 'not be lawful for any Justice of the Peace or other 'person to administer or cause or allow to be administered, or to receive or cause or allow to be received, any oath, affidavit or solemn affirmation 'touching any matters or thing whereof such Justice 'has not jurisdiction or cognisance by some Statute in 'force at the time being.' It is further provided that nothing in that Act should apply to any oath or affidavit in any Court of Justice. This Act means that the power of administering an oath exists only where expressly conferred by Parliament. The practice in Scotland has been in conformity with this view, and in Scotland therefore no Commission, whether Statutory, Royal, or Departmental, has exercised or claimed to exercise such a power, unless it had been specially conferred by Act of Parliament. We find, accordingly, that the Highland Commission of 1883, which was a Royal Commission, had no such power. On the other hand, the Crofters Commission, which is a Parliamentary Commission, possesses the power under the following words of express enactment in Section 24 of the Act of 1886:—'In any application under this Act it shall be 'competent to any parties thereto to demand, and for 'the Crofters Commission to order, that the evidence 'shall be taken upon oath.' In England the same rule is acted upon, and in Lord Brougham's Act of 1851, amending the Law of Evidence, there is a special provision empowering every Court, Judge, Justice, Officer, Commissioner, Arbitrator, or other person now or hereafter having by law or by consent of parties authority to hear, receive and examine evidence, to administer the oath. That Act and other later Statutes, including the Special Commission Act of 1888, confirm the view that without direct statutory authority an oath cannot legally be administered by us. Upon the whole matter, therefore, it will be understood that such statements as are tendered and received are not to be given upon oath. The next question calling for observation is,

Portree, Skye.

The Chairman.

The Chairman.

shall what is known as 'cross-examination be allowed'? Here it is necessary to remember that parties coming before us with divergent views and information are not in the position of opposing litigants in a suit, the one seeking to have a right declared or an obligation enforced, the other offering a defence to the action, and each endeavouring to prove to the satisfaction of the Court certain special propositions. There being no *lis* or lawsuit, it follows that cross-examination of witnesses, in the ordinary sense of that term, becomes inapplicable and inadmissible; but notwithstanding this, the statements made may often require to be sifted and tested in the most careful and exhaustive manner. This duty, in the absence of cross-examination or what would be analogous to cross-examination by parties, rests with us. The proceedings about to commence are not proceedings at a private instance, but at our own instance, moved thereto by Her Majesty's Warrant and authority; and on our shoulders, accordingly, lies the serious duty and responsibility of seeing that statements open to doubt or challenge are not allowed to pass without being tested by further examination. In conducting such examinations, most useful suggestions may be made by those interested on either side in this inquiry. Should either landlord or crofter or some one representing them desire that special questions be put, he may suggest such questions; and if these are competent and relevant, they may be allowed, but can only be actually put through me. The question then before us is the following:—Is there or is there not available land in this district within the meaning of the terms of reference? If there is not, our duty will be simple. If those or some of those who are to give us the benefit of their aid know or believe that there is such available land, they will proceed to say where that land is, and what is its nature and extent; and they will show whether such land can or cannot be cultivated to profit by crofters or other small tenants. The first statements to be taken will be from crofters in the Portree district; and as it may facilitate matters if some one representing them or a section of their number can give information applicable to the whole case they wish to present, he will be taken first. Following him will come individual crofters in this district; and when their statements have been received, information will be taken from the landlords also in this district, or those representing them. We hope that, as the inquiry proceeds, parties on both sides will arrange to convey their facts and views through selected representatives, and thereby not only save time but keep the inquiry within manageable limits, and render the information tendered more compact and effective.

John G. Mackay.

JOHN G. MACKAY, Merchant, Portree.—*examined.*

1. *The Chairman.*—I understand you are prepared to submit a statement to us?—Yes.

2. Please proceed?—As the statement which I intend to make contains a considerable number of statistics, I thought it better to put it in writing, and I will proceed to read it, merely premising that the statement bears not only upon this district but upon the whole island. I have been asked by the people of several parishes in Skye to give evidence before your Commission. I have been for a long time interested in the condition of the Highlands, and have made a careful study of the social condition of the country, past and present. I know nearly the whole of the island, and have had many opportunities of obtaining information from old people in different districts, and also from all written authorities bearing upon the subject. It was abundantly proved by the evidence led before the Royal Commission of Inquiry 1883 that the present unhappy condition of the Highlands was brought about by the introduction of the sheep farm system about the beginning of the present century, and in the following statement I wish to show that before the introduction of these changes, the people of this country were in a state of comparative comfort, that since that time the population has been gradually but speedily reduced, and that in *adverse ratio* as the population was being reduced, pauperism increased to an alarming extent. It will also be seen that the island of Skye before the introduction of sheep farming was able to maintain a much larger population than at present, and that, almost entirely on its own resources; while at present the population of Skye is maintained by the earnings of fishermen, labourers, tradesmen, and servant girls in different parts of the country. Skye in its present state would not maintain itself for two months of the year. All the wealth of the island is being drained out of it. If we except Skeabost, little or nothing of the rental of Skye is being returned upon itself. The twenty-nine sheep farmers who occupy at least three-fourths of the island, or I might say all the good land inthe island, employ little or no labour: they might, in fact, so far as the welfare of the rest of the community is concerned, as well not exist. It is true they claim to pay a large portion of the rates; but as I will show, pauperism has been created, or at least very much increased, through the introduction of sheep farming, and the system should not grudge its share in the maintenance of its own child. In the year 1801 the population of Skye was 22,592; in 1841 it stood at 23,086; in 1891 it was only 16,476. It would be naturally supposed that, with such a large reduction in the population, those remaining would be very much improved in circumstances, but, as the following figures will show, the very reverse is the case—

Parish.	1792.		1851.		1861.		1881.		1891.		No. of Poor.		Population.
	Population.	Poor Assessment.	Population.	Poor Assessment.	Population.	Poor Assessment.	Population.	Poor Assessment.	Population.	Poor Assessment.	1792.	1892.	1801.
		£		£		£		£		£			
Bracadale,	2250	9	1597	230	1335	357	929	577	908	596	...	44	1769
Duirinish,	3000	8	5330	548	4775	515	4319	764	3933	1425	63	162	4765
Kilmuir,	2555	say 10	3177	616	2847	519	2562	563	2406	805	60	117	3415
Portree,	1980	10	3557	518	3159	585	3191	674	3162	862	61	141	3441
Sleat,	1788	7	2531	400	2330	459	2060	498	1811	635	25	79	2756
Snizort,	1808	say 10	3108	444	2639	403	2120	441	1895	575	...	86	3484
Strath,	1575	5	3243	481	2664	468	2618	665	2361	1194	15	97	2962
Total,	14,956	59	22,543	3237	19,749	3306	17,799	4182	16,476	6092	...	726	22,592

These figures are taken from the Census returns and from the Reports of the Board of Supervision; the figures for 1792 are taken from the old Statistical Accounts of Scotland, and as the population therein given refers to 'examinable persons' above nine years of age, a third or perhaps a fourth falls to be added to arrive at the actual population. From these Statistics it will be seen that the people began to get poor immediately on the introduction of sheep farming, and that it is in those districts in which they have been most completely divorced from the soil that pauperism has increased the most. This refers with equal force to the whole Highlands. In the parish of Bracadale, which has suffered most, the cost of maintaining the poor amounts to 13s. 3d. per head of the population, and in the Raasay district of the parish of Portree the cost of maintenance of a pauper is about double what it is on the mainland of the parish. This is accounted for by the fact that when the poor creatures live among crofter townships they get assistance from kindly neighbours, in the way of patches of potatoes, and many other kindnesses; and that when they are placed among large farms and sporting estates, like Raasay, they are entirely dependent upon the miserable dole from the parish. On the evidence of aged and intelligent witnesses examined before the Commission of 1883, it was made clear that the people in olden times were in comparative comfort. I would particularly direct attention to the testimony of Donald Macqueen, the catechist of Bracadale, a most intelligent man of over ninety years, who said that in former times 'the people had plenty cattle, sheep, and horses 'on the hills,' and that during the most of his time he had seen in the district plenty of food of all sort,—flesh and fish and milk. 'I have seen Mr Macleod of 'Ebost, when that farm was a granary, supplying food 'of all sorts to people as they required it, and a 'number of townships belonging to the crofters themselves.' This is amply proved by the reports of the ministers of the different parishes in the old Statistical Accounts in 1792. Is it not a terrible condemnation of the present division of land in the Highlands, that in the parish of Bracadale, with a population two and a half times less than it was a century ago, the miserable remnant of the population have been brought to such a state of pauperism that it takes sixty-four times the amount to maintain the disabled poor; and the parish of Kilmuir, which was at that time very properly called the granary of Skye, has to pay a hundred times more for the upkeep of its disabled poor, in the face of a decreasing population. In 1792 there were in the parish of Snizort 597 horses used entirely for tilling the ground and carrying home the peats; now there are only about 130 horses, and men and women have to drag the harrows, and women have been converted into beasts of burden to carry the peats on their backs. In Portree there were in the same year 362 horses as against 103 to-day,—without counting, of course, the horses used by carters and by the hotels. Such is the course of civilisation in these parts. The various writers in the old Statistical Accounts complain that the tenants in Skye were so slow in adopting the plough for turning the ground instead of what they even then called 'an antiquated instrument' the *caschrom*. Strange, that after the lapse of a century we find the Skye small tenants still using the *caschrom*, but unfortunately from necessity and not from inclination. Another strange comparison which illustrates the change for the worse in the circumstances of the people, is that in 1792 there were four students from the parish of Duirinish attending the Aberdeen University, while in 1892 there were only three. Portree at that time had three students attending the University, and after a lapse of a hundred years the number is exactly the same. The Rev. William Bethune, Minister of Duirinish, stated that during the twenty years from 1772 to 1792, on a very moderate computation, 2400 souls emigrated from Skye to America, carrying with them £24,000 sterling, ship freight included. I should imagine it would be very difficult to get £24,000 in Skye to-day, if we exclude the proprietors and a few larger farmers.

About sixty years ago, one of the Skye lairds, having got into difficulties, got from many of his small tenantry, in loan, sums varying from £10 to £100. Such was the confidence in their chief at the time that few, if any, had even an acknowledgment for the money. Some of these died, and their families knew nothing of the transaction; but his son, to his honour be it said, paid every penny with interest. I believe, if the same thing were tried to-day, it would be a difficult thing for any laird in Skye to get the loan of as many pence from his small tenantry. From all this it will be seen that the people have been gradually getting poorer since the introduction of sheep farming. They were cleared out of their former holdings without any compensation, and what stock they had they were compelled to sell for whatever they could get for it. Those of them who were too poor or infirm to leave the country were huddled on to the top of other townships where they had to build houses for themselves, and by this forced sub-division of the land the former occupants of the township soon became as miserable and wretched as themselves. As is well known, the old system of division of land in the Highlands was as follows:—Large farms were let to gentlemen of means, frequently relatives of the chief, who acted as officers in the clan army, when any military operations were being carried on. These tacksmen, as they were called, set the land to a number of sub-tenants who paid them in rent and kind, they themselves paying the chief in the same manner. There were also a number of farms let to joint-tenants who paid direct to the chief. This arrangement continued in force till the sheep farms displaced them. According to a statement published by Mr Macdonald of Skaebost, the number of such Tacksmen in Skye in the year 1733 was 142. The number of joint-tenants holding of the chief was 517; but that the greater part of the sub-tenants were in every respect equal to them there cannot be the slightest doubt. The tacksman had no great power over the sub-tenant further than as a middleman to collect the rent. The size of the townships occupied by these sub-tenants can still be traced, and the number of families occupying them is well known, as also the stock held by them. I will now proceed to give a list of the sheep farms as at present held, with the number of townships absorbed by them, and as far a I have been able to trace them, the number of families holding land in each, with the old Highland measurement or *souming* of each township.

PORTREE PARISH.

Sconser Deer Forest.

Penny Land.	Township.	Families.
5	Tormichaig	12
	Ceann-a'-Chreagain	3
...	Moll	...
	Raasay.	
...	Cuil-a'-Chasteil	2
...	Brochel Castle	8
...	North Screapadal	7
...	South Screapadal	6
...	Halaig-Uachdrach	4
...	Halaig-Iochdrach	9
...	Leac	6
...	Fearn	23
...	Blar	4
...	Oidhre	9
...	Lon-Ban	4
...	Suisnish	8
...	Baile-Meadhonach	5
...	Doire-Domhain	3
...	Manish	5
...	Creag	2
		105

Rent in 1881, £1,000.
„ 1892, £500.

Portree, Skye — John G. Mackay.

Scorybreck.

Penny Land.	Township.		Families.
5	Scorybreck	Tacksman	1
½	Maligan	Tenants	10
1	Achadh-a'-Chorc	„	3
1	Escadale	„	3
4	Cill-Taraghleann	„	13
...	Bereraig	„	2
...	Holm-Beag	„	2
...	Holm-Mor	„	3
5	Rigg	„	30
1½	Tote, Upper	„	9
1½	Tote, Lower	„	8
...	Invertote	„	...
2½	Totrome	„	7
...	Beinn-Rigg	„	...
...	Eirmishader	„	2

Rent in 1881, £1170.
„ 1892, £732.

SNIZORT PARISH.

Skerinish Farm.

1	Cnoc-Erisco	Tenants	3
1	Peighinn-na-h-Iollainn	„	3
1	Peighinn-a'-Charainn	„	1
...	Glaic-na-Criche	„	3
2½	Breasculan	„	9
1	Peighinn-an-Duin	„	4
1	Breacachadh	„	4
½	Achadh-nam-Bard	„	2
6	Skerinish	„	1

Rent in 1881, £475.
„ 1892, with part of Reinetra } £332.

Kingsburgh.

5	Kingsburgh	Tacksman	1
5	Romisdale	Tenants	...
...	Leanchladaich	„	...
5	Kingsburgh-Beag	„	...
...	Sandavaig	„	...
3	Corbheinn	„	...
5	Peighinn-Bheag	„	2
2	Muilleam	„	...
1	Vatrigill	„	5

Rent in 1881, £650.
„ 1892, £430.

Cuidreach Farm.

5	Cuidreach	Tacksman.	
5	Liport	Tenants	7
...	Culnalion	„	...
5	Tir-na-Coille *or* Peighinn-an-Duin	„	12
5	Arlosh-Mor	„	...
1	Inverlie	„	...
1	Ceannbaidh	„	...
1	Gearraidhleathain	„	1

Rent in 1881, £346.
„ 1892, £160.

Glenconnan Farm.

½	Creich	Tenants	2
...	Peighinn-Choinnich	„	6
...	Talamh-nan-Tighean	„	8
...	Beinn-a'-Bhraghad	„	4
...	Cuil, North	„	19
...	Peighinn-Soraig	„	9

Rent in 1881, £475.
„ 1892, £228.

KILMUIR PARISH.

Portree, Sky — John G. Mackay.

Mogstad or Monkstadt.

Penny Land.	Township.	Families.
3	Greallain	8
2	Lianacro	7
3	Cnoc-Shabhaill	7
2	Dilista	6
1	Feall	8
1	Leth-Pheighinn	3
2½	Peighinn-a'-Ghobhainn	...
...	Part of Cnocodh	...
1	Lachasaidh	6

Rent in 1881, including Sartill, £975.
„ 1892 „ £430.

Duntulm.

10	Duntulm, Upper and Lower Beallach	Tacksman	1
...	Scor	Tenants	4
...	Scor Lower	„	2
2	Eirisco	„	9
...	Shulista	„	...
4	Brunistot	„	...
...	Clachan	„	15
2	Cleat	„	8
...	Scammdale	„	...
...	Aird	„	...
...	Isle-Trodaidh	„	...
...	Fladdaidh-a'-Chuain	„	
...	Osmagaraidh. (part of)	„	

... Rent in 1881, including Flodogary, £1523. ...
„ 1892, including Flodogary, £840.

Sartil Farm.

3	Sartil	Tenants	...
2	Culiscot	„	...
3	Balmeanach	„	6
½	Leadin	„	...
...	Camalaig	„	6

Fleodagary.

...	Eilean-Fleodagary	Tenants	...
4	Mhoiltear	„	9
...	Altavaig	„	...
...	Bealach-corran	„	...
...	Cearaidh	„	...
...	Buaile-Bhuirbh	„	...
...	A' Chlach-Ghlas	„	...

BRACADALE PARISH.

Glenbrittle Farm.

...	Buabisgil	Tenants	...
...	Salacharie	„	...
1	Sataran	„	...
2½	Trien and Mercadal	„	6
...	Buaile-Shuainn	„	...
1¼	Carbost	„	3
...	Carbost-Bheag	„	4
...	Buaile-nan-Clach	„	...
...	Gortan-an-Fhirich	„	...
...	Brae-Eynort	„	5
3½	Gruille	„	4
3½	Brunnal	„	9
3¼	Crackinish	„	16
...	Gleann-Breatal	„	12
3	Rudh-an-Dunain	„	20
...	Leisol	„	...
...	Achadh-a'-Bhaird	„	...
...	Buaile-an-Tuir	„	...

Rent in 1881, £1800.
„ 1892, £1000.

This Farm is in the hands of the Landlord.

Penny Land.	Township.		Families.
1	Talisker	Tacksman.	
4¼	Theille	Tenants	16
3½	Ardbhreac	Tenants	
3¼	Fiscavaig	„	10
5	Ardshabhail	„	6
...	Tuasdale	„	12
...	Baile-Iochdrach	„	...
3	Fearanlea	„	16
...	Lag-Mhor	„	...
6	Borlin and Kirkabost	„	8
2	Leachd-Leavich	„	12

Rent in 1881, £1575.
„ 1892, £800.

	Township.	Families.
	Drynoch Farm.	
...	Crossal	...
...	Achadhachar	...
8	Drynoch	...
...	Invermiadal	5
...	Boust	4
2	Miadal	12
...	Sumerdal	10
...	Crossabreac	10
...	Beinn-Dubh	6
...	Fearann-nan-Cailleach	6
3	Glen-Bracadale	2
...	Amur	...
11	Gesto and Leider	...

Rent in 1881, £1260.
„ 1892, £650.

	Totardor Farm.	
4½	Totardor	6
...	Gleann-bhidigail	...
...	Achadh-a'-Loch	...
	Ebost Farm.	
...	Ebost	...
...	Glen-Ostil	...
...	Glen-Ullinish	...
	Ose Farm.	
...	Ose	...
...	Glen-Ose	...
...	Glen-mhic-askill	...
...	Balmeanach	...

DUIRINISH PARISH.

	Feorlig Farm.	
6½	Baile-mor	13
4½	Dun-an-Eilthirich	13

Rent in 1881, deducting £75 for Vatten, £404
„ 1892, £200.

2	*Orbost Farm*	1
1¾	Fors	5
½	Brandersaig	1
1½	Idrigil	2
2	Varkersaig	...

Rent in 1881, £350.
„ 1892, £350

	Uignish Farm.	
4	Uignish, Upper and Nether	9
2	Ostill	...

Rent in 1881, £225.
„ 1892, £150.

Penny Land.	*Waterstein Farm.*	Families.
3	Ramasaig	...
3	Loargill	...
	Scalbisdale	...
...	Waterstein	...
...	Dibisdale	...
...	Olasdale	...
...	Hamara	...

Rent in 1881, £528.
„ 1892, £480 (in Landlord's hands)

	Claigean Farm.	
20½	Claigean and Camus	Tacksman. 1
4½	Duart and Glenunbost	...
4½	Tot-a'-Chocair	7
1½	Suardale	...
...	Baidh	5
...	Larach-Bheag	...

Rent in 1881, £850.
Present Rent, £580.

	Waternish.	
10	Unish	...
6	Trumpan-Beag	...
8	Trumpan-Mor	11
7	Trien	14
...	Scornagillean	18
...	Ascrib	...
4	Fasach	...
...	Hallistra (part of)	...
...	Forsabrec	...
...	Fors-a'-Chreagain	...
...	Isay	...

Rent in 1881, £707.
„ 1892, £500 (in Landlord's hands).

	Greshornish Farm.	
2½	Cuislateir	10
...	Duibeg	4
...	Gleann-Beag	6
...	Stapagan	2
...	Creag-a'-Chait	2
...	Achadh-na-h-Airde	1

Rent in 1881, £386.
„ 1892, £250 (in Landlord's hands).

	Lynedale Farm.	
...	Braebost	9
...	Aird-Lynedale	6
...	Baile-Mhic-Mhath	6

PARISH OF SLEAT.

	Kinloch Farm.	
...	Ardnameacan	...
...	Leth-Fhearran	...
...	Leitir-Chailleach	...
	Ord Farm.	
...	Ord	...
...	Morsaig,	...
...	Cheanna-Mhuir	...
	Knock Farm.	
...	Baravaig	...
...	Brae	...
	Ostaig Farm.	
...	Cill-Bheag	...
...	Linagearaidh	...
...	Gleann-Cruaidh	...
...	Baile-a'-bhile	...

Tormore Farm.

Penny Land.		Families.
...	Carradale	...
...	Capstal	...
...	Calligary-Bheag	...

The eviction of this class of tenant began about the year 1792, and was gradually carried on as the sheep farmers extended their stock, and as their respect for the tenth commandment decreased. In the year 1792, 150 families were cleared out on the MacLeod Estates alone, or 220 in ten years, among whom I find the names of one army captain, two lieutenants, besides many soldiers. From the legal proceedings taken in the removals, it is proved that the whole were direct tenants. A number of them held their lands on account of military services rendered, their sons having been enlisted by MacLeod, who was an officer in the 42nd Highlanders. In some parishes in Skye the removals are of a more recent date, and many are within the memory of people still living, and even the victims themselves are still to the fore in a good many cases. Though the greater part were forced to emigrate, at least those who were physically able to do so, many were accommodated with shares of existing holdings in other townships, which naturally resulted in overcrowding, so that crofts already too small were made totally unfit for the maintenance of any family. The question now is, what is to be done with the people? It is proved that they are getting poorer and poorer; the Census returns show that they are rapidly decreasing in numbers. I also hold it proved that sheep farming is accountable for the present unhappy state of matters. Sheep farming itself has proved a failure. Every proprietor who can is turning his sheep farms under deer, and the deer are driving the miserable remnant of the people before them. Will the land now occupied by sheep and deer pay, if converted into small holdings? The whole thing depends upon the size of the holdings, and the amount of the rent. If the upholding of rent rolls is a primary consideration with the legislature of this country, then it becomes a question for experts to say whether small tenants under the altered circumstances would pay better. But if the preserving of a comfortable peasantry is of more importance to the nation, the question 'will 'it pay' becomes very much modified. Apart from that, it is a fact that sheep farms have become unprofitable to a large extent, owing to the deterioration of grazing through being so long out of cultivation, the fortunes of former days having been made on the unexhausted improvements of the removed tenants; and the only way to improve these grazings is to replace the small tenantry on the soil. It will probably be argued that the crofters have in many cases failed to pay the arrears and fair rents as arranged by the Crofters Commission. True, many of them are in that unfortunate position; but it must be borne in mind that, while the Commission has reduced the crofters rents in Skye on an average about 25 per cent., all the sheep farmers in Skye have got their rents reduced 50 per cent.: that the sheep farms were much lower rented than the crofters before, that they occupy vastly superior land, and that, though many of the crofters got their small patches for nothing, it would not materially alter their circumstances. There is a great amount of land in Skye most suitable for re-occupation as moderate sized holdings. This is easily proved, and will be seen by the gentlemen of the Commission for themselves. Skye maintained a larger population before on its own resources, and would do so again if it only gets the chance. Is it not a melancholy fact that while in more favoured parts of the country education, invention, and increased knowledge of agriculture have caused two blades of grass to grow where one grew before, in the Highlands rushes, heather, and fog grow where corn grew not so long ago? In Skye, as in most parts of the Highlands, the appearance of the country, as well as the condition of the people, has gone back a century within the past hundred years. To quote again from the old Statistical Accounts of Scotland, the minister of Kilmuir says: 'The people all reside in the parish. 'The parish affords employment for all the inhabitants, 'but many of the young men, to the detriment of 'this part of the country, go to the south of Scotland 'to earn higher wages. This parish has more land 'employed in raising corn than any other in the island. 'In the particular district in which the incumbent lives, 'the eye can in one view see four miles which look 'like one continued field of corn, there not being the 'smallest portion of moor in the extent. The rest of 'the parish is also well calculated for the production of 'corn, though not equal to this part. It supplies itself 'with provisions, and in plentiful years it furnishes oat-'meal to those adjacent; but when the crop happens to fail, 'the inhabitants live worse than in the other parishes. 'The vegetables raised here are the same as are raised 'in the south of Scotland, and they thrive equally 'well.' At that time every parish in Skye had its mill, and some parishes two, kept constantly employed. All the millers sold large quantities of meal. It is within the recollection of many still living that the millers of Kilmuir employed a smack to go to Gairloch and other places to sell their meal. If such was the condition of Skye a century ago, why should it not be again under more enlightened and humane management? The main difficulty in the breaking up of the sheep farms and deer forests will be the stocking of the new and enlarged holdings, for it is quite evident that few people will be able, without assistance, to erect the necessary buildings and purchase the stock. So far as I can see, there need be no difficulty. The late Government, unasked for, offered £150,000 to transport Highland crofters to British Columbia. That amount would go a long way to stock new and enlarged holdings at home, with more benefit to the people, profit to the country, and security to the British taxpayer. I am aware strong objections are being made against advancing money on the security of stock, but with the introduction of parish councils I see no difficulty in the way of managing it with little risk. The re-distribution of the people on the land is a matter of vital importance, not only to the people occupying the land, but to every member of the community. As pointed out already, under the present system all the wealth of the country is being drained out of it, and very little of the earnings of the land is spent on it. If, on the other hand, in place of the present vast extent of territory under one man, there were a number of reasonably sized holdings averaging from £10 to £100, what a great increase of trade it would mean to the country.

3. Do you propose to give us any information with regard to the particular portions of land which you think are available within the scope of this Commission?—As far as I know—and I know a good deal of the country—there are very few, if any at all, of these townships that I have enumerated in this list but are suitable for re-occupation.

4. What size of holding do you point to?—Well, the size of holding I would suggest is what I have stated, averaging from £10 to £100.

5. Of rent?—Yes.

6. But I understand you are not at present in a position to indicate, except in so far as you have dealt with the matter in your written statement, any particular portions of ground?—I did not do so, for this reason, that there are so very many portions of ground. There are none of the farms I have enumerated but occupy the best portions of land in the island. It is not a case of any particular district, because there are so many portions the same way.

7. We would like if you could be a little more specific as to the portions of land, but perhaps you have not fully considered the question?—I have not, of course, considered that question, but I can very easily at a later period give you a list of the more suitable districts.

8. Now, suppose we endeavour to put a croft into shape, what area, arable, would you give? Take the case of a man who lived by his croft without depending on fishing, or on wages for occasional work, what area,

arable, would you say?—I would say an average of 8 acres—8 or 10 acres, or so.

9. And what area of grazing?—Well, a person would require to keep half a dozen cows. The answer would depend again so much on whether the tenant was to be a separate tenant or in a joint-holding.

10. Suppose him to be a separate tenant—a sole tenant?—I should say half a dozen cows and two horses and about 100 sheep.

11. And paying what rent?—I cannot say as to the rent, I would have to leave that to a more practical man.

12. Well, but we are supposing a case?—I am not going to commit myself as to the rent at present. I did not consider that question, and I would rather not give a haphazard reply.

13. Would he require two horses for 8 or 10 acres?—Possibly not.

14. Is it not a fact, Mr Mackay, that two horses could work 40 acres or perhaps even 50 acres?—Two Clydesdale horses might, but with small ponies, such as are kept in this country, it is a very different thing. Half a dozen of these would not cost as much as one Clydesdale.

15. You are aware of the words of the Commission, 'land capable of being cultivated to profit.' Can you mention any crofter holding, which, to your knowledge, is being cultivated to profit?—As I have pointed out in my statement, the whole thing depends upon the rent.

16. Assume the rent to be a fair rent?—I cannot point to any one just now. It is a difficult thing for a person to say. I don't know the circumstances of the people, whether they are earning the rent of their holdings upon them, or elsewhere.

17. *Mr Gordon.*—Are you a farmer yourself,—a crofter or a farmer?—I am neither.

18. *The Chairman.*—You did not make any reference I think, Mr Mackay, to the cottars in Skye. Is there a large number of cottars?—There were in the year 1881 1360 families in Skye without land.

19. And are there as many now?—Well, possibly with the decrease in the population there will be perhaps thirty or so less. But that includes such people as schoolmasters, doctors, and others in Portree, for example. I should say there would be about 800 cottars in the island.

20. Are these cottars at present a considerable burden upon the crofters?—They are, decidedly.

21. And would the removal or emigration of these cottars be of great advantage to the crofters in the first place and to the cottars themselves in the second?—There is no doubt it would, because in many cases they are a great burden upon the crofters. Another thing is that the removal of these cottars and giving them land would certainly tend to decrease pauperism, because it is against the Poor Law Act for parties holding land to be taken upon the Poors Roll: so that the Poors Roll is swelled by these cottars.

22. Have you considered in detail the question, what extent of arable and grazing, with a given rent, would enable a man to cultivate a croft to profit?—No, I have not. This is one way in which I look at it:—Take some of these large farms that were occupied by sixty families before. If a hundred years ago, considering the primitive implements and the very small knowledge of agriculture possessed by the people, these families were able to maintain themselves without any extraneous aid, I see no reason in the world to doubt why half that number should not do so now.

23. Even allowing for altered circumstances?—Even allowing for altered circumstances, I could point, if you would allow me to go out of Skye, to a small farm of which I have a special knowledge, which was held on the old joint-tenant system, and which has been a decided success. I refer to the farm of Kirkton, in Lochalsh, which is occupied by six tenants. I believe I am perfectly safe in saying that so far as it is worked, in point of agriculture it is equal to any large farm, certainly to any that I know of, on the west coast. I know it pays a larger rent than a farm of equal extent and value in the neighbourhood, and I know that each of the tenants has been able to bring up a family, with their sons and daughters placed in as respectable circumstances as any sheep farmer I know.

24. *Mr Macleod.*—Cannot you give us a case in Skye?—I cannot, because the Skye landlords have not been so liberal with their tenants.

25. *Mr Maccallum.*—Do you think the small holdings are too highly rented in Skye?—Taking them in proportion to the large holdings, decidedly they are.

26. But still it is an advantage to have these small holdings?—It is a case of just having a home.

27. And if they lost the land they would not be so comfortable?—That is seen in the difference between the crofters and cottars.

28. *The Chairman.*—I suppose I am correct in saying that even those crofters who are not able to show that they cultivate their crofts to profit are in a much better position than the neighbouring cottars?—Oh, decidedly. There is another explanation that I should like to make. As everybody knows, about 150 years ago the Highland chiefs took a great deal of trouble to train their men to military exercises, and they proved exceedingly good soldiers, every one of them. Now, the unfortunate thing is this, that when they found it profited themselves more to turn their farms into sheep runs, they never took it into their heads that their native crofters could be taught. They merely took an adventurer from the south in some cases, and let the farm to him.

29. *Mr Macleod.*—Are there any cases of a crofter occupying a sheep farm in Skye?—No, not to any extent; there is only one that I know of in Skye.

30. You said there were 29 sheep farms?—Yes.

31. And are there 29 sheep farmers?—No, there is one case in which one farmer keeps two farms. There are a number of farms in Skye which have been let to sporting tenants who take the grazing and sport upon the farms; they occupy the grazing themselves, but the profitable working of it is a matter of secondary consideration.

32. You gave us rentals of sheep farms. Did these apply to the grazing only?—To the grazing only. They had nothing to do with the sport.

33. *The Chairman.*—There was one point you touched upon, Mr Mackay—the value of these grazing farms when originally formed from land previously in cultivation. But I understand you to say now that, owing to the length of time these lands have been occupied as grazing farms, the land has got sick for grazing purpose, and would be much the better of being again cultivated. Is that your view?—Yes, decidedly it is. They can very easily be seen, and at a distance not very far from us you can see land formerly under cultivation now growing heather. They do not now carry the same amount of stock. It is a fact, also, that a great many, if not the most, of the farmers in Skye have changed their stocks from the finest sheep to black-faced sheep.

34. Can you give us any statistics to enable us to compare the sheep stock carried in Skye a few years ago with the stock carried now?—That is not within my power.

35. You have not the materials?—No.

36. *Mr Gordon.*—How many acres of arable land do you think would keep a family?—I have already qualified my statement there. Not being a practical farmer, my statement is more general.

37. How many acres of land would you require for the 100 sheep?—I am not going to take upon myself to answer the question at haphazard.

38. Then you could not say what it would take to stock them?—No.

39. In fact, you have no practical knowledge at all about it?—Not as to Skye. I have a general knowledge as to the whole country.

40. *Mr Munro.*—You have told us that, as the population diminishes, the poor rates increase. Are we to infer from that that if we replace the people on the land the poor rates would diminish in the same proportion?—Decidedly. Not only is that the case with Skye, but I made up statistics as to all the Highlands, and the same thing applies with equal force to the whole of the Highlands. It is in those parishes which

Portree, Skye.

John G. Mackay.

have been almost entirely cleared that pauperism has most increased, the poor having nothing to look to but their dole from the parish.

41. Can you give us any case in the immediate vicinity of Portree now occupied by large farmers that could be repossessed by crofters?—There is the farm in the immediate neighbourhood.

42. What is the name of the farm?—Scorybreck Farm: there is one township there that was occupied by some 30 families before.

43. What is the name of that township?—Rigg is the name of that place.

44. And how many families were in Rigg?—There were 30 tenants there, and I am told there were also 30 cottars who were very comfortable, living upon the tenants.

45. *Mr Macleod.*—You said, Mr Mackay, that sheep farms were no profit to the community generally. Don't the sheep farmers spend a considerable amount?—No, they certainly do not. They employ very little labour,—three or four shepherds and two servant men, and about a couple of servant girls or so.

46. *Mr Maccallum.*—And do you think that in these parishes you could stock small holdings if you got them?—Possibly a few here and there, but not generally.

47. There is a desire to get land?—Decidedly there is a desire to get land, if means could be devised by which that land could, under proper security, be stocked.

48. *The Chairman.*—I understand you, Mr Mackay, to take up this position, that so far as your knowledge goes, even if land, arable and pasture, were assigned to particular tenants in Skye, you don't think they could stock these lands, or properly cultivate them, and erect the necessary house and steading, without extraneous assistance?—I am perfectly satisfied they could not. Of course, I hold on the other hand that, as the people of this country who were formerly, as I have proved, in comfortable circumstances, have, through the operation of the laws of this country, been brought to their present unfortunate state, I hold that they are perfectly justified in expecting at all events that now, seeing that the system for which they have been pauperised has itself proved a failure, the law should step in and replace them upon the land from which they were dispossessed.

49. *The Chairman.*—That is not a matter immediately before us.

50. *Mr Shaw Stewart.*—Your view is that they could not cultivate the holdings to profit without having stock advanced to them?—No, I am satisfied they could not.

51. *Mr Macleod.*—Do you speak of the whole of the Highlands, or of Skye alone?—I am speaking in the meantime for Skye. I will qualify that by saying that there are a good number, perhaps, here and there, who could stock the holdings, but in the case of those particularly who are most needing land, the cottars, very few of them would be able to stock farms.

52. *The Chairman.*—Do you wish to add anything to what you have said, Mr Mackay?—Not just now, but further on I may. I will complete the statement in regard to other farms not dealt with.

53. *The Chairman,* on the suggestion of Mr Mackintosh, Factor for Lord Macdonald.—What becomes of the stock that is raised and reared on the sheep farms in Skye?—I think the answer to that question is exceedingly simple. If the same land was occupied by a greater number of tenants, possibly the output to the towns would not be quite so large; but in my estimation it would benefit the British nation equally, if not more, because in the first instance it would rear a healthy peasantry at home, the surplus as at present would go to the large towns, and in place of enriching one individual, would enrich perhaps twenty or thirty, or even forty or sixty, as the case might be.

ARCHIBALD STEWART, Slignach, Portree (60). (Examined in Gaelic through an Interpreter.)

Portree, Sk

Archibald Stewart.

54. *The Chairman.*—What information do you wish to give us about the land?—That the people are not getting land as they had in previous years.

55. Can you tell us any land that would be available?—Yes, land that was in cultivation before, would be suitable.

56. To what land do you refer?—Borve away down here; and plenty of land in Rigg.

57. Anywhere else?—Tormichaig away beyond Portree here. Taking the parish of Portree itself, Raasay was cleared, and the population went off to Australia and America within my recollection.

58. Are there any other places that you can mention in the parish of Portree?—Tormichaig and Sconser, which were cleared for deer forest purposes; Maligan and Achachorc—there are people in Portree who were born there.

59. Is there anything else you would like to tell us about it?—There are plenty people here who would make good use of a piece of land, and they are not getting it; the people are living in places not worthy of counting at all, I myself living on the sea-shore.

60. Do you pay any rent?—No. In bad weather the sea comes about my feet to the depth of 14 inches.

61. Where is your dwelling?—Down here below us.

62. Are you in the township of Slignach?—Yes.

63. Did you at one time occupy a croft?—I have repeatedly asked for a croft before now, and could not get it.

64. What size of a croft would you like to get?—Enough to support a cow, and one or two young beasts, and a few sheep.

65. And what extent of arable do you wish?—Just as much as would support the like of that stock.

66. Could you put a stock on it?—Not just at present.

67. Could you put up a house and steading?—Yes, a house that would suit my own purposes.

68. *Mr Macleod.*—Would you get the assistance of friends, if you got such a holding as you have described?—I don't know; the friends have got so poor that I don't believe they would be able to help.

69. So that, even if you got the holding, you would not be able to stock it?—Not just at present; no.

70. *Mr Munro.*—What sort of help would be required?—Any help it would seem proper to give me: I would not ask much.

FARQUHAR MACLEOD, Portree (72)—*examined.*

Farquhar Macleod

71. *The Chairman.*—Can you point us to any land in the neighbourhood available for crofters?—Yes. There is Borve away down here, where my father and grandfather were born. It is waste now. About 30 families were there altogether. There is also the land away up by Scorrybreck.

72. Do you mean apart from the Farm of Scorrybreck?—Near Portree.

73. Any other land?—That is all I know well about.

74. Are you paying any rent just now?—I have no land. I am a householder. I cannot get land for which to pay rent.

75. But if you got land, could you stock it?—I have two cows and a young beast, and I have to buy grazing for them.

76. *Mr Macleod.*—What is your present occupation?—Scavenger.

77. Would you be able to stock such a holding as was described by the previous witness?—I lost my family, and I could not do much in the way of stocking land, but if I got a small portion of land I could stock it.

78. What extent of land?—About £3 worth.

79. What stock would you expect to put upon that

£3 holding?—Not much: it would not take very much stock.

80. Could you buy additional stock besides what you have at present, if you had the ground?—I believe I could not.

JOHN NICOLSON, Craiglea, Portree (72)—*examined.*

81. *The Chairman.*—What is your occupation?—I am a salmon-fisher at Craiglea.

82. Do you know the land hereabout well?—I know the most of it.

83. Do you remember lands being formerly in the occupation of crofters?—Yes, I remember being in the crofter's place nearest to this house.

84. Could you tell us some places that might be used for crofters at present?—Plenty. There is a place at Maligan where I remember there were eleven people and two cottars. That is within half a mile of where I live.

85. And you think that land could be used again?—Well, I think it could; I think it might.

86. What state is it in now?—It is now under sheep and cattle.

87. Is it on a farm?—It belongs to Mr Stewart, Scorrybreck.

88. Is it a part of Scorrybreck Farm?—Yes; it is part of it now.

89. Is there any other part of Scorrybreck Farm that would do for crofting?—Some of it is the best I know. That is about Torvaig there, and Mr Stewart ploughed a part of it above Torvaig.

90. Has the place got a name of its own?—Above Torvaig—Lag-na-Ceirdich.

91. *Mr Macleod.*—We have got Maligan, above Torvaig, and Lag-na-Ceirdich. Are there any other places in Scorrybreck that there used to be tenants on?—There is another place called Escadale; and one on this side of Escadale, called Gearaidh-Fraoich.

92. Are there any on the east side?—Plenty. There was a place called Rigg; my own grandfather was there. Another place to the north of that, called Tote.

93. Tote and Invertote?—Yes.

94. Any more?—A place called Achadh-a'-Chorc, and Holm close to the shore.

95. There is a small island there?—Yes.

96. *Mr Maccallum.*—Was not the whole of Scorrybreck at one time under small tenants?—There was some of it that tenants could not work. They had the pasture up to the top of the hills.

97. *Mr Gordon.*—These places are mostly all on the east side; do you know of any further inland, on the west side of the watershed?—No, I don't know that district.

98. *The Chairman.*—Do you know a place called Totrome, immediately south of Rigg—was that under cultivation?—Yes.

99. Do you remember any more?—There is another place called Borve, opposite Escadale, which I mentioned already.

100. Are there two places called Borve?—There is a place in Macleod's country called Borve, but there were different names on the crofter townships in Borve. There was one place called Peighinn-an-duin; another township called Beinn-na-h-Iolainn, and Breascot. I remember, when the crofters were there.

101–102. *Mr Macleod.*—Do you know how many families were in Borve?—I cannot tell.

103. Were they all small tenants, or were there any cottars amongst them?—Most of them had crofts or half crofts, but there were plenty of cottars there too, I think.

104. What stock would a crofter have?—I cannot tell; I was young when the crofters were there, but I know they cultivated the ground, and they held to the top of the hill for grazing.

105. How many cows would each man have?—I cannot tell.

106. Had they any sheep?—Plenty sheep.

107. *The Chairman.*—Do you remember a township called Cuishinish?—No. Portree, Skye.

108. Or one called Totabeg?—No; there is a Tote at Scorrybreck Farm. John Nicolson.

109. Do you remember a place called Stolemor?—No.

110. Or a crofter township called Pennymore?—No; I was a boy at school then, I mind of these things as I would see a dream.

111. *Mr Munro.*—Were the crofters at that time in comfortable circumstances?—Yes, they were very well off.

112. Had they money in the bank?—That is a thing I cannot tell, some of them may have had.

113. They were not in debt, I suppose?—Perhaps they were, some of them.

114. *The Chairman.*—Can you give us any information as to when the crofters left Borve, and where they went to?—I cannot remember, it is so far back.

115. What were you doing at the time they left?—I was along with my father and mother, on this farm called Escadale.

116. How many years ago was that?—I think about 50 years ago.

117. Where did they go to, or where were they sent?—Let them get places for themselves, or want. Some that had cattle and sheep had to build houses anywhere they could get a place.

118. Did they leave Skye, or did they find quarters in Skye somewhere?—Most of them were cottars to gentlemen that gave them a place to build a hut.

119. In Skye?—Some of them in Skye.

120. And did some of them leave Skye?—I am sure some of them did.

121. At the time you speak of, was there any general destitution in the Highlands, and especially in Skye?—Well, I don't say there was.

122. Do you remember when it was worse?—Yes. There was not much meal coming from the south at that time.

123. Do you remember why it was they left?—They were "raised" by the proprietors and factors. They were put away, as far as I can remember.

124. *Mr Shaw Stewart.*—Would they be paying rent?—They were paying as much as they could.

125. *The Chairman.*—You spoke of meal coming into the country. Was it usual for meal to come into the country from the south when you were a boy?—Yes. There were not many millers in Portree at that time, and vessels would bring in meal. The first meal-dealer in Portree, Mr Cumming, got cargoes of meal from the east coast.

126. *Mr Maccallum.*—And when the vessel did not come, were they ill off?—I did not feel much of that.

127. *Mr Macleod.*—What was it they gave to the meal merchant in exchange for the meal?—Money.

128. Where did they get the money?—There was good fishing going on at that time; they were making money on herrings, and by selling their cattle.

129. *Mr Maccallum.*—They made some meal themselves, did they not?—Yes, the mill would be crowded with meal, and the people would have to wait perhaps a fortnight for their turn to get their corn ground.

130. *Mr Munro.*—Did Skye ever raise a sufficiency of oats to make meal for the people without importation?—I cannot tell. The vessels brought plenty of meal from the east and south to Portree, which was sold to the people, and there was plenty of hand-fishing going on. The herrings were not then so cheap as now.

HENRY MACKAY, Crofter, Sconser (70). Henry Mackay.
(Examined in Gaelic through an Interpreter.)

131. *The Chairman.*—You are a crofter in Sconser, I understand?—Yes.

132. How long have you been there?—About 40 years. I was born in Moll.

133. Do you desire to obtain more land?—Yes.

134. Can you tell us any place near your holding

Portree, Skye.

Henry Mackay.

where land can be got?—Tormichaig, Ceann-a'-chreagain, and Moll.

135. Were these old townships?—Yes.

136. How far are these places from where you live?—About half a mile.

137. How are they occupied at present?—By the deer forest.

138. Do you remember when they were added to the deer forest?—Yes, about 50 years ago.

139. How many families lived in these townships?—Eight in Tormichaig, four in Ceann-a'-Chreagain, and eight in Moll.

140. Was there any other township near?—Kinlochainort; only two were there. These are all the townships near that were cleared.

141. Is there land now where these townships were, available for crofting cultivation?—Yes.

142. Can you tell us how many acres?—I cannot say.

143. Were you living at Sconser when these townships were cleared?—Yes.

144. You saw the townships being cleared?—Yes.

145. Where did the people go?—Some to America, some to Australia, and some were crowded in on other townships, the holdings being divided.

146. When these townships were cleared, was the number of crofts in Sconser increased?—Yes, they were cut narrow.

147. From what number of holdings to what other number?—In Coillemore (or Sconser crofts), where I am staying just now, at first there were only 4 tenants, and now there are 30 crofters and 10 cottars.

148. Before Tormichaig, Ceann-a'-Chreagain and Moll were cleared, were there any cottars in Sconser?—A few.

149. But were they increased in number after these townships were cleared?—Yes, I believe so. There are three cottars on the bit of land I occupy myself.

150. *Mr Munro.*—How many tenants were there, and what amount of stock on each of these townships you refer to?—I already mentioned the number of tenants. Some crofts had eight cows, others four, just according to the townships in which they were situated; besides horses and sheep.

151. Would the people take possession of the lands again, if they got the opportunity under fair conditions?—Yes, very gladly.

152. And I suppose they could live there comfortably?—Yes, they would be fairly comfortable.

153. *Mr Macleod.*—Could they stock the places if they got them?—Yes, our crofters have a good deal of the necessary stock already.

154. *Mr Shaw Stewart.*—Would they have any thing over after they maintained themselves and stocked their land? After paying for their living, and the stock, and the upkeep of the land, would they have any money in their pocket?—I don't know that they would save money in it.

155. Would they be able to make any profit in the new holding?—Yes, if they could once get it stocked.

156. That is without counting any rent at all?—Yes, they could help themselves well.

157. They could help themselves to live, but would they have anything over to pay rent?—No, not out of their stock.

158. Do you mean that they would require to get these crofts rent free to enable them to live?—They would not ask them without a reasonable rent.

159. But do you think they would have money enough to pay a reasonable rent?—Yes. They could take it out of their stock.

160. *Mr Macleod.*—Can you tell us what rent was being paid by one of the crofters you described to us as having eight cows and so many sheep?—About £6.

161. Would you consider a holding that would carry that stock to-day a fair sized holding?—I would consider that a good croft that would carry eight cows.

162. *Mr Gordon.*—How many acres of arable land would be required?—Nine or ten acres.

163. You could hardly keep a cow on an acre, I am afraid?—Yes. I believe it could be done; as the ground has been lying so long out of cultivation, it would yield well now.

Portree, Sk

Henry Mackay.

164. No doubt for a time. Is it supposed that this land would be occupied in connection with the present holding, or as a new holding?—A new holding, not that it should be added to the present one.

165. Then they would require a new house?—Yes.

166. And practically a new stock?—Yes.

167. Have you any idea what it would cost to provide these houses and to purchase the stock?—The house would cost from £20 to £30, but I cannot very well say what the stock would cost.

168. *Mr. Munro.*—Could they build a house by their own labour without any outside help?—Some could, and some could not.

169–170. *Mr Gordon.*—Are you a tradesman?—No, I fish.

171. *The Chairman.*—Suppose new holdings to be formed at Tormichaig or Moll, could the crofters there get on without fishing at the same time?—No, they would not do without fishing.

172. They would require to fish besides carrying on their crofts?—Yes.

173. Is there any land in those districts that would enable a crofter to carry on profitably without fishing?—No.

174. All the crofters at Sconser at present depend more upon the sea than upon the land?—Yes.

175. And the same would apply to new holdings at Tormichaig and Moll?—Yes. If they did not get the hill grazing that was attached to these townships before.

176. What extent of grazing was attached to the townships before?—The big hills above the township.

177. Do you remember the extent?—Yes, I was herding sheep there myself.

178. Do these grazings now form part of the forest?—Yes.

179. And all the pasture the Sconser tenants now have is, I believe, between 1300 and 1400 acres?—Yes, and a great deal of that is rocks.

180. *Mr Gordon.*—How many sheep have you in the pasture just now?—I have about 40.

181. Do you keep two cows or one?—Two cows and a small beast.

182. Have you a horse?—No.

183. Were there horses on the old holding?—Yes.

184. *Mr Macleod.*—Do you mean to say that, supposing holdings were formed that would carry eight cows and their followers, and horses and sheep, such as you described to be the case in the cleared townships, the people would not be able to live without the fishing?—Yes, I believe I could support myself on such a croft without fishing.

185. *Mr Shaw Stewart.*—But only if everything went well with your sheep, I suppose?—Yes, provided I had a good piece of land.

186. *Mr Gordon.*—How many acres of arable land would they require?—About ten.

187. *The Chairman.*—What rent would you think it necessary to have to pay as a fair rent in order to live without fishing on a croft, say at Tormichaig or Moll?—I cannot say; the old rent, I think.

188. Have the Sconser tenants more than their proper number of stock at present?—Some have and some have not.

189. How do those who have, get feeding: do they feed on the forest?—No; but if our sheep trespass on the forest, the deer trespass on us.

190. *Mr Gordon.*—You say you have 40 sheep?—Yes.

191. What is your souming number?—Thirty. Some have only half that, or a third of that.

MURDO MACLEOD, Crofter, Sconser (62). (Examined in Gaelic through an Interpreter.)

Murdo Macleod.

192. *The Chairman.*—Do you live at Sconser?—Yes.

193. What rent do you pay?—£2, 18s.

194. Do you know of any land in the neighbourhood

rtree, Skye. of where you live available for cultivation by crofters? —Yes, suitable enough land; Tormichaig and Ceann-a'-Chreagain are as suitable as any place could be.

195. And is Moll another place?—Yes, middling; though not quite so suitable as other places.

196. Why?—There is not so much arable ground in it.

197. Is there a small piece called Kinlochainort?—Yes, it is suitable enough.

198. Do you remember when these places were formerly occupied by crofters?—Yes, I myself came from Tormichaig.

199. What rent did you or your father pay at Tormichaig?—I am not very sure.

200. What stock had your father?—Four cows at one time; but when the hill pasture was taken from us the number was reduced to three.

201. Was the hill pasture taken away before the crofters were removed?—Yes, the one side of it.

202. Do you know what extent of pasture was taken away, or how many sheep you were reduced by?—One cow's grass we had reduced. There were no sheep in it then.

203. Was the land taken added to the forest?—Yes.

204. Were the tenants at Tormichaig removed because they were in arrear of rent?—They were not behind with the rent at all.

205. Were you behind, or your father?—Very little. Few of the crofters were behind, except perhaps some poor widow.

206. Do you remember what year the removal took place?—It would be 42 or 43 years ago this term.

207. How long before that was the hill taken from them?—Not very long, but I cannot say exactly.

208. Were you more or less able to pay the rent after the hill was taken from you?—Less able.

209. Do you remember what rent your father paid?—No, I was a young boy at that time. My mother survived my father two years.

JOHN MACKINNON, Crofter, Sconser (50).
(Examined in Gaelic through an Interpreter.)

210. *The Chairman.*—Do you remember anything of these old townships?—I remember when Tormichaig was cleared.

211. Is it in your judgment suitable now for cultivation?—Part of it is suitable enough.

212. And the other part, what about it?—The other part would require draining.

213. Is Ceann-a'-Chreagain suitable for cultivation?—Yes.

214. The whole of it?—Not all without being put in order.

215. In what way?—Drained.

216. Is Moll suitable?—Bits of it; it was always a bad place

217. Were the tenants better out of it?—No.

218. Is it a place that you would desire to go to yourself now?—I would not like it as well as the other places. Tormichaig and Ceann-a'-Chreagain.

219. Did you or your father live at Tormichaig at any time?—My father and grandfather did.

220. What rent did your father pay?—I don't remember.

221. Suppose tenants were to be established in crofts in Tormichaig or Ceann-a'-Chreagain on the better parts of the land, could they subsist there without fishing?—Yes, if they got a good slice of it at a fair rent.

222. What slice, and at what price?—That would have to be determined by those who have to judge it.

223. But we would like to have your own idea of the size and the rent?—Between 10 and 12 acres of arable land, and I think they would require not less than 80 to 100 acres of grazing.

224. Do you mean for yourself as sole tenant?—Yes.

225. Suppose you had that, what would you be willing to give as rent, in the hope of getting on fairly well?—I cannot judge.

226. You have given us the situation of the holding, and the extent of arable and the extent of grazing; now, in order to get on fairly well, what rent do you think you should be called on to pay?—I have no idea. Portree, Skye. — John Mackinnon.

227. How many tenants would the like of these old townships accommodate, of the size of holding you have been describing?—I think about a dozen.

228. And could they live without fishing?—I think they should be able.

229. Would you like to undertake to do so without fishing?—Yes, if I got a sober rent.

230. What is a sober rent?—I don't know what it should be worth, but there are people set apart for the purpose of fixing fair rents. I think about £6 would be quite sufficient for such a holding.

231. Do the crofters at Sconser at present eke out their living by means of the sea?—Yes, every one who can goes to sea.

232. They could not get on, I daresay, without the sea?—No, it would not be half the living without the sea.

233. *Mr Macleod.*—What stock would you propose to put on the holding you have described?—About six cows, and one or two small beasts, a horse, and about 80 sheep. I should think the 100 acres of grazing would feed the 80 sheep, and the remainder would feed the rest.

234. *The Chairman.*—Would the tenants of Sconser be willing to leave the place altogether, if they got sufficient crofts on more fertile land?—I know that some of them would be very willing to do that.

235. But would most of them prefer to remain where they are?—I believe so.

236. With all their difficulties?—Yes.

237. Would you be prepared yourself to take a new holding?—I would try.

238. *Mr Munro.*—Is it possible for a crofter to cultivate a croft as it ought to be done, and prosecute the fishing industry at the same time?—No, but they have to do it; they cannot do justice to the croft and be fishermen also.

239. It depends, I suppose, upon the size of the croft?—Yes.

240. But it is not possible to do the two things well?—No, not properly; that is my opinion at any rate.

241. *Mr Maccallum.*—Is it not an advantage to the fishermen to have a small piece of land?—Of course he is the better of it, even should he only have as much as would enable him to stretch himself on it.

242. He has spare time to cultivate land?—If he is a fisherman it will take all his spare time to keep his fishing gear in order.

243. *The Chairman.*—Does it not stand in this way, that when a man has to choose between fishing and the croft, he must neglect the one to attend to the other?—Yes, that is likely enough, he cannot attend to both.

244. If you got such a holding as you have been describing, would you be able to stock it without assistance?—Not just at present, but I don't know but I could get help.

245. Where?—I have friends who are able to help me.

246. *Mr Shaw Stewart.*—But that would mean borrowing and paying back, would it not?—Yes.

247. You think they would be willing to lend you the money if you got such a holding at a fair rent?—Yes, I think so.

248. And do you think you would be able to stock the land and pay some rent, and also pay back the money you borrowed on that holding?—It would be hard enough to do as prices are at present, but if the years turned out good I could manage it.

249. *The Chairman.*—You could not have done it last year?—No.

250. What amount of money would you require to enable you to stock a holding of that size?—I think it would take about £140 or £150.

251. At present prices?—No, not at present prices. If there was a reasonable price going, it would take about that sum.

252. *Mr Shaw Stewart.*—But what about the buil-

Portree, Skye. John Mackinnon.

ing?—Any house that we have ever lived in was built without assistance; we built them ourselves.

253. But would you be content with that kind of house in the future?—Yes; the kind of house I am living in now would quite satisfy me.

254. *Mr Munro.*—Could you repay the money advanced you by easy instalments?—Yes, I think I should be able.

255. Even if years went bad?—It would be hard enough in a year such as last year.

256. But taking an average of years?—Yes, taking years by the average

257. What would you call easy instalments?—I think one would be able, on an advance of £140 to £150, to pay back £2 or £3.

258. What is to become of the interest on the money?—Paying the interest besides.

259. *The Chairman.*—What kind of house have you got: is it stone built?—Yes.

260. With lime and with corrugated iron roof?—Yes.

261. And how many apartments?—Four or five.

262. Are there upstairs and downstairs?—Yes, two rooms upstairs, and two rooms and a closet downstairs.

263. What did that house cost you?—About £50, besides our own labour.

264. And that is all paid?—Yes.

Ronald Nicolson.

RONALD NICOLSON, Crofter, Rona (45).
(Examined in Gaelic through an Interpreter.)

265. *The Chairman.*—You are a crofter from Rona?—Yes, from Doire-na-guaille.

266. Do you say that there is land in Rona which would be available for crofter cultivation?—There are plenty people in Rona already for the land that is there.

267. Do you mean by that that all the available land is taken up?—Yes.

268. Then there is no land in Rona which would be available for the formation of new holdings?—No.

269. Do any of the Rona tenants desire to leave Rona if they could get better holdings elsewhere?—Yes, most of them, I believe.

270. Is there land in Raasay that would be suitable for any of the Rona people?—Yes, plenty.

271. And are the Rona people desirous of obtaining land, if they can get it, in Raasay?—Yes, I believe so.

272. How many of the Rona tenants would be willing to leave, if they got suitable crofts in Raasay?—I cannot say, but I believe the most of them are anxious to leave; they are all complaining of the smallness of their present holdings.

273. Are these people who lived in Raasay in former times?—Some of them.

274. Do you wish to leave yourself?—Yes, if I get a better place.

275. What would you describe as a better place?—Fifteen acres of arable land.

276. And how much grazing?—Just up to the old marches, the old townships.

277. And what rent do you contemplate paying for that?—I don't know; I have not a good enough idea of rents.

278. Could you stock a croft of that size,—15 acres arable?—No.

279. Could you put up the necessary house and steading at your own cost?—No.

280. Where is the land in Raasay that you refer to as available?—The land in Raasay that has been wasted.

281. Give us some description of it?—Brochel Castle, in the first place: North and South Manish, Halig, Leac, Fearn, Haer, Ayre, Suisnish, and the two Screapadals (North and South).

282. Have all these places land available for the object we have in view?—Yes, all of them. They were all occupied by crofters in time gone by.

283. And are they now parts of farms?—They are in the hands of the landlord now.

284. At what time did the removal or change take place from Raasay to Rona of the Rona crofters?—About 40 years ago, that is what I hear. Portree, Sk

Ronald Nicolson.

285. *Mr Maccallum.*—Can you give us any idea of the number of tenants in these townships?—No.

286. Are the townships under sheep?—Under sheep and all sorts of game,—rabbits and deer.

287. *Mr Gordon.*—You have only about two acres of land just now?—I am not sure how much I have, it is scattered amongst rocks and stones.

288. Have you any sheep?—Seven sheep.

289. And cows?—Yes.

290. Do you do anything except fishing?—Yes, labouring and every sort of work that comes in my way.

291. Is there any labouring in the island?—It is in the island I was working last year.

292. For the proprietor?—Yes.

293. At what wage?—From 13s. to 15s.

294. *Mr Munro.*—What proportion of the people do you think should leave the island to leave the remainder comfortable?—I can only give an idea of the township in which I live myself. There are eight or so in my township, and it is only enough for two.

295. Is your township fairly representative of other townships?—Yes, they are much about the same.

296. *Mr Macleod.*—Would you be prepared to take a holding in Raasay, if you could get it?—Yes, I would take a croft certainly if I got it, but I could not make much of it unless I got assistance.

297. You could not stock it?—No.

298. *Mr Maccallum.*—Could you get assistance from friends to stock a holding?—No, my friends are as poor as myself.

299. *The Chairman.*—Do you do a good deal at fishing?—No.

300. Do you live by your croft and by your labour?—It is by my labour I live mostly, I am not making much of my croft.

301. Do you work your croft at a loss?—I cannot say about that: I would not say at a loss.

302. *Mr Munro.*—If you are not able yourself to stock a croft in Raasay, and cannot get assistance from friends, how then are you to obtain the means of working a croft satisfactorily?—I would not make much of it without assistance.

303. Where do you expect assistance from?—Who knows? I don't know.

Alexander Macswan.

ALEXANDER MACSWAN, Acairseid-thioram, Rona.
(Examined in Gaelic through an Interpreter.)

304. *The Chairman.*—What is the name of your holding?—I live at Acairseid-thioram, 'the dry harbour.'

305. You are not a crofter?—Yes; I succeeded my brother John.

306. I understand there is no land available for crofters in Rona, for new holdings?—No.

307. Is there land in Raasay?—Yes.

308. Would you be willing to go to Raasay if you got a sufficient croft there?—Yes, it is long since I was expecting to get a croft in Raasay.

309. Did you hear what the previous witness said about the old townships there?—Yes.

310. Do you agree with that evidence?—Yes.

311. In what part of Raasay would you like a croft?—Either in Manish or in Castle.

312. What size of croft do you wish there?—A good piece that I could live on.

313. How much arable and grazing?—Land sufficient to rear six or seven cows, and between 80 and 100 sheep, and I would require a horse.

314. And what rent would you contemplate for all that? Would you be willing to give a rent of £20 for it?—No.

315. How much?—I am not a valuator at all.

316. Suppose you had such a croft, could you stock it?—Not without help.

317. Could you put up the house and steading without help?—I believe I could not.

318. How would you propose to flit from Rona to

tree, Skye. Raasay to such a holding as you have described, if you could neither stock it nor put up the necessary buildings? How would you carry out the project?—It would not be easy without help. We have run to poverty so much that we would not be able to do it.

319. Are you in debt just now?—Yes.

320. *Mr Maccallum.*—Are there others in the township who could stock such a croft?—Possibly there are some. I did not come to speak for myself alone, I came to speak for the township.

321. *The Chairman.*—Then the Rona crofters are poor,—worse off than the Raasay crofters?—There are no crofts at all in Rona; only bits here and there, scattered among the rocks.

322. *Mr Maccallum.*—You say you wish to get a croft in Raasay? Why did you leave Raasay for Rona?—I was put out; my father was put out of Raasay.

323. *The Chairman.*—Was he in arrear of rent at the time?—No; we had a good stock too.

324. What was the reason given for the removal?—The township was evicted when Mackenzie, Suishnish, took it for a sheep farm.

325. *Mr Maccallum.*—How many families were evicted then?—Many a family; upwards of a hundred.

326. Where did the most of them go?—To Australia.

327. Suppose you had a croft of ten acres arable, would you know how to cultivate it?—Yes, I know how to cultivate, and make the best possible use of it.

328. *Mr Shaw Stewart.*—What is your employment; how do you live now?—Anything that comes to my hand by which I can make a living.

329. What comes to your hand?—Fishing.

330. Have you any knowledge of farming?—Oh yes, I have; I know how to manage stock and horses, and to use the scythe.

331. Are there any horses in Rona?—No, but we had them in Raasay.

ald
lennan.

RONALD MACLENNAN, Rona.
(Examined in Gaelic through an Interpreter.)

332. *The Chairman.*—Tell us what you would like to say?—I knew the townships which were cleared and which were occupied by crofters years ago in Raasay.

333. We have got all these, I think. You desire I understand, to get a croft on one of these townships?—Yes.

334. Where would you wish to migrate to in Raasay?—Any place between Ayre and Castle, where the small crofters used to be.

335. *Mr Munro.*—What stock had you in Raasay?—It was in Kyle-Rona we were before: we kept four or five cows.

336. Are you a fisherman?—No, I am in the lighthouse packet; I live by fishing and all kinds of work.

337. Are you one of the attendant boatmen to the lighthouse?—Yes.

338. And you have a regular wage from the Lighthouse Commissioners?—Yes.

339. What is that wage?—5s. a week.

340. That is all the year round?—Yes.

341. How long have you held that situation?—Four or five years.

342. Would you lose that, if you went south to Raasay?—Yes.

343. Are you anxious to throw that up for the chance of a croft in Raasay?—Yes.

344. Could you stock it?—Not in my present circumstances.

345. Do you know where you could get help?—No.

346. Surely you don't say that you would give up that situation, small as it is, on the chance of getting a croft which you would not be able to stock?—Yes, I would rather have a good croft in Raasay at the risk of losing the packet employment.

347. What rent would you be willing to give?—I don't know.

348. Could you give any?—Yes.

349. What would you give?—Just according to what I could raise off the croft.

350. *Mr Macleod.*—Where were you born?—On Rona, then we were in Umachan, and then in Kyle-Rona. Portree, Skye. Ronald Maclennan.

351. And do you remember Rona before the people were put there from Raasay?—No, I was but little at the time.

352. What is the name of the township you come from?—Doire-na-guaille.

353. *The Chairman.*—You have four cows, I think?—Yes, we have half a croft at present.

354. You want a croft in Raasay, with four cows? What other stock would you desire to have besides these on a new holding in Raasay?—I have seen them in Raasay up to 8 cows and 50 sheep.

355. I am speaking of such a croft as you would wish to have?—I think we would require not less than fifty sheep, five or six cows, and a horse, on a croft of that kind.

356. What arable land would be required for that?—I have no idea of large areas, and no idea of the measurement of land, we are so accustomed to broken land.

357. But you could give us some idea of what extent of arable land you would require with five or six cows, fifty sheep, and a horse?—No idea, as we have not been used to it.

358. Suppose you had a croft with the proper arable, and five or six cows, fifty sheep, and a horse, what rent would be a fair rent for you to pay and leave you the chance of cultivating it to a profit?—I don't know; we are not accustomed to big rents, but to small holdings. We are eight of us planted down where there was but one tenant before.

359. Are you entitled to any retiring allowance from the Lighthouse Board on superannuation?—No.

360. *Mr Macleod.*—Is there anything you would like to add?—No; but I can tell, if you wish to hear it, how the people were put out of Raasay.

361. *The Chairman.*—I should like to hear it, but state it briefly.—*Witness.* I have seen them knocking the houses over their heads when they were evicting them; and I have seen the time when the mill in Raasay had more to do than it could manage. In one day I have seen no less than 300 evicted and leaving the island, and I have seen them going to the churchyard in their grief at being separated from their homes, and taking handfuls of the soil and grass that covered the graves of their kindred, as mementoes. It was myself and two other boys who ferried across for Mackenzie, the new tenant, the first lot of sheep that were to occupy the land which was thus cleared; and from that beginning the eviction process was carried on till the whole place was cleared. I have seen all that myself, and I have seen seven landlords in Raasay, and it is but right of me to say that of the whole of them Mr Wood was the best. He gave us work, and he gave us money.

362. *Mr Maccallum.*—Were they all cleared at one time?—It was year after year. The two townships were cleared in Mac-Gille-Challum's time.

363. *The Chairman* (on the suggestion of Rev. Mr Darroch).—Who was the proprietor at the time of these evictions?—Mr Rainy was the owner when the big clearance was made. They were left to settle on the top of each other, and shifted to the Isle of Skye, and cleared anywhere. Some of them reside in the parish of Portree at the present day; I know one man in Portree whose father was a tenant in Keistle, and had 80 cows and 50 sheep. His house was demolished over his head, and he was obliged to go into a little hovel there until he could dispose of his stock.

364. The island was then put under sheep?—Yes, it was cleared for Mackenzie, the tacksman.

365. And is it used as a farm now?—Mrs Wood has sheep on it,—sheep and cattle.

366. Is it a deer forest?—There are deer on it too, and rabbits. It is not exactly a deer forest.

367. It is not fully stocked with sheep?—No. They have sheep and cattle on it, with rabbits and game.

Portree, Skye.

Ronald Gillies.

RONALD GILLIES, Fladday, Raasay—*examined.*

368–369. *The Chairman.*—You come from the island of Fladday?—Yes.

370. Near Arnish?—Two miles from Arnish.

371. What is the extent of your holding?—I have no idea.

372. Are you the son of John Gillies?—Yes.

373. Your rent is £2, 5s.?—Yes.

374. Do you know of land elsewhere in Raasay that would be suitable for a new holding?—Yes, plenty.

375. Where is it?—At the upper end of Raasay, the south end.

376. What is the name of the place?—Castle, North-Screapadal, South-Screapadal, the two Haligs, Leac, the Fearns, Baile-Meadhonach Ayre, Suishnish, and the two Manishes.

377. These have all been mentioned already, I think?—Yes, except one, Doire-Domhain.

378. What use is that land being put to at present?—It is under sheep and cattle, and rabbits and deer and birds.

379. What kind of land is it?—I believe it is better land than we have at present.

380. Could you stock a croft if you got one?—I could only place upon the new croft the stock I have on the present holding.

381. And could you put up a house and steading without assistance?—Not at present.

382. Are you in arrear at present?—Only this year's rent.

383. If we come to Raasay, will you show us the land to which you were referring?—Yes, I can show the places, but I cannot define the marches.

384. *Mr Munro.*—Do you know if there have been any deer or rabbits imported?—Deer have all been imported. I believe they are endeavouring to improve the breed of rabbits.

385. Do they injure the corn?—That is what I hear. They do not cause much damage to us in our township, but in others they do.

386. Do the pheasants do any damage?—Not much; we cannot complain much of that in our township.

387. *Mr Maccallum.*—What is the general size of a croft in Raasay just now?—About three acres, with about 10 sheep; that is the average. The holdings will scarcely feed that stock, but they are kept alive in a sort of way.

The Chairman here read an extract from Macdonald's Report on the Agriculture of the Hebrides, showing that so far back as 1811 the island of Raasay abounded with roe-deer.

388–389. *Mr Maccallum.*—Is it of the roe-deer that you complain?—I never quarrel with the deer.

390. What kind of deer are they?—Big beasts.

391. *Mr Gordon.*—Are you a fisherman?—Yes.

392. Have you a boat?—A share of a small fishing-skiff.

393. Would you like a croft to occupy your whole time, or would you wish to shift to better land and continue to be a fisherman?—I am sick-tired of the fishing: I would rather have a croft that would keep me entirely employed.

394. How much stock would you require to have?—Seven or eight cows, a horse, and 80 to 100 sheep.

395. Is the fishing not so good as it used to be?—No, not for some years past.

396. What rent would you be willing to pay for a croft that would keep that stock?—I don't know; but if it was I who had the fixing of the rent I would make it pretty light. I would say about £5 at any rate.

Alexander Gillies.

ALEXANDER GILLIES, Crofter, Kyle-Rona (40)—*examined.*

397. *The Chairman.*—What rent do you pay?—30s.

398. Where is your holding?—Kyle-Rona.

399. Would you like to get out of there into another holding?—Yes.

400. How much additional rent could you pay for a better holding?—I cannot say.

Portree, Sk

Alexander Gillies.

401. I see you had fallen into arrear in your old holding to the extent of £7, 16s. 7d.: but you were called upon to pay only £1, 10s. What extent of new holding do you desire to obtain?—What would keep seven or eight cows.

402. And how many sheep?—50 or 60.

403. And a horse?—Possibly.

404. Can you stock that land?—No.

405. Could you put up the steading and the house?—No.

406. Of course, you know that whatever the rent of such a holding might be, it would be a very great deal more than £1, 10s.?—I believe it would.

407. Would you like to face the maintenance and working of a croft, and live by it, with a rent of £15 or £20,—assuming that the rent was a fair rent for what you got?—According to the circumstances.

408. Would you like to contemplate having a croft worth, say £15 of rent?—It would be too much for me.

409. Would you feel that to be rather staggering?—Yes.

410. I suppose you have never paid a rent of more than 50s.?—No.

411. Therefore, a rent of £15 would be a very serious matter, would it not?—I think it would.

412. But remember, the rent of £15 might be a lower rent than a rent of £2, 10s., having regard to the difference in the holding. Is there anything else you would like to say? Do you do a good deal of fishing?—No, not at present; the fishing is far back in these years.

413. What are your means of livelihood?—Working sometimes, and fishing sometimes, and labouring about the railway.

414. Were you south working at the railway last year?—I was at the Black Isle Railway the summer before last.

415. And last year you were working on the estate?—Yes.

416. What was your wage?—It was contract work.

417. Did you do any fishing last year?—No, I was not at the fishing at all.

418. What was the contract?—Building a house for a crofter.

419. You can put up a black house, can you?—Yes.

420. Do you know about the cultivation of land, and the carrying on of stock?—I am not a practical farmer.

421. *Mr Macleod.*—About what rent would you be willing to pay if you got a croft?—£5 or £6.

422. Would you be prepared to take a croft of the size represented by such a rent if it were offered to you?—I would make an attempt to take it.

423. Do you think you could work it, if you got it?—Yes.

424. *Mr Shaw Stewart.*—What makes you think so, if you have not any practical knowledge of farming?—Practical enough in the sort of work that is in the country, such as the *cas-chrom* and the spade.

425. Do you think you could live on that without contract work?—I think it would be a help.

426. Would not the croft take all your time to cultivate?—No, I think I could finish it in a shorter time than my present croft, because it is a very convenient place to work at. Where I am we have sometimes to carry from one place to another on our backs, on account of the rocky ground.

427. *Mr Macleod.*—It would be easier for you to work a croft at £4 or £5 than your present 30s. croft?—That is my idea.

428. But you would still have to get help to stock it?—Yes.

429. Don't you think the stock you have got at present would increase on the new holding, and you would get a better price for what you had to sell?—I thoroughly believe that it is easier by degrees to stock a good croft than even to keep a stock on a bad croft.

430. You would, of course, be able to put up the buildings yourself?—Yes, the walls.

431. *Mr Maccallum.*—The difference between a rent of 30s. and £4 is not very much: you would make that up easily by working, and you would have the better croft?—Yes.

432. And your stock would increase?—Yes, on better land.

433. You would like better soil?—Yes.

434. Could you easily show us better soil in Raasay than the soil you have?—Oh yes, plenty of it.

435. Is the soil you have very poor?—Yes.

436. And I suppose it is worked out?—Yes, and getting worse.

JOHN GILLIES, Crofter, Torran, Raasay (60).
(Examined in Gaelic through an Interpreter.)

437. *The Chairman.*—You come from Torran?—Yes.

438. What is your rent?—£3.

439. You used to pay a rent of £6?—Yes.

440. Are you anxious to leave your holding?—Yes, indeed I am.

441. Where do you wish to go?—To the south end of the island.

442. That is to say, to one of the places already mentioned,—Halig and Fearn?—Yes.

443. Is the land down there much better than the land you have?—Yes, indeed it is.

444. Could you show us ground that would be suitable for a croft in that quarter?—Yes, easily enough.

445. Could a number of crofters be accommodated with new crofts there?—Yes, there are these old townships, some of them are bigger than others, and could take more crofters.

445*a*. Are a number of the crofters in Raasay, besides yourself, anxious to get new holdings such as you wish?—Yes, the most of them, I believe.

446. Now, suppose you had a croft at the south end of the island, could you stock it?—No, I could only place upon the new croft the stock I have at present.

447. And wait till it multiplied?—Yes.

448. Can you tell us what rent you would be willing to give for such a holding as would keep you?—I cannot tell that: I could only say after seeing the croft cut out, and the marches defined, and seeing the land.

449. Suppose the land cut out or marked off, would you expect anything more to be done for you in removing from where you are to where you wish to be, or would you undertake to carry out the flitting yourself, and set up in the new holding?—No, I could not, without assistance.

450. What assistance would you require?—I think it would be a good deal.

451. Tell us a little more specifically what assistance you would require?—I would take £100, I think, of assistance.

452. And you would not move till you got it?—I don't know that: I am very anxious to leave my present place at any rate.

453. Have you any friends that could help you?—No.

454. Where would you expect the assistance to come from?—I have no idea.

455. You will show us the land you were thinking of when we pay a visit to the island?—Yes, with pleasure.

456. *Mr Macleod.*—If you got this £100 to remove how would you propose to pay it back, and when?—I cannot say; but if I got good stock on the land I would soon pay it.

457. But supposing some one gave you £100 to move to a good croft, how soon would you be prepared to pay it back?—That would depend upon the way the stock would be got, and how prices would be.

458. You would not be afraid that you would not be able ultimately to pay it all back?—I would be anxious enough until it was all repaid.

459. *Mr Shaw Stewart.*—Have you any practical knowledge of the management of stock?—Yes, I have.

460. *The Chairman.*—Are you thinking of a holding near a harbour, or a place where boats would have some shelter?—I would not consider it the worse of that.

461. Have you a harbour in view?—I would prefer a croft near the sea.

462. *Mr Gordon.*—Are you a fisherman, or partly so?—I would be trying to fish.

463. Suppose you got a nice croft with better land, where you could not follow the fishing, would you prefer that?—If I got a good croft away from the sea I would prefer that.

464. *The Chairman.*—Was your former answer given altogether apart from the question of a harbour?—I was thinking of the sea at the same time when I spoke of the poor croft.

465. Then your view is that, even if you got a good croft in the south of Raasay, you would require to have fishing besides?—If I had a good croft I could not give attention to the fishing.

466. Do you wish to say anything more yourself?—No, but the place I am in at present is very poor; should I begin to tell how poor it is, and how great are the difficulties connected with it, I would scarcely be believed.

467. Do you represent any other crofters in Raasay?—I appear for a neighbour of mine also.

468. Do you wish to tell us anything with regard to him, or with regard to the township of Torran?—No, I have nothing to say but to complain of the poverty of our holdings, and how much we are infested with game.

469. What game do you complain of?—Rabbits and pheasants, but not deer; the deer never trouble us.

ALEXANDER GILLIES, Crofter Kyle-Rona, Raasay (40).
(Examined in Gaelic through an Interpreter.)

470. *The Chairman.*—Are you a crofter?—Yes, I have a croft along with my father.

471. Your father's name is John Gillies?—Yes.

472. Do you and your father both desire to get out of the present holding if you can get a better?—Yes, we are very desirous of doing so.

473. Have you considered the kind of holding you would like, and be able to carry on?—A new croft with good land anywhere in the island.

474. Of what size?—A small farmer would require something like 15 acres of arable land to make his living out of it.

475. And what pasture?—Pasture according to that.

476. And stock?—I cannot say.

477. Suppose such a croft as that to come into the market in Raasay, would you and your father be disposed to offer for it?—I don't know; at the present time we would not be able.

478. Because you could not stock, and you could not build?—Yes, that is it.

479. Then you could not pay a fair rent for such a holding, I suppose, in the present circumstances?—Not in our present condition, unless the croft itself would yield it.

480. Do you and your father carry on any fishing?—I do, but my father's day for fishing is past.

481. Could you raise money by loan from friends to meet the expenditure on a new holding?—No, my friends are only just in the same position as most in the island; they would not be able to help me, and I have no prospect of help from any other quarter.

482. Are you quite satisfied, however, that there is land which would be much better suited for a croft in the south of Raasay than the land you have?—I know that there is land on the other side of Raasay, of the breadth of the sole of my shoe, which would be almost better than half an acre of the land I have now. It is not soil, but rocks we are occupying.

483. *Mr Forsyth.*—What stock have you now on the present croft?—I have two cows of a sort, and my

Portree, Skye. Alexander Gillies.

father has other two small beasts,—that is four in all. We have four cows and one or two little beasts.

484. Supposing you got a new croft,—a good croft which suited you, what would you do with your present croft?—The landlord would have it to do his pleasure with it; he might give it to somebody else.

485. Would you wish to give it up then?—Yes.

486. Have you any sheep on this holding?—Yes, a few sheep.

487. *The Chairman.*—Are there many cottars in Raasay?—Yes, I may say that I am a cottar myself, for my name is not on the landlord's books.

488. Are the cottars a considerable burden to the crofters?—Not much; the crofters require to give them bits of ground.

489. Have you a bit of potato ground?—Yes, a third part of the croft.

490. How old is your father?—He is well past 70.

491. Do you wish to make any further statement either for yourself or for any one else in the north of Raasay?—No.

John Macleod.

JOHN MACLEOD, Braes of Raasay (55).
(Examined in Gaelic through an Interpreter.)

492. *The Chairman.*—You come from the Braes?—Yes.

493. Is that in the south of the island?—Yes, just opposite Portree Bay.

494. Do you know the arable land of Raasay well?—Yes.

495. Is there any portion of that suitable for the formation of new crofts?—Yes, the townships already mentioned.

496. How many holdings would these townships allow of?—I cannot exactly say, but I know they were occupied by crofters: I have seen them myself occupied by crofters.

497. And would you like to get a holding in one of these townships?—I was in Kyle-Rona first, then for 20 years a cottar in Umachan. There is land contiguous to my present holding from which my present holding could be sufficiently enlarged.

498. The Crofters Commission may consider any claim of that sort?—Not but that I would like as well to migrate to another township if I could only manage the expense of it.

499. Where would you migrate to?—The township of Castle or of Screapadal. These are the best townships that have been cleared to my knowledge.

500. Would you be willing to migrate to a holding there without getting any assistance to stock or build?—When I came to my present holding it was empty, and I have now got live stock and buildings; and I believe if I got land in any of these townships I would do quite as well there.

501. But would you go there if you did not get assistance?—Yes, I would go; but I would like to have sheep on the new holding.

502. And where would you get them?—I think if I could put only a few sheep on the land, they themselves would not be long in multiplying.

503. *Mr Maccallum.*—How many holdings could be made out of Screapadal?—I think it would suit four well.

504. What stock would they have?—I cannot say about the stock, but I think it would support four crofters comfortably. I don't remember that particular township, I only remember the people there; but I could tell you about a township that I know better about, the township of Castle. In my earliest recollection there were 12 there, but at that time they were very poor.

505. And how many could be comfortably accommodated there now?—Four. I believe that the township of Castle would maintain in comfort an equal number with the township of Screapadal.

505*a*. *The Chairman.*—What would be the number of acres arable to each of the four?—I cannot say.

506. What number of acres arable would you wish for yourself?—I think that 15 acres, between arable and pasture, would suit me well. Portree, Sk John Macle

507. At what rent?—Any fair rent that competent judges would fix.

508. *Mr Gordon.*—Is this land which you referred to old arable land?—Yes.

509. Could it be reclaimed again with the plough without spade work?—It used to be ploughed before.

510. Is it rocky ground?—There is part of the land of Castle that I consider to be stony and hard, but not in Screapadal, which is fine green grassy land.

511. Wet or dry?—Dry. The arable land is not wet.

512. Does the land that you have in view as suitable for a holding require draining?—I believe the two townships I have mentioned don't require any drainage.

513. *Mr Macleod.*—Do you think if you were once in occupation of one of these old townships you could cultivate it properly?—A man that will take up a good big holding would require a good big family; the bigger the family the bigger the holding he could profitably utilise.

514. *The Chairman.*—Are you prepared to incur the risk of leaving your present home, and undertaking the management of a new holding at an increased rent?—I would rather have that and have sheep than be as I am to-day.

515. Are you very anxious about it?—Yes, I am very desirous of getting another place, and I would leave my present place at once. I have been there 13 years, and I would never have come if I had known of all the trouble I have had.

516. *Mr Gordon.*—You said you wanted 15 acres, but did you mean that to be all arable?—That is what I desire, 15 acres between arable and pasture.

517. But where do you keep the sheep—how much hill ground?—I am a man with a small family myself; but I think, besides the cattle I have, I would require to have at least 15 sheep. For the 15 sheep and the present stock I would require 15 acres altogether. I would rather have the sheep and be with one cow than have the cows and be without the sheep.

518. *The Chairman.*—Have you any family?—My wife and two daughters.

519. *Mr. Maccallum.*—What stock of cattle would you have on the 15 acres?—If I had the 15 acres where I am, it would be quite enough that I should keep three cows on it.

520. But if you got a new holding?—If the stock that I have at present were placed on a 15 acres holding I would not require another cow.

521. Do you mean 15 acres for the new croft, or simply in addition?—The new holding in the township of Clachan to which I have been referring.

522. *The Chairman.*—Would you prefer an addition to your present holding, or to go to a new holding altogether?—I would almost prefer any other land in any other township in Raasay to my land at present.

523. Would 15 acres be sufficient as the whole croft in the new place you speak of?—I think the hill grazing that belonged to these townships in the past would require to be added to the new township as well.

524. *Mr Gordon.*—And you would like really 15 acres arable, and hill ground, as a holding?—If I could not get an enlargement of my present holding to the extent of 15 acres I would rather go to another place.

525. But you would rather remain where you are than if you got it extended to 15 acres?—I would rather go to another township.

526. *The Chairman.*—When you spoke about 15 acres, were you not exclusively referring to your present holding?—It is the croft that I have at present that I had in view.

526*a*. But your present croft has 3½ acres arable and 9 pasture?—I was informed that it was only 7 acres.

527. I understand you think there is a piece of land that you think might be added to your present holding?—Yes.

528. How much is that?—I could make the addition unlimited. It is land that was occupied long ago.

DONALD MACRAE, Baile-'chuirn, Raasay.
(Examined in Gaelic through an Interpreter.)

529. *The Chairman.*—You are a crofter from Baile-'chuirn, Raasay?—Yes.

530. Do you give in a statement on behalf of the tenants of Baile-'chuirn and Bailemeanach?—Yes. Murdo Mackenzie, crofter, Balmeanach, and I were duly elected by the people of our townships to appear before your honourable Commission. 'We respectfully state at 'the outset that the crofting townships in Raasay are, 'and unless relieved will remain, in a condition of chronic 'poverty: the reasons being (1) because the land 'occupied by the crofting tenants is the poorest land in 'the islands; (2) because the crofting townships are over-'crowded with crofters and with cottars; (3) because 'these townships have not the hill pasture necessary for 'a fair living; (4) because the best townships in the 'island have been cleared, and now form a huge sporting 'preserve; (5) because deer, rabbits, pheasants, and 'black game do incalculable damage to us. The town-'ships that were cleared of the people, and that are now 'under sport, are 13 in number. They are far the best 'land in the island, though now going back to a state 'of nature, having been 40 years waste. Over 90 families 'lived in them at one time. They would make 34 new 'holdings at the least, and keep that number of families 'very comfortable, at a just rent, and game would 'be much more plentiful than at present. The clearances 'were made by Mr George Rainy, the proprietor, between '1851 and 1853, when a large number were sent to 'Australia, who expected that those who remained 'in the townships would be much better off. When 'those were got away, the remaining tenants in the 13 'townships were violently and forcibly cleared out of 'the country, their houses being pulled down about their 'heads, their fires put out, and some of the people taken to 'the steamers half dead. Thereafter these townships were 'made into a sheep farm. Then Mr G. G. Mackay, the 'next proprietor, introduced deer about 20 years ago. 'Then the late Mr Wood, who succeeded Mr Mackay, 'introduced more deer and rabbits and pheasants. Rab-'bits are being imported every year since, though the 'island is swarming with them. If the people were put 'back to these 13 townships, and this is what the people 'want, it would relieve the conjestion of population in 'the existing crofting townships. Those migrating to 'the old depopulated townships would do well, and so 'would the existing townships when relieved of the over 'population. By such a scheme it would be found that 'there is plenty of land in Raasay for the people of 'Raasay.'

531. Do you wish to add anything to this statement?—No.

MURDO MACKENZIE, Crofter, Bailemeanach, Raasay—*examined.*

532. *The Chairman.*—You are a crofter from Balmeanach, Raasay?—Yes.

533. Do you adopt the statement just submitted by Macrae as your own statement also?—Yes.

534. Do you wish to add anything?—Not at the present time.

535. *Mr Macleod.*—Would you be prepared to take a holding yourself in one or other of the townships mentioned?—Yes; about the time Mr Wood left us, but I am seriously impoverished since.

536. Do you want a new holding, or are you satisfied where you are?—If I could get the hill pasture where I am.

537. *The Chairman.*—Would you stay where you are if you got an addition to your holding, and some hill pasture?—Yes.

538. Rather than leave altogether?—If I could get a croft in Ayre I would shift.

539. Would you be able to stock it?—No, not at the present time, for I am seriously impoverished by what has happened during the last seven years. Here is a copy of a letter I addressed to Mrs Wood of Raasay:—

'*6th February* 1893.

'MADAM,

I beg respectfully to submit to you that, 'since the death of Mr Wood, my crops of every kind 'have been destroyed by pheasants and black game and 'deer. At rent time in each of those years I was 'bringing my case to the notice of the factor. He 'always promised to look into it, but did nothing 'hitherto. The crop of 1891 was so much injured that 'I was obliged to buy feeding-stuffs for my beasts to the 'value of £8, besides being short of two bolls of oat-'meal. The last crop of 1892 practically altogether 'destroyed. I have not a handful of oats left for 'sowings, and already I have been obliged to buy to 'the value of £4, not to speak of what I must yet buy 'for my beasts before the end of May. For want of 'fodder I was compelled to have my beasts out on the 'hill to keep them alive instead of having them housed 'as they ought to be during winter. Let it not be that 'my stock is excessive; for I have actually less stock 'now than when the Crofters Commission fixed it. I 'have been paying the rent regularly up to last term, 'that is as long as I could.

'When I had occasion to complain at the second 'last rent time, to our late proprietor, Mr Wood, he 'allowed me £8 compensation when I had only one-'third of the land under tillage that I had last year. 'Then the last rent time before his death that I submitted 'my case, he allowed me £5 compensation. As already 'stated, I suffered serious loss all those years since Mr 'Wood's death, and no attention has been paid to my 'complaints beyond promises. But the last two years 'have been simply ruinous. Mr Ross did, indeed, offer 'me, on the last occasion, £3, 10s. compensation, but I 'could not accept of that as part payment of compen-'sation. I am now obliged to submit these facts for 'your consideration, and I humbly trust you will order 'such inquiry into the above statements without delay 'as will be satisfactory to you, and that you will see to 'it that such compensation is allowed me as will be 'fairly proportionable to the loss that I have sustained.

I am,
Madam,
Your Obedient Servant,
M. MACKENZIE.

540. *Mr Macleod.*—Have you any sheep?—I had; but at the time of the Crofters Commission they told me to put them away.

541. If you got the hill pasture that is contiguous to your holding, you would be better off than you are?—Yes.

542. What is it presently being used for?—Deers and rabbits, and sporting.

543. *Mr Gordon.*—How many cows have you just now?—I have five cows, and a heifer, and a two-year old and four stirks,—eleven altogether.

544. No sheep at all?—One black-faced sheep.

545. Have you a horse?—No, there is not a horse in the island, except what Mrs Wood has.

546. How many quarters of oats have you grown?—I got three quarters sown with the *caschrom*, but it is very hard work, and if I had a horse I would make my living with it. I would like 15 acres better, as then I could give a rotation of crops.

547. But you must give these cattle to the land?—They are on the hill always. I dare not keep sheep on the hill.

548. Did you sow any turnips last year?—Yes, but they were eaten up by rabbits and deer.

549. Did you sow any grass?—Not the last two years. It did not grow with the soil.

550. You don't lay down grass, as a rule?—When I get it in *caschrom* I must lay it down.

[Mr Stewart, Estate Overseer, made an explanation as to the privilege of hill grazing attached to the crofts of this and the previous witness. The two delegates were allowed to put their cows on the hill of Mrs Wood's farm for six months in the year, but were not actually limited to the six months if they kept within ordinary bounds.]

551. *Mr Gordon.*—Is your whole croft under these

Murdo Mackenzie.

four bolls of oats?—*Mackenzie.* No, there is some under fogg and under heather.

552. That is the whole that you cultivate?—Yes.

553. Have you any land under turnips this year?—No, it is useless to sow them for turnips.

554. How many acres do you sow?—I am not very sure.

555. If you had a little extension of your croft, you would keep a horse?—Yes, if I had the hill pasture.

556. You could hardly keep the horse if you had the hill pasture?—The horse would work for himself and for myself.

557. *Mr Munro.*—How many quarters would you reap?—I used to feed my cattle well, and make some meal in Portree, for our own grinding mill is turned into a sawmill.

558. Give us an idea of the quantity you would produce out of three-quarters?—It would take five or six bolls of meal, besides feeding my beasts, and giving me my seed back again.

559. And how much corn would you reap?—Well, one year when the game was clear of me, I fed my cattle, and had £12 worth of corn.

560. What was the weight per bushel?—I don't know. I have had corn and straw besides keeping my cattle.

561. *Mr Maccallum.*—When you sent it to the mill, how much meal did you get per boll of oats?—I am not very sure.

562. Would you get a boll of meal for a boll of oats?—And more.

563. What weight would those be—40 lbs.?—Yes.

564. If you sent two bags of corn to the mill, what would you get back in meal?—I have to carry it on my back to the shore, and I cannot carry it.

Norman Gillies.

NORMAN GILLIES, Oskaig, Raasay.
(Examined in Gaelic through an Interpreter.)

565. *The Chairman.*—You are a crofter from Oskaig, Raasay?—Yes.

566. Have you any statement to make?—Yes, I have a statement prepared by the township of Oskaig. John Maclean and I were asked by the crofters of our township to give evidence before your Commission.

'1. *Disposition of the Land in the Island of Raasay.* 'On the potato famine the proprietor, Mr George Rainy, 'started public works, and for some time gave the people 'work and a fair wage. When these works ceased, a 'number of the crofter tenants emigrated to Australia, 'at the expense of the proprietor. Before this the 'crofting townships were overcrowded, and a few left 'each township. Those who remained expected that 'the condition would thus be improved as all the towns 'were overcrowded before. But those who remained 'were afterwards evicted, every one of them by the 'proprietor about 1853, and the whole of the following 'townships made into one sheep farm:—

Township.	No. of Holdings in them.	No. of Families in them.	No. they would keepcomfortably.
1. Suisnish,	9	12	3
2. Ayre,	6	10	4
3/4. North and South Fearn,	16	32	6
5. Leac,	4	4	2
6/7. Upper & Lower Hallaig,	16	16	6
8/9. North and South Screapadale,	8	8	4
10. Castle,	9	9	4
11. Manish,	4	5	2
12. Doire-Domhain,	1	1	1
13/14. North and South Glen,	6	6	4
Totals,	79	103	36

Norman Gillies.

'It is right to add that the two glens were cleared 'before Mr Rainy's time, and that if young Mr Rainy 'had lived he would have undone much of the evil 'caused by his father on the evil advice of the local 'factor whom he afterwards found out in his true 'character and dismissed.

'When the above townships were inhabited, black 'cock, grouse, and partridges were much more plentiful 'than now, though now so much preserved. We believe 'the same kind of game would increase again if the 'people got the land back.

'I, John M'Lean, attended a volunteer soiree in the 'time of the last Mr Rainy. Lieutenant Frederick 'Lillingstone of Balmacara was chairman, and Alex-'ander Macdonald, Esq., Portree was croupier. Mr 'Rainy at that time had enrolled 50 rifle volunteers in 'Raasay. He said that evening, that if he was spared 'another year he would get the sheep farmer to renounce 'his lease, and that he would put some of the people 'back to the townships that his father had cleared. Un-'fortunately he died before the end of the year, and a 'sporting proprietor bought the estate, and the whole of 'those 14 townships are now one sporting preserve. 'There is not one volunteer in Raasay to-day.'

567. Do you wish to say anything more?—The witnesses who have already spoken have said enough about Raasay.

[ADJOURNED.]

SECOND SITTING.

PORTREE, SKYE, WEDNESDAY, APRIL 19, 1893.

Present:—

DAVID BRAND, Esq., Advocate, Sheriff of Ayr, and Chairman of the Crofters Commission, *Chairman.*
MICHAEL HUGH SHAW STEWART, Esq., M.P.
ANGUS SUTHERLAND, Esq., M.P.
JAMES NOEL MULLER FORSYTH, Esq.
GEORGE GORDON, Esq.
REV. MALCOLM MACCALLUM.
JOHN MACLEOD, Esq.
HENRY MUNRO, Esq.
WILLIAM MACKENZIE, Esq., *Secretary.*

Neil Macl

NEIL MACLEOD, Cottar, Eyre, Snizort (47)—*examined.*

568. *The Chairman.*—You are a cottar in Eyre?—Yes.

569. Do you pay rent?—Not in the meantime.

570. Have you never paid a rent?—Yes.

571. When was that?—Till last year.

572. What rent did you pay?—I was paying before the time of the Crofters Commission £14, 10s.

573. Did the Commission reduce that rent?—Yes, to £9.

574. And you had an arrear of £35, 5s., of which you were ordered to pay £22, and £13, 5s. was cancelled. Are you now a cottar?—A cottar.

575. How is that?—By the work of the Commission; they left part of those old arrears on me, and I was evicted for that sum.

576. You had to leave your holding?—Yes.

577. And are you living on another man's croft?—No, I am living below high-water mark just now.

578. You did not pay the £22 of arrears ordered to be paid by the Commission?—No.

579. And how long have you been living at your present place?—For the last six or eight months.

580. Did you get a place given to you, or did you settle there yourself?—No, I could not get an inch.

581. So you went below high-water mark?—Exactly.

582. Do you wish to make a statement?—Yes.

583. You appear for all the cottars?—Yes.

584. Did you write out the statement?—No, I did not write it myself.

585. Can you read it?—Not very well.

586. I suppose you can read English?—Sometimes.

587. Have you read that before?—No but I was at the writing of it along with others.

588. You know what is in it?—Perfectly.

589. Have you not gone over the statement after it was written out?—No, but it was read to me. The writer is here.*

590–591. Do you wish to make any statement to us?—Yes; I am desirous of obtaining a holding.

592. Can you show us land in the locality which would be suitable for a holding?—Yes.

593. Is it an old township?—It was an old township.

594. What is its name?—Kingsburgh.

595. Was there more than one township there?—Yes.

596. How many?—Five or six.

597. Different townships?—Yes.

598. Had they different names?—Yes.

599. Can you give us the names?—Vatragill, Romesdal, Sandwick, Corrobheinn, and Moileam; and that is, besides all the arable land about the house, five or six big parks, containing from 25 to 30 acres.

600. Were these also old townships?—I suppose they were.

601. Well, but do you know?—They were attached to the big house, three of them.

602. And the others—had they been old townships?—Likely they were.

603. You don't know?—I don't know.

604. Can we see traces of occupation there?—Yes; still there.

605. But you don't see the traces of occupation on the arable land round the house?—Oh, yes.

606. In what form?—In rigs, and the stones of the old buildings were removed and used for dykes for the parks.

607. Now, what size of holding would you desire to have?—A croft that would keep a man comfortably.

608. What size, in your judgment, would that be?—About 12 acres of arable land.

609. And how much pasture?—What would keep about 80 or 90 sheep.

610. And what else?—Six or seven cows and a horse.

611. Is it your view that on a croft of that size you could make it self-supporting?—Oh, I think so.

612. Without wages from labouring and without fishing?—With occasional labour I could make a living out of that.

613. Could you stock such a holding as that?—Not in the meantime, without assistance.

614. And I suppose I may take it that you could not put up the dwelling-house or steading without assistance?—No, not in the meantime.

615. What amount of assistance would you think necessary for your contemplated holding?—I would take as little as possible, unless I got it at reasonable interest.

616. You require a certain amount, you know?—I would take in hand to stock that in the meantime, because prices are low—about £170 or £180.

617. And within what period would you consider yourself probably able to repay that loan?—From twenty to thirty clear years.

618. You could clear yourself in twenty or thirty years?—Yes.

619. And would you pay interest?—I will.

620. How did you happen to fall so far behind with your rent as to get into this trouble?—By being rack-rented for twenty-one years, and then left with part of the old arrears on me, and law expenses and all.

* The statement is given under the evidence of the succeeding witness, Norman Maclachlan. See p. 21, Question No. 736.

621. Law expenses; were these for proceedings for rent?—For rent, and putting me out of my holding and everything—upwards of £20 last year.

622. Did you not make an effort to pay the sum left upon you by the Crofters Commission?—I offered to do so, but it was refused.

623. What did you offer to do?—I offered to pay last Whitsunday when I was summoned, and decree and poinding and everything. I offered to pay £10 of the old arrears then, and £5 in December.

624. And were you able to pay that?—Well, I would get it by some way or other.

625. When you offered to pay the £10, had you the cash to offer?—Yes.

626. And that was refused?—It was refused, and the fair rent would not be taken from me.

627. I am coming to that in a moment. And the £5 that you were to pay at Christmas you thought you could raise by a loan?—At September.

628. But that offer was refused?—It was refused.

629. Where had you got the £10 that you offered in cash?—I had them by some of the beasts I sold before that.

630. In order to meet the debts?—To meet the debts, and I would make something by fishing too.

631. Then you offered payment of the fair rent?—I offered payment of the fair rent at every collection time, and it was refused.

632. That is to say, you offered payment of £9?—£9.

633. Every time it came due?—Yes.

634. And it was always refused?—It was refused. I would come and offer what I had, and they would not take it unless I would settle with the law agent of Lord Macdonald first for the old arrears.

635. Have you a family?—One of a family.

636. Is your wife living?—Yes.

637. How do you subsist at present?—By fishing.

638. Have you a boat?—Yes; a small boat.

639. Fourteen feet keel?—14½ feet keel.

640. *Mr Sutherland.*—You were a crofter before you became a cottar?—Yes.

641. And it is only recently that you became a cottar?—Yes.

642. Have you any reason to suppose that it was by process of law you became a cottar?—I did not get justice by having these old arrears left upon me, because I had been paying the higher rent for twenty-one years, and I paid more than the fixed rent is now—about £140 more than the valuation of the Commission. I think there should not have been any arrears at all left on me. I could not pay it at long last, and I was spoilt almost before the Commission came. The croft is dear enough as it is.

643. But my question was directed rather to see how the cottars have become cottars. Some of them have become cottars through the landlord refusing to give them land to settle upon, and some, as you have become, by process of law for recovering rent?—Ay, that is the way I came to be a cottar.

644. Now, do those views that you stated to us to-day represent the views of the cottars round about—do you speak for a class?—Yes.

645. And everything you have said with regard to being able to take suitable land would refer to them as well as to you? Would every man be as able to take land under favourable circumstances as you consider you are?—Oh yes, I think so.

646. And in making these statements regarding the land that is available for occupation, you did not take into account at all, as I understand, land that can be reclaimed, but that never was reclaimed before?—I believe there is such.

647. And, as a matter of fact, the land that the crofters have got is not by any means the best land, is it?—It is the very worst.

648. So that any land that you could take in Skye would not be worse land than what they have?—I don't know if it is.

649. The crofters are in occupation at present of the worst land?—They are in occupation of the worst land that I know.

Portree, Skye. — Neil Macleod.

650. So that if the land that the crofters have now got is capable of being tilled at all, the greater part of the remainder is also capable of being tilled?—I don't know, but I know the crofters have the worst of the land.

651. They could not have worse land than they have now?—I don't know of it, if it is to be had.

652. So that, you think, ought to be taken into account in selecting the land?—I think the land will speak for itself when you see it.

653. For the 12 acres of arable land and the 80 or 90 acres you said was the proper size of holding, you always considered that the rent would be fixed by a separate tribunal, not by the landlord or by the tenant?—We hope so. We have got plenty of that already.

654. In taking into account this £200 that you said would be necessary to build a house, have you any idea as to how it could be got?—No, unless we get it from the Government.

655. Well, supposing it to be advanced by the Government, do you think that the people would be perfectly willing to enter into any reasonable condition for repayment of that money?—I am sure they will.

656. Do you know what interest the Government generally charges for money they advance?—I am not sure; but what I have been told is from 3 to 3½ per cent.

657. And do you consider these terms more favourable than are generally given in the localities—say, by local banks?—By far.

658. So you think it would be far easier to get money through the Government than money from a local bank?—Yes; I could not get it from the local bank under 5 per cent.

659. Are you aware of the arrangements made with County Councils for advancing money under the Small Holdings Act?—No.

660. But you think that a body like the County Council would be a good body to advance money to the crofters?—I don't know. I prefer it from the Government.

661. You would not deal with the Government direct, would you?—I cannot say.

662. Would you see any difficulty in repaying a sum of £170 to £200 in a term of thirty years?—Not the slightest.

663. And paying 3¼ or 3½ interest?—Yes, and fair rents too.

664. I always presume there would be a fair rent in the arrangement, that the rent would be revised periodically, and that, as prices went up or down, you would pay rent accordingly?—I want to be rented, not for ever, but that the rent would come to an end some time.

665. The same way as you would repay a loan to the Government?—When I pay it.

666. *The Chairman.*—You want the rent to run out, and then you will stand rent free?—Through time.

667. *Mr Shaw Stewart.*—Why do you think that you would be able to repay this money so easily if you had a new holding?—From twenty-one to thirty years.

668. How do you think you would be able to raise the money in that period?—By good management of the farm.

669. Entirely, and not from any outside labour?—No; by good management of the farm.

670. Have you taken into account the rates that you would have to pay?—Fine that.

671. And the fencing?—Everything.

672. *Mr Gordon.*—Do you say that the whole of the cottars in your part of the country are men who have formerly been in crofts?—Some of them are young.

673. Is it not the case that they are partly squatters and partly members of the same family as held the croft?—Oh, they are cottars.

674. No doubt; but is it the case that the whole of the cottars in your district are men who have been turned out of their crofts?—Well, no; some of them never had a croft, but they all like to get holdings and crofts.

675. *The Chairman.*—You say that too heavy arrears were left upon you by the Crofters Commission. Did you take an appeal against the order made?—No.

Portree, Sk — Neil Macle

676. Why?—There was no appeal at that time.

677. Now, are you aware that in Skye, as well as other parts of the West Coast, there are frequent instances of sub-division of holdings by crofters?—No, I was not aware of that.

678. Are you aware of this, that crofters frequently give a bit of their crofts to a son or other relative?—No, I am not aware of that.

679. You are well acquainted with the Eyre district?—Yes.

680. Are there many cottars there?—Six in the township, and only eight crofters.

681. Is that including yourself?—Yes, just now.

682. That is to say, there are five and yourself. How did these five come to be cottars, do you know?—Some of them never had land—they left their father's house, and put up a house on their father's ground.

683. Without the consent of the landlord?—That was going on in former years.

684. And it went on in your time?—In my time too.

685. These were not persons who had been evicted?—No.

686. They wanted to remain in the place, and set up this little establishment of their own?—Yes, and they could not get land.

687. *Mr Sutherland.*—Why? Was there no land in the country to give them?—But they would not get it. They would not get a place for building a house.

688. *The Chairman*—Is it the case, as Mr Mackintosh, the factor, states, that decree has been obtained against you in the Sheriff Court of Portree for the arrears of fair rent?—He refused it.

689. But is it a fact?—It was by the way he was refusing it. He would not take it. It is quite right; but he refused the money till I would settle the arrears with Mr Macdonald first. I can produce plenty other crofters who were refused the same way as myself.

690. You admit you were in arrear with your fair rent?—I admit I was in arrear with my fair rent.

691. How was it you fell into arrear with your fair rent?—Because he would not take it.

692. Did you ever tender payment of the full sum of fair rent?—I offered to pay that.

693. What did you offer to pay?—£9.

694. Always?—Two times, and it was refused.

695. *Mr Sutherland.*—Would you have to pay £22 and the new rent £9, *i.e.*, £31 for the clear rent?—I suppose so.

696. *The Chairman.*—Were you bankrupt before you were removed from your croft?—No, until the time of the Commission. He made me bankrupt.

697. The proceedings taken by the landlord resulted in your bankruptcy?—Exactly.

698. Why did you not pay an instalment of the arrears?—I did not pay at all.

699. But you were ordered to pay £22 by four instalments of £5, 10s. each; did you not do that?—No, I did not.

700. Why did you not pay even a single instalment of the arrears?—I was unable to do it.

701. Did you try to raise the money?—No, I thought it was too severe to pay it, because I had already paid too much to the landlord.

702. Did you ever see a cottar on Kingsburgh Farm?—They are there still.

703. On the places you mentioned?—Yes.

704. I thought you said they were vacant?—There are some cottars there, and there were crofters there for the last eighty years.

705. And are there cottars there?—There are cottars and sub-tenants there still.

706. How many?—Seven sub-tenants and one cottar.

707. Who improved the land near the farm-house?—Well, I don't know. I suppose it was the cottars.

708. Do you know as a matter of fact?—It is eighty years since it was cleared.

709. You mentioned a sum of £170 to £180. Does

that include the expenditure required for building?—The whole amount for stock and building.

710. And, indeed, the whole expenditure you need to make?—The whole of it.

711. Suppose you got a loan such as has been indicated, would you undertake to repay the interest at 3 or 3½ per cent. while the loan was due, and pay up the loan itself?—Yes.

711*a*. Both the interest and the capital?—Both interest and capital.

712. *Mr Shaw Stewart.*—You have told us you fell into arrears on the small croft with a fair rent. Have you any reason to think that you would not fall into arrears on a larger croft paying a larger rent?—Yes; because the croft I had was good for nothing.

712*a*. But the fair rent was fixed?—It had been turned for the last 200 years; and suppose it were sown this year, I would not get as much seed back as was sown.

713. But that was taken into account when the fair rent was fixed?—I don't suppose so.

714. But why do you suppose that the rent would be any easier in the new croft?—The gentlemen who valued these crofts did not understand the soil.

715. But how do you know that the next valuation will be any better?—Because it is a better soil.

716. But you would have a larger rent to pay, and heavier burdens?—Another good reason,—if I made improvements I might be removed next year, and be fined for my labour.

717. *Mr Macleod.*—Do I understand that if you had not those old arrears you would have been able to pay the fair rent, and continue in the holding?—Well, indeed, it was quite hard lines, because the croft was bad; but I would have paid it.

718. You would have managed if it had not been for the arrears?—Yes.

719. *The Chairman.*—This is a matter of some importance. The order left upon you was to pay £5, 10s. at Martinmas 1887, the same amount at Whitsunday 1888, the same amount at Martinmas 1888, and the same amount at Whitsunday1889?—All these arrears were put in the rental book as one sum.

720. That might be, but you could only be called upon to pay £5, 10s. at a time. Did you ever tender payment of that £5, 10s.?—I never paid it.

721. *Mr Sutherland.*—Were you asked to pay it?—It would be asked of me, 'Are you going to pay it?' and I would say, 'I am not able just now.'

722. *Mr Macleod.*—You fell into arrears when the rent of your croft was £14, 10s., did you not?—I did.

723. To the amount of £35, 5s.?—Something about that.

724. That was reduced by the Crofters Commission to £22?—Yes.

725. Divided over a period of two years,—that is £11 a year of arrears that you had to pay, together with a fair rent of £9?—Yes.

726. That is £20 a year altogether?—I suppose it would be something like that.

727. And the old rent of £14, 10s. you were not able to pay?—I paid it except two years; for twenty-one years I paid £14, 10s.

728. *Mr Maccallum.*—The result of the visit of the Commission came to this, did it not, that you were really called upon to pay an increased rent for two years—that is, you had to pay £20 a year for your croft?—Something about that.

729. *The Chairman.*—Oh, no. He had to pay a fair rent of £9 and an old debt of £11 for two years.

730. *Mr Munro.*—Did you tender any sum to the factor?—I did.

731. How much,—the fair rent, £9?—Yes.

732. And it was refused because you had not paid the arrears fixed by the Commission?—Yes.

Norman Maclachlan, Cottar, Kingsburgh (32)—*examined.*

733. *The Chairman.*—You are a cottar at Kingsburgh?—Yes.

734. Do you pay any rent?—No.

735. This written statement is in your handwriting?—Yes.

736. And it was prepared by you along with some of the other cottars in the locality?—Yes, it is from cottars in Kingsburgh, Eyre, Kensaleyre, Rhenetra, and Keistle in the parish of Snizort, on Lord Macdonald's estate, and is as follows:—'The following delegates 'were duly appointed by the people above stated to 'appear before your Commission, viz., William Beaton, 'Kensaleyre; Neil Macleod, Eyre; Norman Mac-'lachlan, Kingsburgh; John Mackinnon, Rhenetra. 'Eyre, Kensaleyre, Rhenetra, and Keistle are all croft-'ing townships, with landless cottars in each of them. 'There are 6 cottars in Eyre, 4 in Kensaleyre, 3 in 'Rhenetra, and 3 in Keistle. Besides these there are 7 'sub-tenants and 1 cottar on the sheep-farm of Kings-'burgh. All the above cottars are desirous of securing 'crofters' holdings in their native islands, and offer to 'show that plenty of suitable land is available even in 'their neighbourhood to meet their requirements. 'Kingsburgh sheep farm carries a sheep stock of at 'least 2600, besides 8 Ayrshire cows and 20 Highland 'cattle, and 6 horses. It contains old arable land 'where crofting townships once existed; in the follow-'ing parts:—

'(1.) Vatrigill, where the people were evicted about '80 years ago, and where 5 could be comfortable.

'(2.) Romisdale, where, within the memory of Angus 'Buchanan, there were 9 families, and where 3 families 'would live comfortably.

'(3.) Sandwick, where there were 15 families who 'were evicted by Lord Macdonald 80 years ago, and 'where 8 could live comfortably.

'(4.) Corrobheinn, where there were 3 tenants before, 'and where 2 could be comfortable.

'(5.) Moileam, where there were 10 families before, 'who were evicted, and where 5 would do well now.

'(6.) Besides the amount of old arable land in the 'above-mentioned townships, there are several parks on 'the farm, after leaving 50 acres of arable land to the 'farm-house, which, part of them, have lain waste for 'several years.'

737. You say 5 families could be accommodated at Vatrigill. What size of holding do you give to each?—I would say between 12 and 14 acres of arable.

738. And do you give grazing too?—For 70 to 90 sheep.

739. And a horse?—And a horse; and from 5 to 7 milch cows.

740. Do you intend a holding of that kind to be self-supporting?—Yes.

741. Without fishing and without labour?—Yes.

742. What labour in your opinion would be wanted to work that holding,—how many persons, male grown-up persons or strong youths, would be required?—I would say two able men and a boy would work it, so far as I can see.

743. Do you think you could work that holding without purchasing corn—seed-corn?—Yes, if I got it in some places that I know myself in the island of Skye.

744. Where?—Even on the Kingsburgh Farm.

745. Could you grow corn sufficient without purchase on a holding of that size?—Yes, in some parts of the arable land of Kingsburgh.

746. The arable land is so good?—Yes.

747. Is that arable land in these townships?—Yes.

748. There are great differences between the arable land in these townships, I suppose,—I mean in the quality of the arable?—Yes, in some parts.

749. Suppose you had a holding of the kind you describe, could you stock that holding?—Not I, for one, I being a poor cottar.

750. I suppose we may take it that none of the

Portree, Skye. Norman Maclachlan.

cottars could stock their holdings without assistance?—No.

751. Some such assistance as the previous witness Macleod described?—They would require considerable assistance.

752. Have you a family?—Yes.

753. Have you sons grown up?—No, a young family.

754. How could you work this holding that requires two grown men and a boy, suppose you had it?—My family would be getting up, and I could be getting the help of a boy till then.

755. The crofters, I suppose, near you are much better off than the cottars?—They are bound to be.

756. And it would be a great advantage for the cottars if they could be placed in the position of crofters?—It would be to the advantage of the poor cottar to have even the smallest bit of land to better his wretched position.

757. And would not it benefit the crofters also by relieving them of the cottars?—Yes.

758. So that it would be a double advantage: the cottar would be made into a crofter, and the crofter would be relieved of these cottars?—Yes.

759. Is that your view?—Yes, that is my view.

760. Do you know any crofter's holding in your district which you consider to be self-supporting?—Yes.

761. More than one?—Yes.

762. These holdings are carried on to a profit; the crofter has always something to the good at the end of the year?—It is to the land that is at present under sheep and other vermin.

763. Yes, but I ask if you know of crofters' holdings in your district that are self-supporting?—Not near my district; they have enough to do to make the two ends meet.

764. Is this the case, that the crofters' holdings in your district, as at present situated, are not self-supporting—that they have enough to do, as you call it, to make a living?—I am only a cottar myself, the crofters will answer that for themselves.

765. I think you have half answered it already. You have some doubt on the subject, I think?—Well, they have enough to do this present year, owing to low prices and what not.

766. And in previous years also, I daresay?—Yes.

767. *Mr Sutherland.*—Do you see any very great difficulty in the repayment of money that might be advanced in order to build a house and steading and to reclaim the land?—I know, as far as I can see, that they would be able to pay it back if they got ample time given to do it, and to get the money at reasonable rates.

768. And settled on the land best fitted for settlement?—Settled comfortably on the land.

769. And under the best possible circumstances?—Yes.

770. Are you aware that when the people were turned out of these places that have been referred to, they got no assistance whatever to build houses?—I believe they got no security from the landlord.

771. They were simply sent there to live the best way they could, and they ultimately became rent paying?—Yes.

772. So that you think, under reasonable and proper circumstances, they would do better than they have done now?—Yes, I believe they would do better.

773. Something has been said about rates, but would it not be a considerable relief to the local rates if all the people were put into comfortable circumstances,—there would be no paupers to support?—I should think so.

774. That is also an element to be kept in view?—Yes.

775. Well, then, as to occupying the land to profit: would not the fact that a family would live in comfortable circumstances be an occupation of the land to the profit of the country?—I should think so.

776. I believe you gave to the Chairman the number of families of cottars that were in the same circumstances as yourself?—Well, I will say that I am worse situated than any of them.

Portree, Sk. Norman Maclachla

777. You consider yourself then an unfavourable sample of the cottars at Kingsburgh?—Yes, I do.

778. You are not living below high-water mark?—I am above high-water mark.

779. *Mr Munro.*—Supposing you got a loan of £180, could you pay that loan off in thirty annual instalments of £6, besides paying a fair rent and interest?—Well, I know I would have enough to do.

780. You have told us you could grow corn upon that croft. What quality of corn would you grow?—The quality that they generally sow in the country.

781. How many quarters would you have per acre?—Being a cottar, I could not say by the acre.

782. On half an acre then,—would it be over 2 quarters?—Yes.

783. *The Chairman.*—Supposing you had to pay an instalment of £6, and interest amounting to £5, making £11, and a fair rent of £10, which brings the total up to £21, could you manage to pay that?—If I got the land in proportion to that.

784. But you have given us the land, you know—10 to 14 arable. Suppose you had to pay even £15 to £18 per annum, do you think you would be able to work your croft and pay that till the whole debt of £180 was discharged in 30 years?—No, it is too high.

785. *Mr Sutherland.*—Are you aware of what they are doing in Manitoba—of the offers made to intending settlers, giving them 5 years in which no repayment is asked,—don't you think that is a principle that could be applied in this country?—I think it should be.

786. *Mr Munro.*—Could you not start a croft with a much lower advance than £180, say if you got £50, could you enter into possession?—Yes, If I could get a bit of land, small as it is, I would do my best to stock it.

787–88. *Mr Maccallum.*—Don't the families of the cottars suffer from a scarcity of milk? Is there a scarcity of milk in your district?—Yes.

789. How do you get milk for your young children?—I don't get any milk a all, though I am living in the midst of the finest parts in the Highlands.

790. And you think they must suffer a great deal through want of milk?—They are bound to suffer.

791. And is not that one of the great advantages that the crofters have, that they have milk?—Yes, it is. I would like to say that by some means I have got a stirk to myself, but I was refused the grazing of it last year, though it would be the greatest of support to myself and my young family.

792. To whom did you apply for the grazing?—The factor on the Kingsburgh Farm came and told me that I would have to take it from him on the term day.

793. *Mr Gordon.*—You have told us that you would like to get 100 sheep. Do you mean that you want a piece of exclusive pasture for the croft, or would you propose that these 100 sheep should be grazed in conjunction with other sheep?—I should say a joint stock would be better.

794. *Mr Shaw Stewart.*—You have really not much practical knowledge of farming?—I would undertake to work a good croft if I got it.

795. But you still think you could enter on a croft of this size with £50 to stock with, as Mr Munro suggested?—It would be so much of a help.

796. But would it be sufficient to commence a building and fencing?—No, not to build a house and steading, and to get stock.

797. *The Chairman.*—Are you a tradesman?—I am a country joiner.

798. Were you born in Kingsburgh, or are you a native of the country?—I have been in Kingsburgh for 23 years.

799. Do you know that Mr Macleod spent a great deal of money in improving the Kingsburgh Farm?—I understand he did, to benefit himself.

800. In trenching and in building dykes?—Well, I was not in Kingsburgh in Mr Macleod's time.

801. Did you ever see an eviction in Kingsburgh?—Not in Kingsburgh.

802. *Mr Macleod.*—You are a country joiner you state?—Yes.

803. So that if you got a new holding you would be able to help towards your buildings, with your trade?—I would prefer the holding to my trade, because it is a poor place.

804. But your trade would be a help, if you got a holding as well?—I would be able to do any work in the way of my trade.

805. You mean in making your buildings?—Yes.

806. You would be able to do the joiner work?—Yes, I would be able to do most of the work myself.

807. You have not much acquaintance, have you, with the handling of money? You don't know much about interest and rent and other things? You are a cottar, are you not?—I am a poor cottar.

808. And you don't know but if you got this holding it might be easier for you to pay these instalments than you think now?—Certainly it would be easier for me, if I could get a fair rent.

809. If your croft went on well, would you give up the joiner work, and stick to the holding?—Yes; entirely.

WILLIAM BEATON, Cottar, Kensaleyre, Snizort (48). (Examined in Gaelic through an Interpreter.)

810. *The Chairman.*—You are a cottar?—Yes.

811. Having formerly been a crofter?—Yes.

812. And what rent did you pay as a crofter?—£6.

813. When did you cease to be a crofter?—A bad factor evicted me although my rent was paid.

814. When did that occur?—About 12 years ago.

815. Where were you evicted from?—Keistle.

816. And how did you come to your present position?—I was flung down on a heathery hillock, and left to sink or swim.

817. And you built a house yourself?—Yes.

818. What is the size of your present holding?—Between heather and all about an acre.

819. At the time you were put out of your croft 12 years ago, were you in arrear of rent?—Not a penny.

820. What was the reason assigned for the proceeding?—The factor was clearing townships in another part of the country, and he took some of these evicted people and planted them in this township, and to accommodate some he evicted me.

821. Who got your holding?—A man of the name of Murchison, who was evicted from Glendale.

822. And is he there still?—Yes.

823. You are anxious to get a crofter's holding now?—Yes; I am very needy of having a croft now.

824. And you could show us the land that would be suitable?—Yes; plenty of it.

825. You heard the previous witnesses mention a number of townships in that locality having ground suitable for crofts, do you agree with their evidence?—Yes. I know of these townships that were mentioned.

826. Are all the townships that were mentioned within the limits of Kingsburgh Farm?—Yes, all of them, and more that were not mentioned, from which the people were cleared.

827. Just tell us any others that have not been mentioned?—Little Kingsburgh.

828. That is Kingsburgh Beg?—Yes.

829. Do you know a place called Lenncladich or Pennybeg?—Yes.

830. Is that one of them?—Yes.

831. And Glenhalton?—That is not in Kingsburgh.

832. What size of holding are you desirous of obtaining, if it can be got?—One who has nothing would like to have something; any croft.

833. You think, in short, that anything in the shape of a croft would be better than your present condition of cottar?—Yes.

834. Would you be willing to take a croft of the same size as the one you lost, at a similar rent?—Yes, if it was good land.

835. Had you some stock when you were put out of that holding 12 years ago?—Yes, a little.

836. What became of it?—I needed to have it to take myself and my family through. Portree, Skye. William Beaton.

837. *Mr Maccallum.* Have you got a family?—Yes.

838. Are they grown up?—From 25 to 12 years of age.

839. How many sons?—Five sons.

840. All at home?—No, that won't do for them.

841. And if you got a good holding, would these be able to help you at the working of it?—I am not very sure now that they have grown up, they have to look after themselves.

842. But do you think that some of them would remain with you to help with the croft?—They would do work for me.

843. Are you a tradesman?—A labourer.

844. From whom do you get labour?—Wherever anybody will employ me.

845. Where do you mostly get employment?—Through my own part of the parish.

846. Are you a fisherman?—No.

847. How many men are in the same condition as yourself in respect of land?—Four of us: we are the descendants of crofters.

848. At the time you spoke of, twelve years ago, was any other crofter thrown out in the same way as yourself?—No.

849. You are the only case?—I am the only case. I said to the factor that I would not go as my rent was paid, and he told me that if I did not go I would not get a foothold on the Isle of Skye, if I did not obey him.

850. Were proceedings taken against you?—Yes.

851. Was the stock your own when you left the croft?—Some of the stock belonged to myself.

852. What part of it?—The half of it.

853. Did your neighbours petition to have you removed?—No; they were very sorry to have me cleared out.

854. Were you in any trouble about anything, with the estate or with your neighbours, at the time you were removed?—I was not in any trouble personally, and my rent was all paid. My father was there sixty years before me.

855. *Mr Macleod.*—Why were you removed? Why should the other man have been preferred to you?—The factor was clearing out the other man from Glendale in order to make a sheep farm of the place he occupied.

856. *The Chairman.*—Can you say, of your own knowledge, that the removal from Glendale was made to make room for a sheep farm for the factor?—That is what the man said to me, and what I heard; and sheep were put into his place, and are still there.

857. Did the factor ever have that portion of Glendale for a sheep farm?—Yes, the factor had it for a year.

NEIL SHAW, Crofter, Eyre, Snizort (71). (Examined in Gaelic through an Interpreter). Neil Shaw.

858. *The Chairman.*—You are a crofter from Eyre?—Yes.

859. What rent do you pay?—£8, 17s. now.

860. What was the old rent?—£13, 10s.

861. Do you desire to leave your holding for another?—Yes, if I get a better one.

862. Can you show us land in your neighbourhood that would make a better holding for you?—I am a stranger in this part of the country. I was born in Macleod's country at Ebost, but I heard the witness who spoke already give the names of townships near me suitable.

863. You did not know this part of the country long ago?—Yes, I know the land here, and I know the land in Macleod's country; I was under three landlords.

864. Then could you point to land that would be available for new holdings?—If it was permissible I would go back to Bracadale parish, and show land there where I could get a good croft.

865. We are talking of land in this district just

now?—Yes, there is plenty of land in Kingsburgh near me which would be suitable for crofts such as I desire.

866. Do you desire to say anything further?—I am ready to answer any questions put to me.

867. *Mr Maccallum.*—You say you wish to get back to Bracadale. How did you come to leave Bracadale?—My father was a tenant in Ebost. Old Macleod of Ebost put tenants out of the glens,—Glen-Ose and Glen-Ullinish. I was 20 years of age before I left Bracadale.

868. And had you a holding in Bracadale?—Yes, my father had a croft there, for which he paid £10 of rent.

869. Was he comfortable there?—Yes, and free from debt. When Mr Gibbon, Macleod's factor, evicted these two townships, there were 12 tenants in them, and there was not sixpence of arrears among them all.

870. And they were not so well off in the new holding?—We then got to Macleod's country, who sent us to the other side of Duirinish. We were only five years there; we had built new houses for ourselves, and settled there, when a bad year came. About 52 years ago, when the potato famine took place, the tenants got much reduced in their circumstances. There were ten of us there, and four of them went abroad, and the remainder got a small place there, where they could get a little crop.

871. *Mr Sutherland.*—Do you know any land in your neighbourhood that is better for cultivation than that you have got yourself?—Yes, plenty.

872. Land at present not under cultivation?—Yes; the land we have is not worth sowing at all.

873. Is it inferior to land that is lying uncultivated?—Yes, indeed.

874. You can show us the land when we visit the locality?—Yes, I will show the Commission the better land at Kingsburgh.

875. Did it formerly form part of townships?—Yes, it was formerly occupied by crofting townships.

876. And what is it being used for at present?—The tack of Kingsburgh.

877. *Mr Gordon.*—What is your present stock?—When I entered my present holding I paid £90 for my share of the joint sheep stock.

878. And how many cattle have you?—Four cows.

879. What is the number of the club stock?—About 60 to each share now: the times have been so bad that the stock has been decreasing.

880. How many are there to share it?—Eight, and a share vacant; there are nine shares.

881. How many acres of arable land have you?—Between five and six.

882. How many quarters of oats do you sow each year?—Four bolls would sow my present land, and a little potatoes.

883. And is the whole of your croft under crop except the potato land?—The area is so small, we keep it under crop except the potato land.

884. Where is your croft?—The minister's glebe is between us and the sea.

885. How many bolls will you reap from your three bolls sown?—About nine or ten. It would give enough to do to get that back, and some of it would not even sow itself back.

886. You have to buy the most of your meal?—Yes, every year.

887. Is it the usual state of matters for the people of your district to have to purchase the most of their meal?—Yes, every man, and oat seed too.

888. Is that owing to the climate?—Partly the climate, especially last year; and the soil is weak.

889. When you send your corn to the mill, do you get more than a boll of meal from a boll of oats?—No, we don't get a boll of meal out of a boll and a half of oats.

890. What sort of crop does the glebe yield?—He tried to use it in two ways, but now he has let it under sheep and cattle.

891. From what source do you principally derive your rent?—The income from the sheep will not this year pay for the shepherd's wages.

892. And where do you get the money?—Those who are able to pay it get it from their families' earnings in other places.

893. Is it a ewe stock that is kept on the club farm?—We have a few wethers, but they are in the same run; we are not selling lambs at all. We winter them ourselves.

894. Can you winter the whole of the sheep stock?—We don't winter them; last year we carried them through the winter in a sort of way.

895. *Mr Sutherland.*—Would you be able to carry a bigger sheep stock if you had more arable land?—We have plenty sheep for the holding we have: it is overrun with sheep and cattle and horses.

896. But if you had more arable land, would you be able to carry more sheep stock with your present grazing?—We could carry if we had a place where we could winter our hoggs; but if we got more arable land we would need to get more hill grazing too, to carry more sheep.

897. But could not you raise a lamb stock, and winter more sheep than at present?—Yes, we would be able to carry more stock, and to get more help for ourselves and our families.

898. *Mr Gordon.*—Does any crofter in your township raise turnips at all?—Every one of us.

899. How much?—Some 1 lb. weight, others 1½ lbs. We are scarce of manure.

900. Do any of them lay down clean grass?—They began that, but as they had no protection for their ground they had to give it up: the stock was spoiling it.

901. The stock of sheep?—Sheep and cattle and horses.

902. *Mr Forsyth.*—Your land is fully stocked with sheep?—Yes, the ground is spoilt by all sorts of stock being on it—we have almost as many stock belonging to other people as our own.

903. Then if you had more wintering land, you would need more summer grazing too?—That is what we want, but we would require ground out of which to take food for ourselves and for our stock.

904. Are you in favour of pasture being separate, or a common or club stock?—I would prefer the joint stock.

905. *The Chairman.*—There was left upon you a sum of £20 of arrears; is that paid?—The £20 is paid, but I am due something all the same.

906. How much?—I am not very sure; I am bandied about between the law-agent and the factor.

907. It is said that you are due £26, 11s.?—I am not sure.

908. Is the croft that you have at present a losing concern or a profitable concern?—It is a losing concern; if I had not my family working for me I would not have smoke out of my house.

909. Do you think you could show us land where you would be able to carry on a profitable croft in the neighbourhood?—Yes, if there was nothing else in the way but that, I could.

910. Do you think you could set up a new holding without assistance from outside?—No, I could not; but I can say this, that though I could not take a new holding, I have been under three landlords, and not one of them had a penny against me when they put me away; and should I leave Lord Macdonald to-day, there would not be a penny against me either.

911. *Mr Sutherland.*—You said your croft was not profitable at the present moment; do you think that is due to the fact of your having these heavy arrears to pay?—It is because of the arrears that the croft is not paying. I paid Mr Macdonald £25 of arrears since Martinmas last. That is £20 that the Crofters Commission left on me.

912. But are the arrears that are now due upon the Fair Rent?—Yes, because the factor would not take the Fair Rent; they were wanting to have occasion against us to put us out.

Portree, Skye. Shaw.

913. Where does the stock come from that trespasses upon your common pasture?—The townships about us; there are two townships beside us, as well as poor cottars that have no place at all.

914. *The Chairman.*—What amount of stock have the cottars upon their ground?—I don't know.

915. Take it this way—how many cottars have stock upon your ground?—There is a number of cottars about us.

916. What number would you say?—I am not very sure; there are five or six.

916*a*. Has each of these cottars got stock of his own?—A little.

617. And do they all put their stock upon your ground?—Yes.

918. Do they pay anything for that?—No, they are never asked anything, unless they pay for the smearing and dipping of them. They might give us a day's service at the fank.

919. Would you say that the cottars had more than half the amount of the whole stock of the township upon the ground?—No, not a third, nor a fifth; but the two neighbouring townships do not observe the march between them and us,—Keistle and Rhenetra.

920. Do the stock from these two places come upon your grazing?—Yes, and some of our stock go into theirs.

921. *Mr Macleod.*—How many crofters are in Eyre township?—Eight, with 14 families.

922. And five or six cottars?—Yes.

923. So that if the five or six cottars were taken away it would be a very great relief to the eight crofters?—No, I don't know that it would. What is a great burden on us is our own poverty, we are not possessed of anything to speak of.

Beaton.

JOHN BEATON, Crofter, Eyre, Snizort (63).
(Examined in Gaelic through an Interpreter.)

924. *The Chairman.*—You are a crofter from Eyre?—Yes.

925. What is your rent?—£8, 15s.

926. What was it formerly?—£13, 10s.

927. Do you desire to leave your present holding if you can get another?—Yes, I would need that.

928. Can you show us land in the neighbourhood that would be suitable?—Yes, Kingsburgh is near us.

929. Did you hear the names of the old townships mentioned?—Yes.

930. And do you agree with the evidence as to them?—Yes.

931. What is the extent of your holding?—I have 7½ acres arable, and a share of 1944 acres common pasture.

932. *Mr Gordon.*—How many sheep are kept on the 1944 acres?—About 400.

933. That is nearly five acres to a sheep?—Yes.

934. Is the crop grown upon your arable land sufficient to make meal for your family?—It is enough, if we get as much seed as will sow the land again.

935. How many of a family have you?—I have four boys.

936. You have either to buy meal or seed then?—I have to buy both.

937. What is your opinion of how much arable land would be required, of the same kind that you have, before you would have both meal and seed?—Fifteen to twenty acres.

938. Do you feed your stock on the corn you grow without threshing it?—Yes, it is more profitable.

939. So that you sell your sheep and buy your meal?—Yes.

940. Is the reason why you use your corn for feeding purposes because you are obliged to do so, having no other food to give them at certain times?—Yes, owing to scarcity of feeding for the stock.

941. Is it a common thing in Skye and elsewhere for the crofters to use their corn for feeding purposes and not for grinding?—Yes, that is the practice.

942. They don't grow any turnips, I suppose?—Yes, we grow turnips. Portree, Skye. John Beaton.

943. How much?—About an acre.

944. For how many cows?—My 'souming' is four cows, but my croft would not feed half the souming.

945. You don't give any of the turnips to the sheep?—No.

946. And is the land in the unoccupied townships of Kingsburgh superior to the land you have in Eyre?—Yes, it would need to be, or it would be worthless.

947. Do you think the land in Eyre is worse than the average?—Yes, I think there is not worse land in the whole of Skye than Eyre.

948. Are the unoccupied townships lower than the township of Eyre?—Yes, nearer the shore.

949. *The Chairman*, on the suggestion of Mr Mackintosh, Factor for Lord Macdonald.—Are you £19, 5s. in arrear with your rent?—No, I am not.

950. Are you in arrear at all?—I will tell you how that is. The people of our township got a summons a year last autumn; they were called upon to pay the rent a few days before, then there was an arrestment or charge of payment sent to us for the arrears. We went to the factor with what we had, but when we reached him he would not take a penny of it, but told us to go to the law-agent. We all went to Mr Macdonald with what money we had, and gave him that.

951. Did he take it?—Mr Macdonald took it. It was £5 that I gave him. Between that and the beginning of the spring following, Mr Macdonald sent three officers to poind my stock. He afterwards sent the sheriff officer with an auctioneer to sell; but my cattle were out of the way at the time, and they could not be got, so the sale did not proceed. I then went with £12 to him. He would not take the £12 unless I would sign a bill for the balance. There was a year's arrears of fair rent put into the bill, and Mr Macdonald has that on me now.

JOHN NICOLSON, Army Pensioner, Tote (75)—*examined.* John Nicolson.

952. *The Chairman.*—Are you a crofter at Tote?—Yes.

953. What rent do you pay?—£3, 5s.

954. What was your former rent?—£3, 16s. 3d.

955. Was it reduced by the Commission?—Yes.

956. Why did the other delegates not come back to-day?—They would lose their work.

957. You seem a very intelligent man, and can speak English. What is it you want to tell us?—I think if we could get a little extension of hill grazing we would not move; but if we don't get that five of us will remove to Kingsburgh, they tell me.

958. How many are there who wish to have an extension of the home grazing?—There are nine crofts on the place in the two townships of Tote.

959. Do the whole of them wish an extension?—The whole of them.

960. Are you one of the five who would like to remove if they don't get it?—Yes.

961. Where would you like to go?—It was Kingsburgh they pointed to this morning.

962. To the ground where there have been townships before?—Yes.

963. Would you be able to remove without assistance?—Yes, I think I would.

964. You don't owe the landlord anything?—No.

965. The arrears of £4 left on you by the Commission are all paid?—Long ago.

966. What size of holding would you like to get?—I suppose we would require about 14 acres of arable land, and grazing for about 60 sheep.

967. What rent would you like to offer for a holding of the kind you have in view?—I think about £7—between £6 and £7.

968. Suppose you had a rent of £6 or £7 for 14 acres arable, and the right to keep 60 sheep, could you make that a self-supporting croft?—I think I could, with good ground.

Portree, Skye — John Nicolson.

969. And do you think you could enter upon that new holding without outside assistance?—Yes, I could.

970. You would face that, though you are a man of 75? Have you a family?—Yes, three boys and a girl.

971. Are the three boys with you?—There is one here a tailor in Portree, and I have two with me.

972. Both grown up?—Over 20 years.

973. And they would help you?—Yes.

974. And you and your two sons would be able to carry on such a holding?—Oh yes.

975. You were only £5, 14s. in arrears?—Yes, and that was cleared off long since.

976. The custom in Skye, I think, as well as elsewhere, was to crop the land every year?—Every year.

977. And you do that of necessity from the smallness of the extent?—Yes.

978. You are not able to work in rotation?—Since the Crofters Commission was round I have worked on rye grass.

979. And have you improved a little?—Yes, I did. Of course, it put me back at the time, but I am gaining by it now.

980. You have better soil than you had before, and better yield?—Yes.

981. The manure you use is mostly sea-ware, is it not?—Yes, a little.

982. What else do you use?—I mix it with the other manure made about the croft.

983. But you would like if you could get into another holding where the land is more fertile?—Yes; and the holdings are too small.

984. Do you support yourself upon your present holding?—No.

985. You require assistance?—I depend on my pension for keeping me up.

986. Are you an old soldier?—Yes.

987. But you think, if you got a new holding of the kind you describe, you could make it self-supporting?—Oh yes.

988. Even without your pension?—I don't know.

989. *Mr Shaw Stewart.*—When you say that you would get on in a new holding of that kind, do you mean that you would be able to stock it yourself without assistance?—Oh yes; we have a little stock ourselves.

990. Have you included the cost of the burdens on the land—the rates?—I considered all that.

991. And the building?—Oh yes.

992. And the possible fencing? You would require fencing, would you not, for the arable land?—Yes, but I suppose I would be in shares with somebody.

993. And would you consider that the rent should come to an end after a certain number of years, like the witness we had a little time ago?—I suppose the rent would be paid twice a year, the same as before.

994. *Mr Forsyth.*—If you had 14 acres of arable in the new holding, would you sow grass seeds and let part of it down to grass so as to rest the land?—Yes, that would be the proper way, or else it would run out.

995. *Mr Sutherland.*—You have actually tried rotation of cropping in your present holding?—Yes. I leave it perhaps two years and take it in again, and then another piece.

996. And then, in forming new holdings, crofters would, of course, be in a better position to begin than cottars, because they have stock already?—Yes; but I suppose a new place like Kingsburgh has been for much over seventy years under sheep, and it would take a year or two before we got much use out of the soil, unless we were to buy manure.

997. But there is no doubt a crofter would be in a better position to begin than a cottar?—Oh, yes; the cottars have nothing, you may say.

998. Now, you said that some crofters in your district wished to remove to new holdings, and others did not?—Yes.

999. But those who remain would look forward to getting the crofts of those who removed, and thus have an enlargement?—Yes; they are for new holdings.

1000. Do you prefer to have your stock in common, or to have your own share of pasture allotted to you? —It would be handier for every man to have his own; but still there might be some families who could not attend to their sheep, and it would be fair to have common stock.

Portree, Sk — John Nicolson.

1001. But taking into account the circumstances of stock, do you think that holding the pasture in common would be the better arrangement?—Well, some would grumble, but I think it is fair to have a common stock.

1002. You think it is better on the whole?—Yes; because it gives fair play to every one. Some man might be losing his grazing because he had not a man to look after his sheep.

1003. So you would require less fencing for the hill pasture. The one fence would do for the whole township?—Yes.

1004. *Mr Macleod.*—Are there any cottars in your township?—Yes; there are three widows and two families of spinsters, and two men. The women could not do anything.

1005. There are two cottars in the township who are men?—Yes.

1006. And do they desire to get holdings?—They are prepared to stop in the way they are, if they get a piece from the crofters.

1007. Are they old or young?—Both young; one of them is married.

1008. They prefer to be as they are at present?—Yes, or else they would attend here; because they get pieces of ground from the crofters, and they are content enough. They sell corn every year and potatoes, and they are far better off than the crofters.

James Mackintosh

JAMES MACKINTOSH, Ostaig, Sleat, Factor for Lord Macdonald—*examined.*

1009. *The Chairman.*—You are factor to Lord Macdonald?—Yes.

1010. How long have you been factor?—For five years.

1011. You had nothing to do with the former management of the land?—No; I was not connected with the island at all. I have prepared a statement applicable to the parish of Snizort, showing the extent of arable and pasture land, &c., held by the crofters of each township, the number of stock entitled to be kept by them on the common grazing, the fair rent fixed, and the arrears ordered to be paid by the Crofters Commission, also the arrears outstanding at this date. I shall read to you the figures of the fair rent and the arrears:—

Township.	Fair Rent.	Arrears at 18th April 1893.
Eyre,	£86 5 0	£230 6 10
Rhenetra,	48 7 0	84 1 0
Keistle,	34 14 0	37 6 6
Tote,	51 3 0	65 15 0
Peinmore,	22 14 0	36 3 0
Crepigill,	25 18 0	32 6 0
Carbost,	52 18 0	119 13 4
Glengrasgow,	15 14 0	92 8 0
Peiness,	26 7 0	120 14 6
Uigshader,	31 19 0	117 18 6
Garalapin,	20 6 0	74 17 11
Leachd,	12 0 0	14 14 0
	£428 5 0	£1026 4 7

1012. Have all these arrears accrued upon instalments left by the Crofters Commission combined with arrears of fair rent?—They have.

1013. None of them are arrears upon old rents?—No; none. The crofters are debited with the rents and arrears payable at Martinmas last, and credited with

any payments made by them to account since that date.

1014. You are giving that statement as applicable to the present moment?—Yes. In regard to Glengrasgow, I should like to make an explanation about the arrears. It was publicly stated in this town by a gentleman whom I see before me that a widow, against whom proceedings had been taken by Lord Macdonald, had complained to him or to others that the factor had refused to take £5 from her to account of the whole debt due, which amounted to about £50, because she could not pay the whole. Now, there was no such thing occurred. This woman, like all the others against whom proceedings were taken, was referred by me to the law-agent if she offered to make any payment. She did offer to make a payment of a few pounds to the law-agent, but on condition that all further proceedings would be dropped. Now, when proceedings were taken against other tenants, the agent did not feel justified in agreeing to her proposal.

1015. *Mr Macleod.*—But it is a fact that you refused to take the money?—I did not refuse to take the money from her. I merely referred her to the law-agent, who was willing to take the money and place it to account, but he refused to accept it in full, and accordingly she did not pay.

1016. Is that all you wish to say?—No; I have some further information here about the parish of Snizort. In the township of Keistle there are no crofters who are not in arrear; there is one not in arrear in Rhenetra, three in Tote, two in Peinmore, three in Crepigill; all in Carbost. Peiness, Uigshadder, Garalapin, Glengrasgow, and Eyre are in arrear, and only one not in arrear in Leachd. That is to say, in the parish of Snizort there are only ten crofting tenants who are not in arrear with their rents. In the parish of Portree similarly there are seventy crofters not in arrear, made up thus:—Township of Achnahanaid, 1; Balmeanach, 2; Camustianivaig, 1; Colliemore, 11; Drumuie, 1; Fisherfield, 5; Gedentailer, 1; Glenmore, 1; who entered at Whitsunday last; Heatherfield, 6; Inveraliveg, 4; Mugary, 1; Nether Ollach, 4; Peinchorran, 1; Penefiler, 3; Woodpark, 2; Shullishadder, 6; Sluggans, 10, of whom 6 are cottars; and Craigleadh, 4.

1017. How many years' rental do these arrears represent?—A little over two years.

1018. And as the arrears apply to the others, not to the seventy, the average of those in arrear would be considerably more than two years' rent?—Yes.

1019. What is the oldest of the arrears you have been speaking about?—The arrears ordered to be paid by the Crofters Commission. We cleared our books then, and began anew.

1020. Are the arrears now due larger than the amount ordered to be paid by that Commission?—Yes. In Portree parish they ordered to be paid £882, 12s. 5d., and there is due to-day £1698, 12s. 9d. In Snizort parish the arrears were £910, they are now £1026, 4s. 7d. I produce a statement or list of the decrees pronounced against crofters on the Macdonald estate for rents and arrears, this shows that decree has been obtained for £3052, 9s. 3d. of principal sums, with law expenses amounting to £212, 6s. 7d., less £24, 1s. 6d. paid to account of these expenses. The total number of decrees was as follows:—

Small debt decrees . .	149
Debts recovery decrees . .	74
Ordinary Court decrees .	32
	255

1021. *The Chairman* inquired if the witness was to submit any further information.—*Mr Mackintosh* then read the following:—

'Report on Sconser Deer Forest, the Property of
'Lord Macdonald.

'The forest, which is situated in the parishes of 'Portree and Strath, extends to 9721 acres or thereby, 'and is bounded on the north by Loch Sligachan and 'Sconser township common, on the east by the Sound 'of Raasay, Loch Ainort and Luib and Torrin township 'common, on the south by the estate of Strathaird, the 'property of Sir William Mackinnon, and on the west 'by the property of Macleod of Macleod.

'The forest is principally composed of rough mountainous land, steep bare rock, and black moorland, 'with the exception of two parks of half cultivation 'land adjoining the shooting lodge, and which are used 'in connection with the lodge for the purpose of supplying summer grazing and winter keep for the shooting tenant's cows, as also for the cows belonging to 'the three keepers employed on the forest, and likewise 'for keeping the forest ponies while the shooting tenant 'is on the forest.

'The forest would be much deteriorated in value were 'the lodge deprived of this convenience; indeed, it is 'doubtful if it would let at any rent without those two 'parks going in connection with the lodge.

'After a careful inspection of the whole forest, we 'know of no land in any of the glens or corries that 'would be suitable for planting crofters; in fact, most 'if not all the corries in the forest are quite inaccessible.

'We are informed by Mr Scott, the head keeper on 'the forest, that the principal wintering ground for the 'deer lies in a point east of the public road between 'Sconser Lodge and the head of Loch Ainort, and known 'as the Moll. With the exception of two score or less 'that winter on the west side, the whole deer of the 'forest are usually on the piece mentioned during the 'winter. This is decidedly the best grazing on the 'forest, and the part which is least disturbed by men 'and dogs, and where the deer get most rest.

'We are quite of the same opinion as Mr Scott, as we 'see no other part of the forest so well adapted for wintering. It is necessary that in a deer forest there should 'be some portions that afford fair grazing, as generally 'it is hills that are good for no other use that are under 'deer, and this is particularly applicable to Sconser 'Forest.

'If the parts mentioned should be cut off the forest, 'we think it would almost be impossible to have the 'deer in condition, if they could be kept alive at all.

(Signed) 'James Mackintosh,
Factor for Lord Macdonald.
'John Taylor, Land Surveyor.

'Portree, 19*th April* 1893.'

1022. You have given us the area of the forest, can you tell us its altitude?—The highest altitude is 2600 feet, and the lowest is at sea level.

1023. Have any additions been made to the forest within the last twenty years?—None.

1024. What area of the forest is at or near sea level?—There is not much of it at sea level, most of it rises to high ground.

1025. Would you say that the greater part of it is above 1000 feet of altitude?—I cannot say.

1026. You have no acquaintance with the forest previous to the last five years?—No.

1027. Have any tracks been made through the forest of late years by the estate?—None.

1028. When you let the forest to a sporting tenant, what number of stags do you indicate he may probably get if he is a fair sportsman?—About twelve stags.

1029. And what is the rent?—£800 is the present rent.

1030. Is that above or below what it let at formerly?—It is a slight increase on the former rent.

1031. What is the increase?—£150; but that includes the rent of Strolumus, which is also included.

1032. Is that a grazing?—It is occupied as a grazing.

1033. Just the sporting rights of Strolumus, or the grazing rights as well?—The sporting rights only.

1034. Is that the grouse shooting?—Strolumus is grouse shooting and trout fishing.

1035. What is the extent of Strolumus?—Strolumus shooting is about 8000 acres. It is a sheep farm, with some crofter grazing let along with it.

1036. Is that in addition to the 9721 acres?—Yes, but Strolumus is not a forest.

Portree, Skye. — James Mackintosh.

1037. The tenant of the forest is lessee of 17,721 acres in all?—Yes; but out of that rent the landlord pays the wages of four keepers, all the rates and taxes, and the upkeep of a good shooting lodge at Sconser, well furnished, and containing ample accommodation.

1038. You say the two parks to which you alluded could not in your judgment be taken from the forest without seriously impairing its sporting value. Suppose these parks taken, would not the deer be able to find a sufficient living on the low ground during winter?—No, they would not; there is really little or no low ground except the parks.

1039. Is there a great deficiency of low ground below the higher altitudes of the forest?—Yes.

1040. It slopes down quickly to the sea?—Yes. I may mention that the cost of the lodge was about £3000, exclusive of furnishings. It was built eight or nine years ago.

1041. Would it not be an advantage to the forest if the Sconser tenants consented to be migrated to other holdings further inland?—It would.

1042. I daresay you could help us to find land for these tenants?—Not on Lord Macdonald's property, I am afraid.

1043. Conceding that it would be an advantage for these tenants to be migrated if they were willing, could not land be got elsewhere on Lord Macdonald's estate, which would suit them better, and at the same time benefit the forest?—I really am not aware of such.

1044. *Mr Shaw Stewart.*—You speak of crofters in the forest, are they in the forest itself, or on the sheep ground of Strolumus?—Not on the sheep ground, but on Strolumus shooting, which extends over the farm of Strolumus, and over the pasture of the crofting townships of Strolumus, &c.

1045. There are no crofters on Sconser forest proper?—None.

1046. That forest is one of the very old forests, is it not?—About the oldest in the country.

1047. *Mr Sutherland.*—You have stated that in your opinion, if some of the land were taken from the forest, it would decrease the number of deer?—It certainly would.

1048. Do you think they would get exterminated altogether?—Yes, I believe they would.

1049. Do you know of any shooting and sheep farms where there are deer?—I do.

1050. And they have not the exclusive use of the land there?—No.

1051. Was not that a common custom all over Scotland?—Yes; but the only sheep farm in Skye where you could count on having deer is in the hands of the proprietor, where they are not so much disturbed as in any other sheep farm.

1052. Would it then be the disturbance arising from the carrying on of a sheep farm that would drive them away?—Certainly.

1053. Where did they come from before the forest was made?—I believe they came from the mainland. It is said that they can swim Kyle-Rhea or Kyle-Akin; and it is said that they swam from Applecross to Raasay and from Raasay to Skye.

1054. What is your opinion?—I believe it is quite possible.

1055. But we must take it, that they are indigenous to Skye?—Certainly.

1056. And when there were no deer forests, how did they survive?—There was possibly not the same amount of trespassing as there is now.

1057. Were the people more scattered over the country than they are now?—Yes, but the crofters had not the same cattle and hill grazing as they have now.

1058. But you know shootings where there are plenty of stags to be got, and where there is not a deer forest?—I know shootings of that kind where ten stags were got last season—that is Kinloch, a farm in Lord Macdonald's own hands, but the shooting rent for it was of more consideration than the profit from the sheep stock on it, and the farm was worked very much for the convenience of the shooting tenant. In that way the number of stags were got; but if that farm was in the hands of a sheep farmer the stags would not get the same privilege, nor the shooting tenant the same sport.

Portree, Skye. — James Mackintosh.

1059. Is there a higher rental from deer forests, as such, than from the combined pasturing and shooting on a farm that is not a deer forest?—Certainly, there is or there has been.

1060. Is the tendency downwards now, or still maintaining?—I think shootings are maintaining themselves, and deer forests are maintaining themselves.

1061. I had rather in my mind the conditions that obtain on the mainland; I wished to know whether it was the same in Skye?—I know only one farm on the mainland with deer shooting equal to that I have mentioned, and that is the Farm of Meoble on Mrs Campbell's property, lying between Lochiel's estate and Loch-Arkaig, and let to Mr Gillespie as shooting tenant.

1062. But you would not go the length of saying that giving the land out in pasture would do away with deer altogether?—It would in Skye.

1063. You have had great experience of the Lovat forest?—I was twelve years with the late Lord Lovat.

1064. Would you say that taking these pieces of ground referred to by previous witnesses would be more injurious to the forest than it would be beneficial to the crofters?—I consider it would be.

1065. How then do you account for the existence of deer on places where they have not got it to themselves?—They break out from the forests, the old stags drive the young ones away.

1066. I could tell you of places where there were deer and no forest within a hundred miles of them?—That is quite possible; the deer may want fresh pasture.

1067. *Mr Shaw Stewart.*—Is it not the case that where a few stags are to be got on sheep grounds, they come and go from the neighbouring forests?—Certainly, that is so.

1068. And it is those that you meet?—I have known a case of a stag being stalked at Beaufort at 6.30 in the evening, and shot by Lord Tweedmouth at Guisachan next morning, a distance of 21 miles as the crow flies.

1069. *Mr Maccallum.*—I suppose you admit that there were crofting townships in the present forest?—Yes, there were, at Tormichaig and Kenchreggan, and they say at Moll.

1070. You have no reason to doubt the crofter's statement?—No, certainly not.

1071. And still the deer managed to live somehow, even with the crofters in these townships?—Yes.

1072. Probably when the game laws were not so strict?—Probably.

1073. But those that were there afforded very good sport?—A stag shot in the forest is the same sport as a stag shot anywhere else.

1074. Don't you think crofters might go there again without much harm?—No; I think the land in Skye is considerably more stocked with sheep and cattle now than it was then; the deer would probably leave Sconser and take a trip through some other part of the island, and come back to Sconser.

1075. That is to say, that in the old times the deer were more scattered?—Yes. Of course, the deer will come back to the place where he was raised.

1076. How is it that you are unable to find any other land for the Sconser crofters?—Because I consider Lord Macdonald's estate is more burdened with crofters than any other estate in Scotland.

1076*a*. Is there not a great extent of Lord Macdonald's property in large holdings?—There is not a great extent, there is more of it under crofters.

1077. Is Scorrybreck Lord Macdonald's?—It is.

1078. What was the rental?—£732.

1079. Could not room be found there for some crofters?—Quite possible.

1080. Then do you say that in these years land is profitably occupied by large tenants,—do they make a profit?—At the present moment holdings in Skye and elsewhere, I believe, are not profitable.

1081. The large holdings are not profitably occupied?—And I have shown you to-day that small holdings are not.

1082. Confine yourself to the large holdings; are they profitably occupied?—They may not be at the present moment.

1083. For some years back?—Two years ago they were profitable.

1084. Two years ago farmers were laying past money after paying their rent?—Possibly some of them were.

1085. But were they?—That is a matter for somebody else to say; they were paying their rents at anyrate.

1086. Have large tenants got large reductions in recent years?—They have.

1087. Larger than the small tenants?—No.

1088. There was a statement made before us at the opening, I think, to the effect that rents on large holdings were reduced about 50 per cent. since 1881; is that correct?—Some large holdings may.

1089. But on the whole do you think it is pretty nearly correct?—No; I don't believe large holdings have suffered such a diminution as that.

1090. *The Chairman.*—Has not there been a much larger reduction in the rents of large farmers than in the cases of crofters who applied to the Crofters Commission?—In some cases there may have been.

1091. But taking it generally?—Taking it generally, about 30 per cent., I believe.

1092. Was it not 50?—No.

1093. *Mr Maccallum.*—You are positive?—I am not positive in all cases, but I speak of the cases I have had to do with.

1094. Now, in regard to the statistics you have given us,—these arrears accumulated in very bad years?—No, they did not; I am sorry to say they were accumulated when prices of stock were very high.

1095. Do you think that since the Commission visited Skye there have been very good years?—There were good years; last year was not a good year, but some years were good.

1096. Such as?—Such as 1889, 1890, 1891.

1097. *Mr Munro.*—There were statements made here to-day that crofters were obliged to use the corn they grew for the purpose of feeding their cattle. Is it consistent with your knowledge that farmers in the low-lying parts of the country have been compelled to have recourse to a similar use of their produce?—It is this way, if I may explain: the class of cattle reared here and in the low country are quite different. In the low country the cattle must be housed; here they are not, except perhaps in the case of yearlings and aged cows. Highland cattle do with a wonderfully small amount of winter forage; and that forage is more easily supplied to them in the sheaf. It is most profitable to the crofter to feed his cattle in the sheaf.

1098. But it is not peculiar to Skye to feed the cattle with grain?—I believe not.

1099. It is the practice in other parts of the country?—Wherever Highland cattle are kept.

1100. And in the low-lying country?—I am not aware of any place in the low-lying country where cattle are fed with corn in the sheaf.

1101. *Mr Forsyth.*—So that it is not an evidence of poverty?—No, not at all. In former years the cattle raised in this country were not of half the value of the cattle now. They were small, ill-bred, and ill-shaped; now the people have got a superior class of cattle, and they find that it pays them to winter these cattle well. It is found more profitable to have one good beast worth £5 than two or three worth £1, 10s. or £2 each. It is on account of the increased value of the stock that they take more care of them, and winter them better.

1102. *The Chairman.*—In the Valuation Roll the yearly rental or value of the forest is at £150?—It is partly in two parishes. The rental I stated to you is not the rental payable now; it is the rental from Whitsunday next. Off the gross rental we are by Act of Parliament allowed to deduct the wages we pay to the keepers, and also a certain percentage for the furniture in the lodge. That is the reason why you do not see the gross rental there. The abatement was made by the assessor, who had full access to the documents showing the amount received.

1103. I see in the statistical account of Inverness-shire for 1842, dealing with the agriculture in the parish of Snizort. The writer says:—

'*Agriculture.*—From the physical quality of its sur-'face, a great part of this parish must remain an un-'cultivated waste. Pasturage forms the principal 'employment of a great part of the inhabitants. Like 'the Germans of Tacitus, "their pride consists in the '"number of their flocks and herds; these are their '"only riches, and in these they place their chief '"delight." Their cows are more celebrated for their 'fine symmetry than for the quantity of milk they 'yield.'—*Mr Mackintosh.* That is applicable to the present day.

1104. *The Chairman* (continuing to read extract)—'On the large farms agriculture is now conducted on 'scientific principles.'—*Mr Mackintosh.* That was written, I understand, by a schoolmaster.

1105. But that would not make it the less valuable?—They are not usually practical agriculturists.

1106. There have been a good many questions asked as to the ideal size of a crofter holding. Perhaps you might be able to give us your views upon the point?—That is a matter that I saw was not gone into fully by the witnesses; and Mr Taylor, surveyor, and myself have been considering the point. We have drawn up a statement of what, in our opinion, would be an ideal croft; it is supposed to be sufficient to keep six cows, one horse, and a hundred sheep, or equivalent in cattle. The extent of it would be from 15 to 20 acres, according to the quality of the soil, and from 200 to 300 acres of outrun. As to the rent, we would consider £22 a fair rent for such a holding. A holding of that extent ought to be cultivated by a crofter according to the most recent and the best adapted modes of cultivation, and I have put down the result in the form of an account, charge and discharge:—

CHARGE.

Rent,	£22
Crofter's labour, at 2s. 6d. per day,	38
Boy, per annum, with food,	18
Woman, do. do.,	18
Spring and harvest work,	7
Sundries (smith, joiner, rates, dip, and share of shepherd),	12
Grass, clover, and turnip seed,	3
Interest on capital invested, say £200,	7
Do. on buildings, if cut out of forest or farm,	7
	£132

DISCHARGE.

5 stirks sold at, say £4 each,	£20 0	
One cow,	7 0	
35 wedder lambs at 6s.,	10 10	
10 mid ewe and wedder lambs at 4s.,	2 0	
20 old ewes at 12s.,	12 0	
Wool, say 20 stones,	11 0	
Household benefit derived from croft, in the shape of milk, butter, potatoes, eggs, and poultry,	23 0	
		85 10
Deficiency, if labour is paid,		£46 10

or £27, 10s. to the good, and for family maintenance if all the work is done by the family.

(Signed) JAMES MACKINTOSH,
Factor for Lord Macdonald.
(„) JOHN TAYLOR,
Land Surveyor.

PORTREE, 19*th April* 1893.

Portree, Skye. — James Mackintosh.

1107. These figures are given as those of an average year?—Yes.

1108. How many lambs do you count on having out of your ewes?—A croft of the kind should have 80.

1109. Seventy-five is a very common average?—Yes, from 70 to 80.

1110. Do you contemplate a club stock?—Yes.

1111. Is your opinion in favour of a club stock?—Yes, because I consider stock are allowed more rest when it is a club stock, with one man in charge; whereas, when stock is held by each crofter, they go out to the hill every year. No stock would thrive with such usage.

1112. Do you expect to cast 20 ewes every year?—Well, he may exceed his number of 100.

1113. What do you allow for death-rate?—Not more than 7 per cent.

1114. Can you mention any crofter's holding in Skye at the present that comes anything near that,—as a concrete specimen?—No, I cannot.

1115. Do you know of any crofter's holding in Skye at the present moment that is being carried on to a profit, leaving out of view last year, which was an exceedingly bad year?—The only man I can ask is the ground officer; he has a croft, and may tell you, his name is Norman Beaton.

1116. You have indicated a certain size of croft; do you think there would be a proportional increase of prosperity to the crofter as the croft went up in size?—It would depend very much upon the individual crofter; one might start with a £22 croft, and be more successful than one with a £44 croft.

1117. But, speaking generally, are the chances better as you increase the size of the croft, within a reasonable limit?—Yes, as long as it did not become too big.

1118. Are you of opinion, keeping in view the economic condition of land, that it would be a great improvement if there could be established a middle class of tenants, holding crofts with rents from £15 to £60 or £70 in this island, assuming that they could be carried on to a profit?—Well, if they could be carried on to a profit it would be an improvement; but, unfortunately, they have gone otherwise in some cases.

1119. Are there many holdings in Skye at a rent of about £100?—There are not many; on Lord Macdonald's property there are about ten rented at between £30 and £100.

1120. Do you think that such holdings as your ideal croft would let readily?—Yes, I believe they would. Where any holding is capable of being worked by one man without employing outside labour, it is readily let.

1121. Is it your opinion that in the case of men who trust to the sea more than to their crofts for their means of livelihood, it is better for them to have a mere patch of ground and depend upon the sea, rather than a croft which distracts their attention from their boats?—I am decidedly of opinion that when a crofter takes his main living from the sea he is not benefited by having a large croft.

1122. A small patch of land close to the shore, and to depend on the sea, is a better arrangement than having a croft which distracts his attention from his main source of livelihood?—It is, certainly.

1123. So that you would divide crofts into two classes,—those down on the shore, where the men depend upon the sea, and have very little land; and those inland, which are intended to be self-supporting?—Yes, but I am not of the opinion that crofters should be placed inland, because, when that is the case, they are not conveniently situated for obtaining sea-ware for manure. Take, for instance, the cases of Glenmore and Mugary. At one time the tenants of those two townships were supposed to be in very comfortable circumstances, but through their mode of cultivating the land it has got quite run out, and the tenants are not now in anything like good circumstances.

1124. But would you not think it a good thing to have in land crofts of considerable extent, which would be manured very much in the same way as the large farmer manures his ground?—Yes, an inland croft of 15 or 20 or 30 acres of arable land, better cultivated; but when a crofter is sent inland to 5 acres he cannot manure it properly.

Portree, Sk — James Mackintosh

1125. But I am speaking of a croft of say 12 or 15 or 20 acres arable?—It is quite possible that such a croft could be cultivated inland by a crofter who knew how to do it.

1126. And who did not depend on the sea-ware at all?—Exactly.

1127. I am speaking theoretically, and apart altogether from Lord Macdonald's estate; you would be favourable to the formation of such holdings?—Yes, but there is one thing to be considered. Arable land in this country requires double the amount of manure that arable land on the mainland does. The rainfall here is so large.

1128. That is important. What is the rainfall?—From 80 to 90 inches. It came to 144 inches one year.

1129. The rainfall is at all events excessive?—It is excessive; and in consequence, the benefits derived from manuring land are to a great extent lost. I consider it takes double the amount of manure here that would be required on the mainland.

1130. The season of tillage in Skye, and the harvest season, are often very brief?—I have seen more bad harvest seasons since I came to Skye than tillage seasons. There is also this to be said in regard to the tilling of the soil in Skye; you cannot begin to till it too soon; you must leave it till very near the time of sowing the seed.

1131. The reason being?—The reason being that the rain would wash it out if you turned up the land in the winter time.

1132. The land would be very watery?—Yes.

1133. If a part of the land was held in first and second grass there would be less surface exposed?—Yes.

1134. And is there a danger of the soil being washed away altogether?—In some places.

1135. Do you mean that gentle rain falling would hurt it?—Not gentle rain.

1136. But every part of Skye is subject to excessive and violent rainfall?—Yes.

1137. Now, in the paper which you have just read, are your calculations based on the crofter cultivating his land on the system at present in vogue in the island?—No, according to an improved system.

1138. Can you tell me how many club farms or club stocks there are in Skye?—I can only speak of Lord Macdonald's property. In Sleat we have no club stock; in Strath there is the club stock of Heast and Torran; in Portree district there are Camustianavaig, Glenmore, Mugary, and Penifiler. In Snizort parish there is one in which seven townships have a share. There are 39 tenants, who have each a share in Unakille grazing.

1139. Now, is it your judgment that the crofters take more out of their stock when worked according to the club system, than the other way?—Yes, I am of that opinion.

1140. Have these club stocks in Skye been fairly successful, carried on harmoniously?—Oh yes, with the exception of the bad years.

1141. *Mr Macleod.*—There has been no difficulty among the people themselves in managing it?—They sometimes quarrel.

1142. Can you tell us the manner in which it is as a rule conducted?—It is usually in this way: take a certain piece of pasture land divided between so many crofters: one crofter occupying a whole croft has a whole share, one with half a croft has half a share: the number of stock is known, and they try to keep it as near that as possible. When a tenant dies, or leaves the place, the whole stock is valued, and a price put upon each class of stock that is on the ground, and the incoming tenant pays the price applicable to one share.

1143. How do they manage about the shepherd?—They pay the shepherd in proportion to the shares.

1144. Through a committee?—Yes, usually.

1145. How often is there a meeting to appoint a committee?—I think usually once a year.

1146. And this committee has the control of the shepherds, and the general management of the stock for the year?—Yes.

1147. How do they do about selling the stock?—They appoint one or two of their own managers. The managers have power to sell the stock at the usual times.

1148. Do they sell the wool in the same way, or divide it among the tenants?—Where it is a considerable stock I think they sell the wool; but in the case of a small stock they divide the wool among themselves.

1149. Is there a yearly division of profits?—Yes, at Martinmas.

1150. Subject to deduction of the expenses?—Yes.

1151. Then as to dipping and shearing, are all the tenants supposed to give their assistance?—They are. Each tenant must go himself, or send a representative to assist at these works,—dipping, and clipping, and gathering, and shearing.

1152. You would be in favour of a considerable extension of the club farm system?—I think it would be more advantageous in every way to have any crofter stocks existing at present put under the club system.

1153. And you believe that if new holdings were formed,—with hill pasture attached—that would be the best method of working the stock?—Certainly it would.

1154. *Mr Sutherland.*—You are aware, no doubt, of the existence of an Act of Parliament regulating these matters: do you know if it has been adopted in Skye?—It has not been adopted in Skye. On Lord Macdonald's estate there were very good rules in force, and where they keep to these rules the Act is not any better; but in some townships where they do not agree, I have been threatening to put them under the Act. If they fail to appoint a committee themselves, the factor or the landlord has the power to do that. I am quite prepared to put that power into operation in one or two cases.

1155. I have been listening to a great body of evidence in another place, and they rather favoured the individual system of farming. I am glad to find a gentleman of experience like you favouring the communal one?—I think it would work better.

1156. It is within your knowledge that that was the old system?—I am not aware from my own personal knowledge of Skye, but I know it succeeds elsewhere.

1157. *Mr Macallum.*—The crofters got very considerable reductions, and the very large holders also got very considerable reductions. Did the intermediate holders, say from £30 to £100, get any such reductions?—Those I had to deal with got reductions.

1158. Equivalent to what was given to the large farmers?—Yes, I may say so. I may say that, although there were leases current, Lord Macdonald gave the tenants who held these leases the benefit of reductions varying from 20 to 30 per cent.

1159. But did not the large holders get very much greater reductions than that?—No, they did not, under their leases.

1160. Let us take Scorrybreck. What was the rental in 1881?—When Mr Stewart entered on the farm, the rent was £1250: when the seasons became adverse his rent was reduced. I think the first year or two he got a reduction of 20 per cent., and latterly a reduction of 30 per cent.

1161. In addition to the 20 per cent.?—No, an increased reduction of 10 per cent.

1162. And now?—And now, when the farm came to be let, his rent is £750.

1163. That is £500 of a reduction?—Yes.

1164. Is that a special case, or may we take it as a typical case?—That may be taken as a typical case.

1165. It seems to come to this, that the reduction of rent to the large farmers has been much greater than the reduction to the crofters?—Yes, but that rent of Mr Stewart's was fixed only last Whitsunday.

Questions suggested by Mr Alexander Macdonald, Portree.

1166. When were the crofters' rents fixed on the Macdonald estate?—In 1810.

1167. Were they lowered repeatedly since then, before the time of the Crofters Commission?—They were.

1168. Were the rents of the sheep farms by the natural course of letting not doubled or trebled within the same period?—That is so.

1169. Do you think the two are fairly capable of comparison, seeing that while the crofters' rents were lowered the farmers' rents were doubled or trebled?—That is so.

1170. *Mr Maccallum.*—Were not the large farms increased in area as well as in rent?—I am not aware of any substantial increase in area.

1171. *Suggested by Mr J. G. Mackay.*—Is it not the fact that the crofters' rents were more than doubled and more than trebled in 1810, on account of the kelp?—No, that is not the case.

1172. *Mr Sutherland.*—Can you give us any idea what the rents of the crofters began at per acre, seeing they have been coming down ever since?—Not at present, but I may, perhaps, before you leave the island.

1173. When the people were shifting from these townships to the places they now occupy, they began to pay the high rents they are now paying for land that was not then cultivated at all?—I am not aware that the crofters were lifted from any of these townships and placed in their present holdings. The rents that were fixed in 1811 were rents fixed for crofters who were perhaps sub-tenants of the tacksmen, and who then came to hold their crofts directly from the landlord.

1174. That implies that they were not transposed at all?—Not all.

1175. So then it is not true what we have been hearing about the old townships?—Certainly, there were occupants there who were sub-tenants of the tacksmen.

1176. And they are not there now?—They are not there now.

1177. Mr Macdonald has stated that the tendency of small tenants' rents has been downwards. I want to know the point they started from?—From the time they were taken on the landlord's books as tenants holding direct.

1178. So that does not cover the whole case, by a long way?—Previous to 1810 they held from the tacksmen, and paid higher rents than when the landlord put them on his own books.

1179. But you can answer only from the time they appeared on the landlord's own books?—That is the only time we have any evidence.

1180. You do not take into account about the areas: there has been always a complaint that the crofting area was diminished, and that the rents were not lowered on account of the diminution?—No, I don't acknowledge that.

1181. *Mr Macleod.*—You said in reply to Mr Macdonald that the crofters' rents have been coming down since 1811 to the present day. Were you speaking within your own knowledge?—From information gathered from books and documents in my possession.

1182. The rents before the Crofters Commission fixed them were lower than they were in 1811?—A great deal less. I can produce the books.

1183. And you are prepared also to show that the rent of 1811 was purely a land rent?—Yes, the rent in 1811 was purely a land rent.

1184. And that in 1887 the rents of the crofters on Lord Macdonald's estate were actually less than in 1811?—Yes.

1185. You are prepared to prove that?—I am.

1186. Do you mean the total, or the average rent of each individual?—The average rent of each township or individual.

1187. That would depend very much on whether the population was increasing or decreasing?—Take the rent of the township.

Portree, Skye. — James Mackintosh.

1188. Can you state that the average rent of each individual has been continually coming down, without any reference to increase or decrease of population,—giving us totals only?—I will produce the rental, and allow you to make your own use of it.

1189. *The Chairman.*—I see from the statements made by Mr Macdonald himself to Lord Napier's Commission in 1883 certain statistics as to rents, among others the following:—

Township.	Rent in 1825.	In 1830.	In 1883.
Parish of Portree—			
Balmeanach, . .	£05	£75	£78
Achanahannaid, .	52	34	47
Colliemore, . .	72	50	54

and so on. Some of these figures appear to indicate a rise in rental.—*Mr Macdonald.* These figures are all downward, with the exception of the first, where by a printer's error the rent in 1825 is stated at £5 instead of £105. Otherwise the figures are quite correct.

Examination of Mr Mackintosh continued.—I have here a Report on the Farms of Kingsburgh and Skirrinish, which, with your permission, I shall read:—

'Report on the Farms of Kingsburgh and Skerinish, 'in the Parish of Snizort, the property of Lord 'Macdonald.

'*Kingsburgh.*—This farm, which has been recently 'let to Mr Purves, extends to 8201 acres or thereby, 'of which about 170 acres are arable and permanent 'pasture, the remainder being hill grazing; and is 'bounded as follows:—on the north by the river 'Hinisdale, on the east by Scorrybreck farm, on the 'south by Romisdale river, and on the west by Loch 'Snizort.

'Besides the arable and permanent grass parks mentioned, there are three other places on the farm, at 'Romisdale river, Hinisdale river, and Sgur Ornachdain, 'where small patches of tillage had at one time been 'made, but it must have been many years ago, as it is 'now mostly under heather.

'The river Hinisdale, which forms the north boundary 'of the farm with the estate of Kilmuir, is the natural 'and only convenient march that could be formed on 'this side. On the south side the Romisdale river 'separates the farm from the crofter township of Eyre, 'and this also is the only natural and convenient 'march that can be got, and was fenced at great 'expense by Mr Tod, the late tenant.

'Upon the whole, as at present bounded, this farm 'forms the most compact grazing in the island of Skye, 'and can be worked, in proportion to its extent, at less 'expense than any other farm in the island.

'There are at present three sheep hirsels, one at the 'west end, and the other two extending from it to the 'east side of the farm. The sheep wintering ground 'on the last two mentioned is along the glens at Hinisdale and Romisdale rivers, and forms the only low 'ground in connection with them; and were the farm 'deprived of these glens, the remaining portion would 'be a narrow strip, composed entirely of moorland 'rising to an elevation of over 2000 feet above sea-'level, which would require to be fenced on both sides, 'and still three shepherds would be necessary to attend 'to a stock of about one half of what the farm at 'present carries. A Cheviot stock such as that now 'on the grazing could not, in our opinion, be kept 'without the parts mentioned.

'After a minute inspection of the whole farm, we 'know of no part that could be cut off without great 'injury to the remainder. With the exception of the 'parks at present cultivated in connection with the 'farm, there is little if any land that could be profitably brought under cultivation.

'*Skerinish.*—This farm, as presently occupied by 'the representatives of the late Mr James Macdonald, 'extends to about 5380 acres or thereby, and is bounded 'on the north by Kensaleyre and Glenhaultain, on the 'east by Scorrybreck farm, on the south by Achtalean, 'Drumuie, and Carbost, and on the west by Tote and 'Loch Snizort.

'The land kept under cultivation is close to the 'dwelling-house, extending along Loch Snizort from 'Tote farm in a northerly direction, and is 45 acres or 'thereby in extent.

'The other portions of this farm showing signs of 'cultivation are Birkises and Anishader, along the river 'Haultain, and at Borve, stretching along Uig and 'Portree public roads. At the former places the little 'cultivation that had been done is now scarcely visible. 'The glen along the river Haultain forms the low lying 'ground for the sheep on the north side of the farm, and 'the river here forms a very suitable march between it 'and the adjoining tenants.

'At Borve, where a considerable amount of cultivation was done fifty or sixty years ago, the pasture is 'mixed with strips of green grass and heather, the 'ground is uneven, being partly soft, wet, and boggy 'land, and partly thin and rocky, and never has been 'closely cultivated, as probably about one half would 'yield little if any return for labour.

'The part along Uig road where cultivation has been 'made, passes through the centre of the farm, and 'could not be detached from it without cutting it into 'two separate parts, and leaving the hill grazing and 'the dwelling-house and arable land apart. The Borve 'hill, which lies immediately behind the strips of old 'cultivation, has the appearance of being dry pasture 'on which sheep would not thrive so well without a 'change to lower and greener pasture, and the part mentioned is the only low green land on this side of the 'farm. We are therefore of opinion that without this 'portion, the farm would be very much deteriorated in 'value as a sheep grazing.

'The centre or remaining portion is moorland, and 'rises to nearly 2000 feet above sea level, and would 'clearly be quite unsuited for sheep without low ground 'in connection. Whether let as one holding or as a 'crofter township, the high and low ground should 'accompany each other. The farm on its present 'boundaries forms a good, healthy grazing, and carries 'a stock of superior blackfaced sheep, but is not well 'adapted for cultivation except on a very limited scale, 'and that principally where the tenant cultivates in the 'neighbourhood of his dwelling-house.

(Signed) 'James Mackintosh,
Factor for Lord Macdonald.
'John Taylor,
Land Surveyor.

'Portree, 19*th April* 1893.'

1190. Is Kingsburgh farm being carried on for the benefit of the trustees of Mr Tod?—Till Whitsunday next, when it is let to a Mr Purves from Caithness.

1191. What is the stock on Skerinish?—I have no information as to that.

1192. In whose hands is it?—The representatives of the late tenant Mr Macdonald, who died two years ago. They hold under a lease.

1193. When does the lease expire?—In two years, I think. I am informed that Skerinish carries 1500 stock, mostly ewes. The following is our report on Scorrybreck:—

'Report on the Farms of Scorrybreck and Glenvarigill 'the property of Lord Macdonald.

'*Scorrybreck.*—The farm, which is situated in the 'parishes of Portree and Snizort, extends to 15,747 'acres, and is bounded on the east by the Sound of 'Raasay, on the north by the estate of Kilmuir, on the 'west by Kingsburgh farm, Eyre, Keistle, and Glen 'Haultain common grazings and Skerrinish farm, and 'on the south by Achtalean and Portree home farm, '&c.

'The farm is at present occupied by Mr John Stewart, 'and is composed with very little exception of moss-'land, and it embraces the Storr Hill, which is at an 'altitude of 2360 feet above sea level.

'There are at present three parks, containing about '30 acres kept under cultivation in connection with the 'farm. There are some signs of former cultivation at 'three or four parts, viz.,—Loch Letham, Rigg, Tote, 'and also at the site of the old dwelling-house of Scorry-'breck, where the tenant is at present breaking up 'some old arable land for the purpose of renewing the 'pasture where it has gone entirely under fog. A little 'cultivation is also made at Rigg for the purpose of 'supplying wintering for some Highland cattle kept 'there.

'All, or nearly all the green pasture on the farm is 'along the Sound of Raasay, extending from Portree 'village on to the north end, is very steep and rocky, 'and quite unsuited for cultivation. It is also a very 'bare coast, without bays or harbours for boat shelters.

'The proportion of heath land is in excess of the 'green, and not quite what would be necessary to afford 'a suitable change of pasture for sheep; consequently 'we observe the tenant is breaking up small portions 'not well adapted for cultivation, with a view to im-'proving the pasture.

'We do not consider any great extent of this farm 'could be cultivated by crofters profitably. Probably 'a few could live at the places mentioned, but as these 'are along the centre of the farm, it would damage it 'to a large extent. The parks kept under cultivation 'by Mr Stewart are necessary for the farm, as 'without them no cows could be kept.

'Loch Letham, Rigg, and Tote are in a very remote 'part, and are distant respectively from the nearest 'public road 4, 5, and 6 miles, and a still greater dis-'tance from the nearest public school.

'There is also a place called Achachork, distant 'about two miles from Portree, where the land has at 'one time been irregularly cultivated, and is at present 'under heather and green mixed. This forms the 'wintering for this part of the farm, which is dry moor-'land, and has the appearance of ground where sheep 'without a change of pasture would be subject to pine.

'*Glenvarigill.*—This farm is presently occupied by 'Mr Lachlan Ross, and extends to 3880 acres or there-'by. It is bounded on the north by Woodend and 'Viewfield, on the west by Muggary and Glenmore 'common grazing and part of Drynoch farm, on the 'south by Drynoch, and on the east by Ben Lee and 'the Glebe.

'The farm, with the exception of about 25 acres, is 'entirely composed of rocky hill pasture, suitable only 'for grazing. The 25 acres kept under cultivation is 'necessary in connection with the farm; indeed, more 'would be required to give constant work to the man 'and horses employed in connection with it. Without 'those parks, the tenant would be unable to keep any 'cows, as there is no other land on the farm that could 'be brought under cultivation.

'After going carefully over the farm, we are unable 'to see any land that could be profitably cultivated by 'crofters. We are of opinion that the arable and 'grazing portions of this farm would not let separately, 'the arable portion being where the young sheep are 'wintered, and without which they could not be kept 'on the farm during winter. The arable on the farm 'might be sufficient for two crofters, but not more, 'whereas the grazing would not be sufficient for 20 or '30, so that we consider this farm quite unsuited for 'crofters in every way.

(Signed) 'James Mackintosh,
Factor for Lord Macdonald.
'John Taylor,
Land Surveyor.

'Portree, 19*th April* 1893.'

1194. What rent does Mr Ross pay?—£110.

1195. Has he a lease?—Yes.

1196. For a term of years?—For a term of years.

1197. When does it expire?—In nine or ten years.

1198. *Mr Gordon.*—Do you know what stock is upon that farm?—No, I do not.

1199. Is the farm paying?—I believe not. The tenant says so.

1200. What was the rent in 1881?—I cannot say without referring to the books.

1201. Did Mr Ross get the land as it had been possessed by the previous tenant?—He only went into it quite recently, within the last five or six years.

1202. I see in 1883 the rent was £160; in 1830 it was £105; and now it is £180?—£110.

1203. What is the reduction of rent on Skirrinish, may I ask?—The reduction was 30 per cent. The rent of the farm is £474, 11s., and the reduction amounts to £142, 7s. 4d.

1204. *Mr Sutherland.*—I gather from the statement read that your opinion is that there is not much land that is capable of being used for cultivation in these farms?—That is so.

1205. You know the native language, don't you?—I do.

1206. You can tell the Commission what the meaning of 'Dalchorc' is?—It means the cornfield or the oatfield.

1207. That points to something, does is not?—I believe it does; perhaps it points to the place where no corn would grow.

1208. *Mr Maccallum.*—You quite agree that there were townships in Scorrybreck?—I don't agree that there were townships; there were sub-tenants.

1209. There were people there holding the land?—There were people allowed to cultivate land, in return for which they did a certain amount of labour for the tacksman.

1210. There was a large population maintained at Scorrybreck?—It was not exactly maintained at Scorrybreck; they went elsewhere. A witness told us yesterday that there was excellent sea-fishing there, and that cargoes of meal came to supply the people.

1211. Was there a church at Rigg?—I am not aware that there was a church since Reformation times.

1212. You are not prepared to deny that there was a church there, in which the minister of Snizort preached?—It is quite possible it may have been a Kiltarglen on the march of Scorrybreck farm.

1213. Do you know how Rigg was occupied before it got consolidated to this big farm of Scorrybreck?—I am not aware.

1214. Were you aware that there was a gentleman there who had a house?—There was a family at Rigg.

1215. And is it not likely, then, that Rigg would be a place where a crofting township might be placed, seeing that that was so?—Certainly, Rigg is a place fit for cultivation, but it is a very out of the way place; there is no road to it; it is far distant from any school; and it is not a safe place for a boat.

1216. *The Chairman*, suggested by Mr J. G. Mackay.—Is it not a fact that Lord Macdonald's rent-roll in the year 1733 shows that there were nine tenants on Lower Tote and eight on Upper Tote on the farm of Scorrybreck?—I have not got that rental in the books, and I believe that information is gathered from different sources, and put together by a gentleman in the island.

1217. That information may be correct enough?—Possibly it may.

1218. You have no reason to doubt it?—I have no proof that it is correct.

1219. *Mr Macleod.*—I take it that you are a practical man. Comparing the land occupied by the crofters at the present time with the land in the different sheep farms on Lord Macdonald's property, would you be prepared to express an opinion as to which is the better in your view, speaking generally?—Generally the land occupied by the crofters has not got the same good usage as land occupied by farmers. Farmers make an attempt to drain their lands and improve them. I have not yet seen crofters attempt to drain their lands.

1220. Then you would be inclined to say that the land presently held by the large farmers is better than the land held by the crofters?—No, I am not prepared to say that.

Portree, Skye. James Mackintosh.

1221. You said that on account of the better usage which the large farmers had given the land in the way of drainage and otherwise it was better?—I have noticed land held by farmers which was not so good as land held by crofters, but the farmer drained his land and it thus improved, until it was better than the land held by the neighbouring crofters. I consider that if crofters would treat their hill-grazing in the same way as farmers do, their land would be quite as good, and in some cases they have very superior grazing.

1222. Taking it over all, there is not very much difference?—There is not much difference, if they were both treated equally well.

1223. Might I ask whether any steps have ever been taken by the estate management to improve the agriculture amongst the smaller tenants, in the way, I mean, of inducing them to drain their land or to sow with grass?—I think there has been in the way of draining lands; and I think I can say that in one parish you will find that crofters have, within the last few years, taken a considerable number of them to sowing grass—I mean in the parish of Sleat.

1224. And is there any means that you would suggest for causing that process to go on elsewhere—any method by which you think the cultivation amongst the smaller tenants could be improved?—No, unless they come to realise that. We had a very intelligent witness here to-day, who informed you that he found it to his profit. An example of that kind is better than a professor from an agricultural college.

1225. Then you could not suggest any means by which this knowledge could be spread, except by such concrete examples in the different townships?—There might be a little done in the way of teaching it in schools.

John Taylor.

JOHN TAYLOR, Land Surveyor, Ebost—*examined.*

1226. *The Chairman.*—You have prepared and signed certain documents along with the previous witness, Mr Mackintosh?—Yes; and I concur with what he has said. I don't wish to add anything.

1227. Are you a farmer in the island?—Yes.

1228. Where?—At Ebost.

1229. You are also a surveyor?—Yes.

1230. This report is drawn up for Lord Macdonald?—At Lord Macdonald's instance.

Donald Nicolson.

DONALD NICOLSON, Crofter, Bernisdale, Skaebost (58). (Examined in Gaelic through an Interpreter.)

1231. *The Chairman.*—You come from Bernisdale, Skaebost?—Yes.

1232. What do you desire to tell us?—It is poverty that brought me here to-day, and the injustice of landlords, and the oppression of bad factors—worse than that, the ground-officer.

1233. But you have nothing to say against the landlord I suppose?—Nothing against our own landlord.

1234. What rent do you pay?—35s.

1235. Are you a crofter or a cottar?—A crofter.

1236. Was your rent reduced by the landlord some years ago?—We got the rent reduced to the sum that we stated ourselves.

1237. What had it been before?—£3, 18s.

1238. *Mr Sutherland.*—Could you take a larger holding yourself if you got it?—It is not for myself altogether that I came here to-day. I came for the people of my place. I myself have come to years, and I don't need much land, but I would like to see land in possession of the young generation that is coming.

1239. Do your neighbours complain that their holdings are too small?—Yes; and they have much reason.

1240. Do you know any place in the neighbourhood where they could get larger holdings?—Yes; and there is no part of the island of Skye from which we have not representatives on our estate.

1241. Have you got any cottars?—Upwards of twenty.

1242. Do you think they would take land if they had the opportunity?—Yes, some of them are applying for it. Portree, Skye. Donald Nicolson.

1243. Would they be ready to show the Commissioners where the land is that they think might be profitably occupied by them?—Yes, in every place about; the whole island of Skye has plenty of vacant land in it.

1244. *Mr Macleod.*—You cannot specify any particular place?—There is only one township on our estate. The estate is not big altogether: but I am sure that if we asked our landlord he would give us part of it.

1245. Have you asked him?—What we asked of him we got.

1246. But he does not seem to have so much land to give as neighbouring proprietors, I suppose?—There is not on our estate what would serve one-fourth of our poor people.

ARCHIBALD BEATON, Crofter, Aird, Skaebost—*examined.* Archibald Beaton.

1247. *The Chairman.*—You are a crofter from Aird, I understand?—Yes.

1248. What rent do you pay?—£2, 2s. 6d.

1249. Was that rent reduced some years ago?—The rent was £5, 5s.

1250. Did you fix your own rent at Mr Macdonald's request?—Yes.

1251. Do you carry on any trade?—Not much; doing the best thing I can. I have no trade—back and forward selling things.

1252. What things do you sell?—Bread and tea and sugar and things.

1253. You have a shop?—No, just a cart.

1254. What is it exactly you wish to tell us to-day? Do you desire another holding?—Yes, it is more land I want.

1255. Where do you wish it?—Anywhere I could get it. I am not particular.

1256. Do you wish land on the Skaebost estate?—There is no land on the Skaebost estate that I see proper to give to the like of me. All the land in Skaebost is under planting and deer.

1257. Where would you like to get it?—I cannot say; I don't see that our landlord has anything to give.

1258. But do you see land elsewhere?—Not near me.

1259. Do you wish to be transported to some other part of Skye?—Yes, anywhere where I could get land. I am not particular; I would go anywhere.

1260. Are not you better at home with the business you have got?—I could have the business there as well as anywhere else.

1261. What size of holding do you wish to obtain?—Between £8 and £16.

1262. Well, now, suppose a rent of £16, what extent of arable would you like for that?—I could not say.

1263. How many cows?—Four or five, and some sheep, and I would require a horse for my trade.

1264. How many sheep?—About 60 sheep.

1265. You would give a rent of £16?—No, I would give a rent that might be fixed by the Commission.

1266. Have you any particular locality in view for this holding?—No, any place would suit me well enough, as I go through the country side.

1267. Any part of Skye would suit you?—Borve, Kingsburgh, or any place round about. I am not particular, if I get more to live on.

1268. *Mr Macleod.*—Would you be prepared to stock such a holding?—I would try.

1269. Do you think you could manage it?—I would not like to say for certain.

1270. You would manage to put up some kind of building too to live in?—I would think so. It is not long since I put up a building already, and I would try to put up another.

1271. Did you get any help with it?—No.

1272. *The Chairman.*—Your landlord is very good to you?—He is good enough; I have nothing to say against him.

1273. What is your present stock?—One horse.

1274. What stock can your croft hold?—It could not keep a cow and a horse. I think I am better with the horse than going to the fishing or the railway, as I used to do.

ALLAN MACLEOD, Treaslane (49)—*examined.*

1275. *The Chairman.*—You come from Treaslane?—Yes.

1276. Are you a crofter?—I have half a croft.

1277. What rent do you pay?—The croft pays £3, 10s.

1278. Was that reduced?—Yes, the old rent was £5, 5s.

1279. Do you wish to obtain a better holding?—Well, our landlord has not much ground for us that he can spare; but we would like the hill along with the crofts. It was taken from our crofts before.

1280. Have you no hill ground?—No. It is a good number of years since it was taken from us.

1281. You want an enlargement of your holding, by the addition of the hill ground?—If we get the hill along with the crofts we will be content.

1282. And you do not wish to leave in that case?—No.

1283. What is the extent of the hill ground?—I cannot say how much it is.

1284. How many crofters are there?—Seven. The tacksman is going to keep two crofts himself, and he will take two shares of the pasture, with the five crofters.

1285. How many sheep do you suppose you would be able to keep?—I consider it will be about 30 sheep, each of us.

1286. Rather over 200 ewes?—Yes.

1287. In addition to that, you would be able to graze some of your cattle and a pony upon the hill?—Yes.

1288. Have you any cattle?—I have one cow and a stirk.

1289. And where do they graze?—On the crofts. There is a cultivated land on the hill that we could work for feeding cattle in the winter time.

1290. You would have to fence it?—To fence or dyke it as we like.

1291. Did you make any application for enlargement of holdings?—No.

1292. Is this hill ground that you refer to on the Treaslane estate?—Yes.

1293. Did you make any application to your landlord about it?—No. The two of us were sent up here from the township.

1294. But, as I understand, neither you nor the other crofters you represent, have any desire to leave your present places if you got this hill ground?—No.

1295. What is the rent of the hill ground at present?—That is more than I can tell just now. The tacksman Mackenzie died, but his sons and his daughter have the holding.

1296. *Mr Sutherland.*—What use is the hill pasture being put to now?—They have cattle and sheep on it.

1297. So that you want to take the land that the tacksman has got?—Yes, and he says he will share it out; he is going to leave it.

1298. If he is going to do that, you will get what you want?—That is what we would like to get.

1299. Are there any cottars?—No.

Questions suggested by Mr Alexander Macdonald, Proprietor of Treaslane.

1300. Are you not aware that I offered to give that hill to the whole of you twenty years before you were there?—That may be.

1301. Did you not hear that?—Yes.

1302. And I offered to stock it for you, and to back you with the money to take the stock, but you refused it; are you aware of that?—I heard it.

1303. That happened before I took you yourself out of pity when your father died, and gave you a holding there?—I should be there, for my father was there.

1304. Are not you aware that this was offered to you, and that you refused it?—Well, I heard that they got the offer, but it was in such a way that they could not accept it.

1305. What was that?—Because the other township was disputing with them.

1306. You want to break up the other holding, do you know the rent of it?—No.

1307. Is it not £30?—It might be.

1308. And do you think it would be advantageous to break up a £30 holding?—I cannot say.

1309. Supposing I went to live at Treaslane myself, what ground would be left for me if I gave that to you?—There is a park there.

1310. You would just confine me to the park?—You would get the pasture along with myself

RODERICK MACRAE, Crofter, Lynedale. (Examined in Gaelic through an Interpreter.)

1311. *The Chairman.*—You are a crofter at Lynedale?—Yes.

1312. What rent do you pay?—£3, 10s.

1313. What was the old rent?—£6.

1314. Do you wish to get a new holding?—Yes.

1315. What extent have you at present?—3¼ acres arable and 20¾ of outrun, with 191 acres of grazing.

1316. Is that in your own hands?—It belongs to the township.

1317. Where is it you desire to obtain another holding?—On Lynedale, where I was born.

1318. Is there land available there?—Yes.

1319. Is it old township land?—Yes.

1320. What is its name?—Breabost.

1321. How many people were in Breabost?—Nine families.

1322. And when did it cease to be a township?—Upwards of 40 years ago.

1323. What led to the families leaving Breabost?—They were put away.

1324. The whole of them?—The whole of them.

1325. Was your father the tenant of the croft where you lived?—Yes.

1326. Where did he go?—Six of the tenants were located in a small corner by the sea-shore, the rest went of their own accord to America.

1327. Where did your father go?—He was one of those who were located on the small holding by the sea-shore.

1328. That is a different holding from what you have got now?—Yes.

1329. How many families could be accommodated now on the old township land of Breabost?—Five, if they got it by the old marches.

1330. How far is that from Lynedale House?—About half a mile.

1331. Is that Breabost township now part of the Lynedale farm?—It is part of the farm, but not part of the Lynedale policies.

1332. Did these removals take place for the purpose of adding the land to the farm?—Yes; our own sheep were gathered on the hill unknown to us, and cleared off the hill.

1333. I see there are two farms; the lands and farm of Breabost in the hands of Donald Macdonald, who is the proprietor, at a rent of £87, 10s.; and the lands and farm of Lynedale Mains, also belonging to Mr Macdonald, rent £56. The land you mean is on the farm of Breabost?—Yes.

1334. Have you been giving your statements just now, as for yourself or as representing others?—I am here for the people of my township.

1335. How many do you represent?—Twelve families.

1336. Do all these twelve families wish to get better holdings?—Yes, they require them.

Roderick Macrae.

1337. Are you now representing their views?—Yes.

1338. Could all these twelve families obtain holdings, such as you have been describing upon the estate of Lynedale?—If the five which Breabost would accommodate with comfort were taken from among us, it would leave the others more comfortable.

1339. By giving their land to the remaining crofters?—Yes.

1340. But is that their idea, do you think?—Yes.

1341. Could you undertake the expense of removal to a holding on Breabost without assistance, by which I mean the stocking of the new holding, and the dwelling-house and steading you would require?—No.

1342. How much assistance do you think you would need?—I have a weak family, and I have only my own earnings. If I got the ground I would try to stock it, with help.

1343. But you could not do it without help?—No.

1344. Indeed, all the expenditure you would need to incur would have to come from some friendly source?—Yes.

1345. *Mr Sutherland.*—Have you thought the matter all over?—No; I have not thought the matter out sufficiently.

1346. But do you think in a general way, that if an opportunity was given you would face the difficulty?—Yes; with good courage.

1347. *The Chairman.*—Are there any tenants in Breabost just now?—No.

1348. Are not John and Donald Macleod there?—No, not at Breabost at all.

1349. Do you know a man named John Macleod?—Yes.

1350. Where is his place?—In Fanks.

1351. That is not Breabost, is it?—No, and never was.

1352. How far is it from Breabost?—There is a burn between.

1353. Did that land never form part of the township of Breabost?—No.

1354. How long is it since there was a tenant in Breabost?—Not since the tenantry was evicted.

1355. Was not Peter Campbell living there, and had he a share in Breabost?—He had the hill of Breabost.

1356. I understand you to say there is nobody occupying the land called Breabost except the landlord?—Yes.

1357. And if five families, or whatever be the proper number, were located on that ground, they would not be putting out anybody else except the landlord?—No; not one.

1358. What use is being made of that land at present,—is it arable or grazing land, or what?—It is not cultivated; it is under sheep.

Donald Stewart.

DONALD STEWART, Crofter, Fanks, Lynedale (35)—*examined.*

1359. *The Chairman.*—Are you a crofter at Fanks?—Yes.

1360. What is your rent?—24s.

1361. What was your old rent?—£3.

1362. Was it reduced by the Commission?—Yes. I speak for my mother, widow Marion Stewart.

1363. Would you like a new holding?—Yes.

1364. Would the land spoken of by the previous witness, which he calls Breabost, be a suitable place for you?—Some parts of it.

1365. What extent of holding do you desire?—According to the lands.

1366. Suppose you got the best bit of Breabost, how many acres arable would you like?—Fifteen.

1367. And how many sheep?—About 100 acres of pasture.

1368. All to yourself?—Yes.

1369. Are you in any trade?—No.

1370. Do you live from your croft?—Not altogether.

1371. In what other way do you earn a livelihood?—Labour sometimes.

1372. Anything else?—Fishing.

1373. You have not been brought up to any particular trade?—No.

1374. Now, suppose you got such a new holding at Breabost, or similar lands on the estate of Lynedale, could you stock it?—I would try my best to do it.

1375. Have you the means?—We would try enough to do it if we got more land.

1376. Do you think you could do it without assistance?—There are nine of us in the family, and I think we would try to stock it.

1377. Are you all living at home?—No; we cannot live at home.

1378. Those at home and those away would combine to carry the thing out?—Yes.

1379. Do you think that you and your brothers and sisters could do that without any assistance from outside?—If we had the land we would try our best.

1380. But whenever you get the land a considerable amount of expenditure is required at once in stocking and buildings: could you and the rest of the family do that, without assistance?—If we had the land we would do our best. We cannot live on the land we have.

1381. Were the family all brought up on this holding of 1 acre arable?—The whole of them.

1382. How many of them remain at home?—Two of us now.

1383. Is the other your brother or your sister?—My sister.

1384. How many brothers have you away from home?—Three.

1385. What are they doing?—Working wherever they can get work.

1386. And they send home assistance to your mother?—Yes. My father died fourteen years ago.

1387. How was your mother able to struggle on with such a large family after her husband's death? Did she get assistance?—From the neighbours.

1388. Only from neighbours?—That is all. I had to work on the landlord's estate at 6d. a day since I was thirteen years old.

1389. How long did you continue at that wage?—Two or three years.

1390. Did any of your brothers work at the same wage?—Yes.

1391. That is the way your mother got on?—I was then raised to 10d. and then 1s., and that was the highest.

1392. You never got beyond 1s. a day?—The last year of it I got 1s. 6d.

1393. Have you been getting work on the estate recently?—Not for the last fifteen years.

1394. And where do you mainly get work now?—I mean to leave this country in about two or three weeks to get work in the south.

1395. And then come back home?—Exactly.

1396. Are you a skilled labourer?—Fishing is the thing I know best.

1397. Where do you go principally to get labour when you are not fishing?—I am going to make for Glasgow.

1398. Have you got labour there before?—Yes.

1399. *Mr Sutherland.*—What is the distance of Fanks from Breabost?—About 100 yards.

1400. So that if you got a new holding on Breabost or any other place near, you could build your house and make your new holding from your present home, and take time to do it, years, could you not?—Yes.

1401. So that the initial difficulty of getting a large sum of money to build your steading would perhaps not arise?—My grandfather's house is still up yet.

1402. In Breabost?—Yes.

1403. *Mr Gordon.*—How far is your house from the sea?—About 300 yards.

1404. Have you a share of a boat at all?—Not in the meantime. There are seven families on 12 acres of land—forty-seven souls in all.

1405. Do any of your neighbours own a boat?—Yes.

1406. Do they make a good living out of that?—Sometimes.

1407. Have you a regular market for your fish?—Not very handy; we have to send it to Glasgow.

1408. Does the steamer call at or near your place?—We have to hire carts at Portree, and pay 5s.

1409. Portree is your nearest shipping port?—Yes.

1410. How far are you from Portree?—About 11 or 12 miles.

1411. There are some families who carry on the trade of fishing near you?—Yes.

1412. And are they in pretty good circumstances?—Near about as myself.

1413. *The Chairman.*—Were you at the fishing last year?—No.

1414. How long is it since you have been at the fishing?—About seven years.

1415. Why have you given up the fishing?—I got a better situation.

1416. Where was that?—In Dumfries.

1417. What is it?—I was in the Lunatic Asylum.

1418. Do you mean the Crichton Royal Institution?—Yes.

1419. What situation did you hold there?—I was one of the attendants.

1420. How long did you hold that situation?—Eleven months.

1421. How long since is that?—Last year.

1422. That was a very good situation of the kind?—Not bad.

LACHLAN MACLEOD, Crofter, Flashadder, Lynedale (28)—*examined.*

1423. *The Chairman.*—You come from Flashadder, Lynedale?—Yes.

1424. Do you represent your father?—Yes.

1425. How old is he?—Seventy-four.

1426. What rent does he pay?—£3.

1427. What was his old rent?—£5, 10s., I think.

1428. What is your father's name?—Malcolm Macleod.

1429. Why does Donald Mackinnon not attend to-day?—He was not well.

1430. He asked you to come?—Yes.

1431. Did he tell you what he wished to be said?—He told us the same that the whole township was for.

1432. What is that?—For more land.

1433. Do you live on the farm of Lynedale?—Yes.

1434. Near where Donald Mackinnon lives?—Yes, in the same township.

1435. Does your father wish more land?—Yes.

1436. Where is the land that you would like to obtain?—All Breabost, as the rest have told you.

1437. Have you anything to add to what the others said?—I am younger than any of the rest, but I can see the land there.

1438. We may take you as concurring in what the others have said?—Yes.

1439. Do you speak for the township of Flashadder?—Yes.

JOHN MACKENZIE, Mossbank, Portree—*examined.*

1440. *The Chairman.*—You are factor on the Lynedale estate belonging to Mr Donald Macdonald?—Yes.

1441. Have you something to read to us?—Yes. There are thirty-nine crofters and cottars, paying a yearly rent, as fixed by the Crofters Commission, of £93, 9s. At Whitsunday 1889 the arrears of rent, as fixed by the Crofters Commission, amounted to £166, 7s. At Whitsunday 1891 the arrears of rent and instalments handed over by the late proprietor came to £157, 16s. 3d.; add the third instalment of arrears falling due under the Commission at Martinmas, £37, 10s.; and the arrears of rent for the year from Martinmas 1891 to Martinmas 1892, £23, 0s. 2d., makes a total sum in arrear at this date of rents and instalments up to Martinmas 1892 of £218, 6s. 5d. The expenses incurred in getting decrees for fair rent and arrears against seven crofters were £19, 11s. 3d. Of the thirty-nine crofters and cottars only six are clear of arrears. The probable acreage of the crofters' ground is 1352 acres, made up of 107 arable, 200 outrun, and 1045 pasture. There are only two cottars. The late proprietor, Mr Alexander Macdonald, railway contractor, laid out an enormous sum of money, which was spread among the people in improvements, and since then there has been a considerable sum laid out in fencing.

1442. Did not the property fall into the hands of the bank?—The Commercial Bank of Scotland.

1443. How long was it in their hands?—Four or five years. With reference to this part of Breabost, if it is disconnected with the farm of Lynedale, and only a small portion taken, it would cut up the whole of the ground, and make the farm perfectly useless.

1444. Could not some means be taken for connecting the hill ground with the lower ground, and at the same time allow Breabost to be utilised in the way suggested?—There is only a narrow strip up to the lodge gate, which is in possession of the hotel-keeper; and there is only a small strip to Breabost.

1445. Would there be any difficulty in making a cattle pass?—It depends on how much was taken.

1446. Is the sole reason you give that it would produce a discontiguity between the high ground and the lower?—Yes, it would be perfectly cut off.

1447. That would be your sole reason for opposing the proposition made?—And this low ground is necessary for the wintering of the sheep that summer on the high ground.

1448. Could not they winter elsewhere on the lower ground?—They could, but not without cutting through Breabost.

1449. They could have a pass through?—Passes are not very satisfactory.

1450. Assuming that the sheep could get from the high to the low ground, there is other low ground besides Breabost on which they could winter?—Certainly.

1451. And what would be sufficient for all the sheep that could summer on the high ground?—Both high and low ground are used for them.

1452. So that if this difficulty of a line of connection between the two grounds was got over, the principal difficulty would be overcome in giving this accommodation to the crofters?—Well, I am afraid the other bit would not let.

1453. You did not suggest that before?—It would require to be let as a separate holding.

1454. It would let as crofts?—No, there is no arable ground.

1455. *Mr Macleod.*—Do I understand you to say that, supposing there were small holdings made at Breabost, they would not require that high and low ground that you speak of for their stock?—Yes, if they took the whole of it.

1456. But supposing that you contemplate a condition of things where the small holders would take the whole of it, there would be no reason why these small tenants who would be in Breabost should not occupy the whole of that high and low ground?—If they take the whole of Breabost.

1457. *Mr Maccallum.*—With regard to the arrears on the estate, Mr Mackenzie, you made a statement about the delegates staying away on account of being in arrear, and it is quite evident that several crofters are in arrear; but is not that an indication that there is need of some change being made in their circumstances?—In the case of the absentee, he holds two crofts, and ought to be able to pay better than the others.

1458. But, looking at the matter generally, have the crofters not fallen into arrears very much through the smallness of their holdings?—I don't know that.

1459. And the low prices?—The low prices current affect everybody.

1460. And it is no wonder at all to find such people

Portree, Skye. — John Mackenzie.

in arrear?—Well, others pay their rents, and they are subject to the same low prices.

1461. Many pay their rents by getting assistance from members of their families working in the south?—That is a general custom.

1462. *The Chairman.*—I want to ask you this, Donald Stewart—and the blue-book confirms him—tell us that his mother has one acre arable. Do you think that a suitable holding for anybody?—It is small enough; but it may be sufficient for a fisherman.

1463. But he has not been fishing for the last seven years. Do you think anybody can live, except in the most precarious way, upon a holding of one acre arable without fishing?—It is not supposed that they lived upon one acre.

1464. Do you suppose it possible?—It is not possible.

1465. It is not a means of livelihood at all?—It is simply a home.

1466. What is the lowest size of holding you would, if you had to begin the thing anew, give a crofter in your quarter of Skye,—a croft that would be self-supporting?—I should say a croft of about 30 acres, to give a man a decent living.

1467. How many acres arable do you put there?—I would give him from 15 to 20 acres, according to the ground.

1468. And how many sheep?—He would require at least 100 sheep.

1469. And how many horses?—He would almost require two horses.

1470. How many hands would be required to work that croft?—A man, if he had his family, might work the croft himself.

1471. I am supposing he has sons growing up, 18 to 25 years of age?—A couple of them should work it. A man and his son might work it, with a little extra assistance at spring-time and harvest.

1472. And would he require any female assistance?—Certainly.

1473. What cattle stock would you suppose that man to have?—He could have from 6 to 8 cows, according to the ground.

1474. And their followers?—And their followers.

1475. And, still supposing you proceed to begin the thing anew, is that the lowest size of holding you would assign to a man in the expectation that he would be able to work his croft profitably, and pay his rent, and make a comfortable living?—And to live entirely upon it.

1476. Is it your opinion that a man who has to live by the sea and not by his croft should have a very small croft?—Yes, a patch for his house and potato ground.

1477. He should not be distracted by the duties of a larger croft when he has the occupation of fishing to engage his time?—Very often the time when he would attend to his croft is the principal fishing time.

1478. He is apt to fall between two stools?—Yes.

1479. What was the outcome of the fishing in Skye last year?—Well, it was not good at all.

1480. Was it bad all over Skye?—In some parts it was better than here; but generally it was poor.

1481. It was a failure in the general case?—Yes.

1482. What was the outcome of the fishing the year before last?—It was very good in some parts of Skye at least.

1483. And the year before that again?—I don't recollect; I think it was good.

1484. Is the Skye fishing mainly herring fishing, or white fishing, or both?—Mainly herring fishing, but there is a good deal of white fish caught, and lobsters.

1485. Do the Skye fishermen go much afield?—Yes.

1486. They go to Stornoway, do they?—Stornoway and the east coast and the west coast.

1487. Do they go to the coast of Ireland?—Yes, but not so much now.

1488. *Mr Gordon.*—Is there any place at Lynedale where they could land their boats?—There is not a very good landing place.

1489. Could the landing place be improved?—I have no doubt it could.

1490. That would encourage them more to the fishing than the farming, if they had a better harbour?—Yes, they might fish there.

Portree, Skye. — John Mackenzie.

1491. Eleven miles is not very far—the fishermen on the east coast have further to go?—They might have a good landing place below Fanks.

1492. And in fairly deep water?—Oh yes.

1493. It would be safer for the boats?—Not very safe in a gale.

1494. It could be improved and made safe?—Certainly.

1495. *Mr Macleod.*—Have you employed any means to take advantage of the Act providing for the erection of boat shelters and slips?—I believe the County Council have been trying it, but the matter is hedged about with such difficulties that they cannot adopt the Act.

1496. But there has been a local effort to get the grant under that Act?—It has been several times before the County Council.

1497. But they found a difficulty in obtaining it?—There is a difficulty in the preliminary expenses before you can get it, which must all be paid locally. The Councils won't expend anything; you must pay the expense of survey and everything, and may after all find your application rejected.

1498. Would this be a pretty central place?—It is on the side of Loch Grishornish.

1499. Could a good few townships take advantage of a harbour there?—Yes.

1500. Within reasonable distance?—Yes; there are seven townships not far off.

1501. There was a crofter here who spoke about the number of cottars. Are you aware whether Breabost was occupied by crofters at any time?—I have no knowledge of it.

DUNCAN KELLY, Drumuie—*examined.*

Duncan Kelly.

1502. *The Chairman.*—You came from Drumuie?—Yes.

1503. Have you something to read to us?—Yes.—'We, the tenants of Drumuie, in the parish of Portree, 'beg most respectfully to submit to Her Majesty's 'Honourable Commissioners that the township of 'Drumuie occupies a most unenviable position, being 'hemmed in between the large sheep farm of Skirinish 'on the one side, and the small farms of Achtalean and 'Woodend on the other. Our souming consists of four 'cows and one horse (no sheep). The grazing for our 'cattle is in the Bigmoss, where our cows are in con-'tinual danger of being lost, and in fact many have 'been lost. The small patch of pasture to the north of 'our township is the resort of cattle going to and re-'turning from markets, so it is of no use to us. Our 'crofts, owing to continual cropping and the ground 'getting no rest, refuse to yield as much as we sow; 'this being the case this year when the return does not 'sow the ground back. We did not send a bushel of 'oats to the meal mill this year, and we are under the 'necessity of buying seed oats.

'The way by which our position can be remedied is 'by adding the small farm of Achtalean, presently in 'the hands of a landed proprietor and sublet to a 'Portree hotel-keeper, both non-resident, and a good 'piece of the farm of Skirinish to our township to 'enable us to keep between 50 and 60 sheep each.

'We have submitted the foregoing facts in perfect hope of our case receiving impartial attention.

(Signed) 'HUGH MORRISON.
JOHN MACLEOD.
ALLAN MATHESON.
MARY MACLEAN.
SUSAN NICOLSON.
DUNCAN KELLY.

'DRUMUIE, PORTREE, 19*th April* 1893.'

1504. Do you wish to add anything to that statement?—That is all I can say.

1505. You wish a part of the small farm of Auchtalean, in the hands of the proprietor, and a consider-

able portion of the farm of Skirinish; and you would show us the ground that you desire to get if we visit the place?—Yes, it is close at hand.

1506. Then you don't want to leave your present holding?—No; but we want more grazing.

1507. You simply want an extension of your hill grazing?—Yes.

1508. And when you say that, do you speak for the other tenants on the place?—Yes, as well as myself. We are six on the township.

1509. And none of you want new holdings—you simply want new pasture?—That is more than I can say. But I think if they got a piece of hill grazing that would keep about 60 or 70 sheep each, the others would be made somewhat comfortable.

1510. Then this is your own statement?—The statement of our township.

1511. You are here as a representative?—Yes.

1512. But have not you been asking for the arable land also that belongs at present to the innkeeper?—It is only a small bit in our neighbourhood.

1513. Is it good land?—Just like other land.

1514. It must be of some value to the present occupier?—I don't know, I am sure.

1515. How far are you from Portree?—Two miles. We have no pasture at all.

1516. What is the size of your croft?—We are not complaining of the crofts, if we had pasture along with them, and the bit of pasture we have we are in danger of losing every day. It is nothing but bog altogether. My rent has been raised twice since I came to it.

1517. Were you before the Crofters Commission?—When I took the croft at first I had it for £5, 10s., and then the rent was raised 3s. for every £1, that made it £6, 6s.; and then this last Commission came and raised it 9s., so that the croft is now rented at £6, 15s.

1518. It must be a very good one. You don't wish to leave it?—Not if I get pasture.

[Adjourned.]

THIRD SITTING.

STRUAN, BRACADALE, SKYE, FRIDAY, APRIL 21, 1893.

Present:—

David Brand, Esq., Advocate, Sheriff of Ayr, and Chairman of the Crofters Commission, *Chairman.*
Michael Hugh Shaw Stewart, Esq., M.P.
Angus Sutherland, Esq., M.P.
James Noel Muller Forsyth, Esq.
George Gordon, Esq.
Rev. Malcolm Maccallum.
John Macleod, Esq.
Henry Munro, Esq.
William Mackenzie, Esq., *Secretary.*

Duncan Mackinnon, Struanmore, Bracadale (38)—*examined.*

1519. *The Chairman.*—You are a crofter in Struan?—Yes.

1520. Are you here to make a statement on behalf of the crofters there?—Yes.

1521. Have you put it in writing?—Yes.

1522. Kindly read it.—'The bulk of the district is 'made up of the farms of Balmeanach, Ose, Ebost, Ullinish, Struanmore, Struanbeg, Balgowan, and Totarder.

'1. Balmeanach is two miles by about one. Fifty years ago there were on this farm 14 families and a tacksman. They were sub-tenants; they all had cattle and were pretty well off. Struan, Bracadale, Skye.

'At present it is occupied by one tacksman, carrying a stock of about 600 sheep. Townships were Carroy, Shagary, Balmeanach, Erobain. Duncan Mackinnon.

'2. Ose. There were 15 families on this farm fifty years ago, who were comfortable on their holdings. Townships were Lethglen, 3 families; Ose., 8; Glen-Ullinish, 4. It is $1\frac{3}{4}$ miles by 2, and carries a stock of about 800 sheep. There are 9 crofters on it at the present day; the souming of each crofter is 2 cows.

'3. Glenvicaskill. Fifty years ago there were 14 sub-tenants on this farm, 7 in Glen-vic-askill, and 7 in Glen Ose; they had cattle, horses, and sheep. At present there is only a shepherd on this farm. It carries about 900 sheep; is 2 miles by $2\frac{1}{4}$.

'4. Ebost is 1 mile by $2\frac{1}{2}$; at present estimated to carry about 900 sheep. Fifty years ago there were 27 sub-tenants, in Colbost there were 6, in Ebost 9, Garriemore 4, Glenostle 2, and Glencolbost 6. They all had cattle, and some had sheep. This farm is more suitable for crofters' holdings than any of the former, there being more arable land. There are only 2 crofters at Ebost now, and 5 at Garriemore.

'5. Ullinish. This farm is at present held by 5 joint-tenants, with a sheep stock of over 600.'

1523. What rent do these joint-tenants pay?—£60.

1524. Among them?—Each of the 5 pays £60. That is apart from any reduction.

'On Ullinish there are also 34 cows and 5 horses. Fifty years ago there were 16 sub-tenants on this farm, who were fairly well off. This farm is also naturally adapted for crofters' holdings.

'6. Struanmore is at present occupied by 18 crofters, with a stock of 18 cows and the same number of stirks. 'Fifty years ago there were only 11 on it. The greater part of the hill pasture of this township is now part of Ullinish. A petition by 8 of the present crofters for additional hill pasture has not yet been answered satisfactorily by the landlord.'

1525. When was that petition presented?—About five or six weeks ago.

1526. You say it has not been answered satisfactorily; has there been some answer sent?—We had a note from the factor stating that he had received it. I may add that we made the application because we had it on good authority that Ullinish, as a club farm, was in the market.

1527. Who is at present in Ullinish?—Five joint-tenants.

1528. And these 5 tenants pay, according to your information, £60 each?—According to their own words.

1529. That is £300 in all?—Yes. I asked one of themselves not later than a few days ago, and he told me that there were 5 shares, and that each share paid £60.

'7. Struanbeg. The whole of the hill pasture that belonged to this township has been added to the farm of Ullinish, and also a part of the arable land. There were 10 sub-tenants on this farm fifty years ago. There is only 1 now, with no land. It is occupied by the inn-keeper, what remains of the old arable land. It is only a part of the old original Struanbeg that is thus occupied by the inn-keeper; the rest was added to the farm of Ullinish.

'8. Balgowan is a narrow strip held at present by the inn-keeper at Struan. Thirty-five years ago there were 7 sub-tenants on it; there are 6 on it now, with very small holdings indeed.

'9. Totarder. This farm is at present occupied by one tacksman. It carries a stock of about 800 sheep. There are 2 sub-tenants on it. Twenty-five years ago it was occupied by 4 tenants, and 1 cottar or sub-tenant. These had a sheep stock of about 400 sheep, with 45 cows and 4 horses.

'These are all the old townships, and there are 6 delegates to corroborate these statements. The whole of the district is in every way suitable for crofters'

Struan, Bracadale, Skye.

Duncan Mackinnon.

'holdings, there being sufficient arable land on which crofters could live in comfort. It is therefore the wish 'of the people that it should be subdivided into suit-'able holdings, so as to enable them to maintain them-'selves on their crofts. It is the urgent wish of the 'people that Government should pass a law that would 'benefit not only crofters, but cottars and sub-tenants.'

1530. How many cottars are hereabout, in this district of Struan?—We will give you that information later on.

1531. Are you a teacher?—I am a joiner to trade.

1532. You belong to the district, I suppose?—Yes, I was born here.

1533. In your opinion are the present holdings of the crofters here too small for profitable cultivation?—Do you refer to the 18 crofters?

1534. Yes.—Oh yes, by far.

1535. The whole of them?—Every one of them. They are equally rented, and by far too small for any family.

1536. Do the people live by their crofts, or partly by them and partly by fishing?—They do not live by the crofts. It is no wonder, since they lose by the crofts, because, supposing they were in other engagements, they would require to work in spring and in harvest, and they only keep the crofts at their present size in order to get the site of their houses.

1537. How do they mainly live?—At present they do not go into the fishing industry very much. They go to other places to work, mostly labouring.

1538. They mainly subsist by wages from labour?—Yes.

1539. Is it your opinion that if they got such holdings as you point at in that paper, these holdings could be made self-supporting?—Yes, by all means.

1540. To what size of holding do you refer; begin with the arable?—I think 15 acres of arable, and about 60 of outrun; but it depends altogether on where they got these, and I was thinking that 5 cows with their followers, and about 50 sheep and a horse.

1541. Now for these sheep, do you propose hill grazing?—Hill grazing.

1542. Common hill grazing, or club farm grazing, or exclusive grazing,—which?—In some senses the club stock does not work well. I think the crofter would thrive better if he had that piece for himself.

1543. A piece of grazing able to sustain 50 sheep?—Yes.

1544. Have you made any estimate of the number of holdings, such as you describe, that could be formed on the lands you have mentioned?—No, I have not gone into that.

1545. Is there, in the land you have told us of, an area sufficient to accommodate the whole of the Struanmore crofters on self-supporting crofts?—Well, the delegates were thinking over that, and, in their judgment, by getting the land the size of the croft I have mentioned, it would pay them well, as the large farmers of the district, at least some of them, hold their land.

1546. They would be willing to pay a rent for these holdings, corresponding in amount to the rent paid by the neighbouring farm?—That is what I mean.

1547. Would the crofters be able to stock these holdings themselves?—There might be an odd man here and there who would, but, take them as a whole, they would not.

1548. Do they know enough of cultivation of arable to work, say 15 acres, to the best advantage?—Yes.

1549. Would they be able to put up the necessary dwelling-house and steading without assistance?—There might be an odd crofter among them who would; but, as a whole, they would not.

1550. Have there been, among the Struanmore crofters, for a length of time, complaints made,—among themselves, I mean,—of the limited extent of their holdings?—It is mostly done every day that they go out among their crofts.

1551. Is the effect of the smallness of their holdings this, that they are obliged to scourge the land year after year; that they are not able to give the land a rest, but are obliged to sea-ware it from year to year, and take out of it what they can get?—Yes.

Struan, Bracadale, Skye.

Duncan Mackinnon.

1552. Having no spare land to rest one year and cultivate another?—That is so.

1553. But you think if they got a larger extent of arable, and corresponding grazing, that would enable them to give it a rest from time to time, as the necessities of the case required?—Yes.

1554. Then they understand about rotation of crops?—As a general rule, they do.

1555. What would they grow upon their holdings?—Potatoes, corn, and patches of turnips.

1556. Do they grow any barley?—No, it would not do.

1557. Do they grow anything else?—That is all; and patches of rye grass.

1558. Do they use their corn for the purposes of grinding, or for purposes of feeding?—For fodder.

1559. Why is that: is it because they are short of fodder, or because they think it is the best way to do?—It is not easy, perhaps, for me to answer your question.

1560. You are answering very well.—I think it is about ten years since we got these 18 crofts. Well, from the new ground that we took in, we were selling corn the first five or six years; but now, as the land has no rest, the cattle will take all the corn and the fodder, excepting there might be some that might sell a little corn now and again.

1561. You mentioned ten years. What did you refer to?—It is about ten years, if my memory does not fail me, since we got these 18 crofts from the landlord, Macleod of Macleod.

1562. Where did the crofters who got crofts there ten years ago come from?—They were sub-tenants in a small corner of the township before then, at the mercy of the tenant of Ullinish, until such time as they got these 18 crofts.

1563. When the landlord afforded these holdings, did he make advances,—I mean, did he spend money in any form in assisting them to settle?—No, unless this, that there was a march fence put up between themselves and the Ullinish small farmers, and for that fence they were charged 2s. per croft for three years, and at the expiry of three years our present factor cut off these two shillings.

1564. What kind of land was it that you got,—was it waste land, or land that had been formerly under cultivation?—Formerly under cultivation by the sub-tenants of old Struanmore.

1565. Was it run out or exhausted land, or land with a good deal of substance in it?—Almost run out.

1566. And did the tenants begin to experience the consequences of that two or three years after entering?—Yes, that is so.

1567. Did the landlord do anything towards helping to fertilise the land when the tenants entered?—Nothing.

1568. Or did he do anything towards trenching, or draining, or dykes, or building houses?—Nothing.

1569. That is a very important point. What was done about the building of the houses,—did they just put up their own houses as best they could?—The sub-tenants lived on the present township, and only possessed a corner of the arable land, and they were able to stay in their houses supposing they got these small crofts. But there are five or six new houses put up at their own cost since then, and they are very comfortable.

1570. Upon the holdings?—Yes.

1571. Some of them have houses on their holdings, and some of them have houses in this corner?—They have the houses where they had them at first, and they still hold these houses.

1572. We can see these houses, I suppose,—how far is Struanmore from where we are?—You can see some of the old houses from where we are.

1573. As to the thatching of the houses, I suppose they managed it themselves, without the assistance of the landlord?—They had the rushes that were used to

thatch their houses when they were sub-tenants from the tenant of Ullinish, and they hold that yet. But there were some encroachments on that liberty some years ago. But when we received the present holdings, the late factor, Mr Alexander Macdonald of Portree, sent word to the crofters here to send a petition down to Dunvegan on a certain date, and he gave them their old rights in connection with the peats and the sea-ware.

1574. Where do they get their sea-ware,—opposite their own holdings, or have they a right of sea-ware over the neighbouring farmland?—They have a right to the sea-ware from time immemorial.

1575. As sub-tenants?—As sub-tenants.

1576. But do they get enough of sea-ware for the ordinary purposes of the croft?—Not on this piece of shore that they had from time immemorial; but they go to the other side Talisker, and on this side Drynoch.

1577. Do they go there of right, or on tolerance?—The first time that the Struanmore crofters went to the Talisker side they sent word to an old man, who is present here (Donald Mackenzie), that Mr Cameron of Talisker had to divide the sea-ware,—to come and put out pieces of sea-weed for them. Well, he did not come, and they went on with the cutting of the weed, and, of course, they were just allowed to do so. Well, later on they went to the Drynoch side, and on going to Mr Scott he asked them were they from Struanmore, or where, and they said, from Struanmore; and he kindly granted them as much sea-weed on his shore as they would like to get.

1578. Do they get their peats easily?—They get their peats on the Ullinish farm.

1579. Of right?—Of right.

1580. And pay nothing for them?—Nothing for them.

1581. Was it intended, do you know, when this statement was made, ten years ago, that the holdings should be self-supporting, or was it only intended that they should have a home there?—Just a home. They had neither cow nor sheep, and it was, I may say, through Miss Macleod of Macleod that they got these 18 acres. She was the main starting point of them, herself, and her sister, Mrs Ferguson, deceased. They requested the Struanmore crofters to put in a petition to their brother, the landlord, and he kindly granted their request.

1582. Has any Struanmore crofter, since being settled there ten years ago, been able to subsist in any one year through the profits of his holding?—No, no.

1583. Not one?—No.

1584. They have always struggled along by means of outside labour?—Yes.

1585. Where do they get that labour in the main, in Skye or outside of Skye?—Outside of Skye.

1586. Going south working and earning wages, and coming back?—Yes, it is a great loss to them.

1587. *Mr Shaw Stewart.*—You said just now that some of the houses in Struanmore were old, were existing before, and five or six you said were new and very comfortable. Were they put up by the crofters?—By the crofters.

1588. How were they able to make them so comfortable?—By their labour.

1589. By getting work elsewhere?—All over the world. There might be an odd man that would get a few days' work in Skye, here and there.

1590. Then as regards Ullinish, you say the five joint-tenants pay £60 rent each. Have they not had considerable reductions of rent?—I could not say.

1591. Do you know if Macleod helped them by any advance of money when they first started?—To the best of my belief they put up their own houses at their own expense.

1592. But do you know if he gave them any advance of money at all?—I could not say.

1593. *Mr Sutherland.*—In the event of holdings being given to the people hereabout in the townships you have referred to, do you think there would be any great difficulty in building homes for them and reclaiming or re-occupying the land? Put it this way; would you yourself, if a favourable opportunity of this kind was given you, be inclined to take one of the new holdings in these townships?—Yes, but I might be an odd case.

1594. But supposing yourself to be in the general position of the people hereabout?—I could not.

1595. You believe that the people, without some assistance from outside, could build houses such as you would like to see them occupy?—Could not.

1596. But these club farmers to whom you referred in Ullinish are not crofters, of course?—No.

1597. Supposing these holdings were to be given as you seem to be desirous they should, do you think that farming could be conducted very much better than the crofters do their farming now?—Yes.

1598. You referred to the exhaustion of the soil by the constant cropping, and you think that that could be avoided to a great extent if the farm was of the size you indicated?—Yes.

1599. You could have a proper rotation?—Yes.

1600. And you think the people would carry out that system?—They are trying it on the present holdings.

1601. They have made a beginning?—Yes.

1602. And they have found it to their advantage, no doubt?—Oh yes.

1603. I have no doubt then that the necessity for sea-ware or sea-weed being used in these inland holdings would not be so pressing, you would not require to take sea-ware from the coast up there if you had a rotation of cropping?—No; because I would have other manure if I had stock.

1604. Are any of these townships far distant from where the people are just now? What distance is the farthest away of them?—5½ miles.

1605. Some of them are very much nearer, are they?—At the doors.

1606. Is all that land that you have referred to upon one estate?—Yes.

1607. In making houses of the kind you have indicated, the people could save a great deal of money by making the labour themselves, while they were living in their present houses?—Yes.

1608. They could travel to the new holdings, work there, and come back to the present holdings?—Yes.

1609. So that a great deal of expense that would in some cases be necessary, would be avoided in cases where the townships are near?—Yes.

1610. *Mr Forsyth.*—You said that the holdings which the people wished, and which would be suitable are about 15 acres arable, and 60 outrun; and you mentioned 5 cows and followers, with a horse and 50 sheep. Do you mean any hill pasture besides the 60 acres of outrun?—According to the number of acres that each township at present possesses, it would just come into something about that.

1611. You mean that that would include the hill grazing?—Yes.

1612. That 60 acres of outrun is to keep 50 sheep with the run of the arable?—In winter.

1613. That would be 50 sheep to say 60 acres?—In summer.

1614. Do you think that would be sufficient?—In some cases, I thought it would; but it depends altogether on the situation, as I said before.

1615. You think that the separate system of having the sheep would be best; you don't approve of club farms?—In the way in which the club farm is at present carried on, I don't think it would be to the satisfaction of all.

1616. That is with reference to the club farm of Ullinish?—Yes.

1617. But don't you think it might be possible, if there was a good stretch of hill pasture, that the sheep would do better if they were held in common like a club farm, I don't say like Ullinish farm, for I know nothing about that, would it not pay better to run them together?—It would.

1618. *Mr Gordon.*—If you were to hold your land separately, the expense of fencing would be very much

Struan, Bracadale, Skye. Duncan Mackinnon.

greater?—We have no objection to a club stock on a right principle.

1619. Well, I am afraid even looking at your fine country here, that there would not be an extent of ground that would keep 5 cows and 50 sheep upon say 80 acres of land for many of your crofters?—It was simply my own opinion.

1620. I have no doubt there is some round about here that would do it, but if you went back from the township a mile, I am afraid you would have to take in a part of the hill?—Yes.

1621. And that would be an additional reason for having a club farm, rather than separate grazings all fenced?—The people as a rule have no objection to club farming on a right principle.

1622. You made a very good statement about the rents. You did not tell us what rent you thought your croft worth, but you said they would be worth the same rent as the farms. Now how much of the farm of Ullinish would you suppose to be taken up by crofters?—Ten or twelve, according to the number of sheep.

1623. You say these ten or twelve men would be paying £30, do you mean to say that a man with 50 sheep, 5 cows, and a horse could pay £30?—No.

1624.—Could he pay £24?—No.

1625. That is where I want to correct your statement. What rent do you think he would be able to pay?—As a rule I don't go by the rent that the present tenant of Ullinish is paying.

1626. But supposing it was very much less than that, I am afraid you would be too high?—I have no authority to state what one of the Ullinish tenants stated to me a few days ago, but I think it won't harm the Ullinish tenants, the landlord, the factor, or myself. I put the question direct to him, and he said that they were paying £60 each. I put the question to him in this way, Now if you would like that yourself and your family would do well in the fifth share of Ullinish, what rent would you like to pay? Half the present rent.

1627. That would be £15?—£15 instead of £30, according to the man's own statement.

1628. That £15 would be the rent of your croft, according to your view of it?—No; because my croft does not come up to near a fifth part of Ullinish. They have about 1000 sheep properly speaking.

1629. You said £800?—Yes, as a rule, but sometimes they have more.

1630. That would be 66 sheep each. What do you think yourself would be the fair rent for 50 sheep, 5 cows, and a horse?—Oh, we look for proper valuators for our land. We would not like to go into rents, because we might be committing ourselves, and I think it is better to keep clear.

1631. You said you would be able to pay the same rent as a farmer?—I am saying that yet. There are some farms on the Macleod estate that we are very willing to pay for a crofter township the same penny on each acre.

1632. *Mr Macleod.*—You told us about the Struanmore crofters, but you did not tell us the rent that each pays at the present time. What is the rent of each croft?—£3, with rates. We got a reduction of 10s.

1633. They were £3, 10s., and they are now £3?—Yes.

1634. What is the reason you have for being in doubt as to the club-farm principle, is it because the Ullinish club-farm has not been a success?—I don't think I should answer that question, because I have no right as a private man to go into the affairs of the Ullinish tenants.

1635. Quite so. Have you any objection to give me the information as to why you doubt whether the club-farm system would be a success?—It would be a success if each crofter were responsible for his own rent, and that his sheep and cattle or anything that he possessed would not be sold out—my neighbours would not be sold out if I failed.

1636. So that the objection you have to the club-farm system does not arise from anything that is inherent in that system, but from the fact that you are afraid that the rent question would come in and make difficulties,—that is to say, that if each tenant was paying direct to the landlord you would have no doubt the club-farm system would be a success?—It would give more justice to the stock, and save expense of dyking and fencing.

1637. And the only reason why you doubted the system was that you thought it would entail each tenant being responsible for his neighbour's rent?—I daresay that is cross-examination, and I want as a private man to keep clear of all these things.

1638. But you have no objection to state that it is the rent question, and not anything inherent in the club-farm system?—There is nothing in the club-farm system on a right principle to make it other than a success.

1639. You said that when you got these crofts at Struanmore, for the first five years you had good crops?—Splendid crops.

1640. And you have no doubt that if the arable land in those old townships were broken up you would have good crops too?—For a good many years to come, because the tenants would be in a position to manure their crofts with the dung of their cattle.

1641. So that you think that for the first few years there would be a larger crop given by the holdings than probably a few years afterwards?—Well, in reference to our own township, we have only the one cow, and within these five years we were reaping the benefit of the strength of the land; but only having one cow to manure that, we are not able to keep it up.

1642. But my point is that there is no danger that your crops would fail?—No danger at all, by having as many cattle as I refer to, and a croft of the size I have mentioned; it would yield a good crop.

1643. You said that most of the tenants, who are presently in Struanmore, would not be able to take new holdings without assistance. Do you think that if they get assistance they would be able to repay any loan that might be advanced to them, with interest, within a reasonable number of years?—I have no doubt about that; there might be an odd man that might fail, but such is the case everywhere.

1644. But generally speaking?—Generally speaking, I have no doubt about it.

1645. And you would be quite prepared yourself if you took a new holding to repay any loan that might be made?—Yes, on a right principle again; 2½ per cent. interest, and so many years to pay it. I have no doubt but such would suit well.

1646. *Mr Maccallum.*—About ten years ago, you had not the crofts at Struanmore—you had just houses without land?—We possessed a small corner off our present holdings.

1647. And the houses in that corner, by whom were they built—by the proprietor or by the tenants?—By the sub-tenants who possessed that corner of the Ullinish farm.

1648. And they got no assistance to build these houses originally?—Originally, to the best of my knowledge, they did not.

1649. Then you got crofts; and have these crofts proved a benefit to you?—A mercy to us.

1650. You think, if you had got more than you got of land, you would be still more benefited?—More so.

1651. You stated also that some five new houses had been put up. That was done without assistance?—Without assistance from the landlord.

1652. Would these houses have been built if you had not got the land?—We would not be allowed to build them.

1653. For new holdings you say you would pay a rent corresponding to the rent paid on large farms. Do you think you are paying higher than that just now?—It is our judgment that we are.

1654. And the crofters generally are paying at a higher rate than large farms?—Yes.

1655. You are alluding to the farms that are very large, such as Drynoch, not to medium farms. Is Drynoch a very large farm?—A very large farm.

1656. And you think you could pay a rent corre-

truan, Bracadale, kye.

Duncan Mackinnon.

sponding to such a farm as that?—I refer to that farm.

1657. You look to that more than to such holdings as Ullinish, that are not so large?—We don't want to covet any man's land.

1658. But is it your opinion that such farms as Ullinish, that are not so large, are higher rented than the very large farms, generally speaking—that medium sized farms are higher rented than the very large farms?—According to my judgment they are.

1659. And is it a fact that the rent of Ullinish now is £160?—I beg your pardon, gentlemen. It was £30 that this gentleman told me, not £60, as I said before by mistake. I beg to be excused.

1660. You are quite sure?—Yes, it just occurred to me just now. There are two of them that have one of these shares between them, and each of them pays £15.

1661. Those houses that have been put up on your crofts, which you built without assistance, are they of a character that would suit new holdings such as you have been looking forward to?—Yes.

1662. *Mr Munro.*—You have told us that if you got your croft extended to 15 acres you would be in a better position to cultivate it properly. Do I understand from that that you would be able to adopt some of the more modern implements, such as ploughing?—Yes.

1663. And, with the assistance of the additional cattle which you would be enabled to maintain on the farm, you could have a proper quantity of manure?—Yes.

1664. And cultivate the soil properly?—Yes.

1665. I think also you told us that the quality of the grain you produce was so indifferent that you used it mainly for the feeding of the beasts?—As a rule we do.

1666. Can you not at present make oatmeal of the grain you make on the farm?—As a rule we have to send south at least every second or third year for new seed.

1667. You are aware, no doubt, that large quantities of oatmeal have to be imported annually into Skye?—Yes, now.

1668. Well, supposing you got a croft of the size you have been speaking of, and had more modern implements of cultivation, would you be enabled to produce a better quality of grain, and thereby save the importation of oatmeal?—Yes.

1669. And I suppose that answer applies, in your opinion, to the whole of Skye?—To the whole of Skye.

1670. So that under the existing system of small crofts you are unable to cultivate them as they ought to be cultivated?—We are not.

1671. But if you had the larger holding, you could?—We could.

1672. You have spoken about advances to help you to build your necessary houses and steadings for the enlarged crofts,—what amount of money do you estimate would be required to enable you to build these houses? Take a holding of 15 acres, with 60 of outrun, would £60 be sufficient?—No.

1673. I mean with the assistance of your own labour?—Well, it would be a great help to build a house something similar to the new houses that were built in our township. But there are other outside houses which would have to be built very substantially in order to come up to the present mode of matters.

1674. Could you not manage now to build these houses, gradually removing from your present croft to the enlarged one?—If we got our new holdings within the 5 miles that I referred to, it would be a great saving for them to build their houses, when they could come back to their old holdings. I refer to the Struanmore township and the other sub-tenants.

1675. You are perfectly satisfied that if you got an advance of money necessary to enable you to build these houses and to acquire your large croft, you would be able to repay it?—Yes.

1676. With interest?—Yes.

1677. In how many years do you think you could repay it. Thirty?—To be sure of it; leave it just at that.

Struan, Bracadale, Skye.

Duncan Mackinnon.

1678. *The Chairman.*—What rent do you pay yourself?—£3, with rates.

1679. And do you live at Struanmore?—At Struanmore.

1680. What extent of land do you hold?—The outrun.

1681. Were you dealt with by the Crofters Commission.—Yes.

1682. Give us the extent of your arable as nearly as you can?—About 72 acres; there are 18 crofts.

1683. Do they average about 3 acres arable?—In making it up to-day, I brought it out at 4, but I am not certain.

1684. That is arable and pasture?—No, only arable.

1685. I think we may take it as averaging a little over 3 acres arable. Have you outrun besides?—There is 172 acres of common grazing.

1686. But has your croft attached to it any outrun besides the arable exclusively belonging to the croft?—Yes.

1687. How much?—It is common to the 18 crofts.

1688. Suppose these holdings you have been talking of were established, would the crofters of Struanmore be favourable to the adoption of the Grazings Act to regulate common pasture if they got common pasture? Do you know about the Grazings Act?—Very little.

1689. It has not been adopted anywhere in this locality that you know of?—I don't know about it.

1690. It is an Act of Parliament which enables the Crofters Commission to frame rules and regulations for the management of a common grazing by a committee of the crofters, the committee taking charge of the grazing and appointing a shepherd if a shepherd is required, and seeing to the management of the sheep stock from the beginning to the end of the year, and the division of the profits if there are any profits to divide?—Such is the case among people in our own day.

Questions suggested by Mr J. T. Mackenzie, Factor for Macleod of Macleod.

1691. Can you tell us the substance of the petition that you have referred to?—It contained a request that the eight crofters present when the petition was written out should get what lies of the Ullinish farm eastward from the old margin of Struanmore, and that Macleod of Macleod knew that we never went in for the 'no rent' policy, and we would each of us pay our rent; and that in asking our present request we did not want to rob Macleod of Macleod of anything, and that we were willing to pay our rents for six months, and take the stock presently on the ground at a valuation.

1692. *Mr J. T. Mackenzie.*—As I understand the petition, it was a request for the portion of the Ullinish farm which is pastured by the five tenants he has already referred to; and the next question I would wish to put is,—if he expected the prayer of the petition to be answered, what would he intend to make of these five tenants if the land were taken from them?—*Witness.* I am able enough to answer that question. I have it on good authority that there are two of the present tenants of Ullinish who are very willing to get rid of their part of the farm. We were led to understand that it was in the market, and it was that that led us to make the request. We had no desire to deprive the Ullinish tenants of their rights. But if these two left, then if we got our request, the other three that remained would be able to take up the remainder of the Ullinish farm.

1693. *Mr J. T. Mackenzie.*—Did my letter to you, acknowledging receipt of the petition, not state that no part of the Ullinish farm was on the market?—*Witness.* You said in your note that it was not on the market, and very likely it would

Struan, Bracadale, Skye.

Duncan Mackinnon.

not be this year; but that was after we had lodged our petition.

1694. *Mr J. T. Mackenzie.*—The witness stated a short time ago that the ground at Struanmore, which they now occupy, is quite exhausted from overcropping.—*Witness.* Almost, not quite exhausted.

1695. *Mr J. T. Mackenzie.*—I now wish to ask whether the Struanmore people have or had at any time been selling the corn off their farm to people away out of the district altogether?—*Witness.* I answered that question to the Commissioners already,—to the Royal Commission.

1696. *The Chairman.*—Just answer it again to Mr Mackenzie.—*Witness.* There might be an odd stack of corn sold out from the township, and sold when these people were on the verge of starvation, and half-starved their own cattle in order that life might be kept in themselves and their families. I am certain sure of what I say, and I don't speak against a factor, a landlord, or a crofter.

1697. *Mr J. T. Mackenzie.*—Is it known to the witness and to many who are better versed in farming, that it is against the common rule of every estate to take corn off one farm and put it on to another, because that removes the means of manuring the ground?——

1698. *The Chairman.*—I think you need not answer that question.—*Witness.* I have no hesitation in doing it.

1699. *The Chairman.*—Well, do so.—*Witness.* If we had an outrun that would keep an additional cow, that would convert these odd stacks of corn that might be sold out into dung, we would be only benefited by it. But when we have not got that, then we must put it to the best advantage, and that is to dispose of it at its best value.—*Mr H. V. Maccallum, Solicitor, Inverness.* I should like to put one question.—*The Chairman.* Are you representing Macleod of Macleod?—*Mr Maccallum.* I represent the Highland Property Defence Association, of which Macleod of Macleod is a member. —*The Chairman.* What is your question?

1700. *Mr Maccallum.*—In reply to your Lordship, witness said that in none of the townships which he mentioned were the crofters able either to stock or to build. In reply to Mr Macleod he said that if they got a loan, he thought through time they would be able to pay back that. The question I wish to put through your Lordship is this: Supposing he got the loan, is he in a position to stock the holding?—*Witness.* As a rule, and according to my judgment, the crofters, when they get this loan, do not look on it as a help to make the necessary buildings, but likewise, if they cannot get the loan without taking over the stock, they look for that loan for both stock and building.

1701. *Mr Munro.*—Mr Mackenzie seemed to suggest that there was a complaint against the crofters, inasmuch as they were in the habit of selling the corn off their crofts occasionally. Now are you aware that that is a habit that prevails elsewhere as well as in Skye among the farmers in the lower parts of Scotland?—Yes.

1702. If you had a proper croft, and were enabled to pursue a proper system of tillage, am I right in saying that you would be in a position to have the grain now used by your cattle converted into meal for your family?—Yes.

1703. So that it is owing to the disadvantageous circumstances in which you are placed that you are at present compelled to sell off your corn occasionally?—To a great extent.

Donald Campbell.

DONALD CAMPBELL, Struanmore, Bracadale (65).
(Examined in Gaelic through an Interpreter.)

1704. *The Chairman.*—You are a crofter at Struanmore?—Yes.

1705. Settled there ten years ago?—Yes.

Struan, Bracadale, Skye.

1706. Did you hear Mr Mackinnon's statement to us?—Yes.

1707. And do you concur in the evidence he gave? —Yes.

Donald Campbell.

1708. Do you wish to add anything to his statement?—Not much; I have nothing in addition to what he said.

1709. If there is anything special that you would like to tell us, we should be glad to have it.—Only this, that I remember the people being evicted from these places that Mr Mackinnon spoke of.

1710. How long ago?—Fifty years ago.

1711. *Mr Macleod.*—Do you remember the circumstances of the people before they were evicted?—Yes.

1712. Were they in comfortable circumstances?—Yes; those in the glen had horses and cattle and sheep, and others had two cows each.

1713. They were more comfortable than they are in Struanmore?—Yes, they had as much land as they could till.

1714. *Mr Shaw Stewart.*—Was not that the time of the great famine?—Yes, that is the year.

1715. And did not Macleod of Macleod do all he could for his tenants at that time?—He put out every man of them he could from Bracadale to Glendale.

1716. But did he not spend a great deal of money in buying food and seed for his people through the famine?—I don't remember that.

Hugh Macdonald.

HUGH MACDONALD, Struanmore, Bracadale (69).
(Examined in Gaelic through an Interpreter.)

1717. *The Chairman.*—Did you hear Mr Mackinnon's statement—Yes.

1718. Do you concur in the evidence and the information he gave?—Yes, every word.

1719. Would you like to make any addition to it yourself?—I don't know.

1720. If there is anything special, or anything you think he forgot, we should be glad to hear it.—I have nothing special to say about the land.

1721. *Mr Maccallum.*—Do you know that the people were sent from Bracadale to Glendale?—Yes, I saw them in the Glen before they went to Glendale at all.

1722. Why were they sent to Glendale?—To clear the place for the factor, who took their land in their stead.

1723. Could they get work at Glendale?—No, except fishing, which they did not know anything about.

1724. They were not accustomed to fishing?—No, never; they were born and brought up in the Glen.

1725. And the only employment they could get at Glendale was fishing?—Yes, if they knew how to do it. I don't know if they ever fished.

1726. *Mr Munro.*—Are you now a fisherman?—I was fishing many a time.

1727. Do you practise fishing still?—Very little.

1728. *Mr Shaw Stewart.*—About fifty years ago, if there were tenants evicted, were there not new crofts formed in Glendale?—I don't know, but they were put out of the place they were in.

1729. Did you never hear that new crofts were formed in Glendale in 1845?—Yes, I heard that before; bits given them.

1730. And the deep sea fishing encouraged by Macleod at that time?—Yes, but they knew nothing about that.

Mr J. G. Mackay, Portree.—By some misunderstanding the delegates on this side of the loch have left out the farm of Drynoch. I would like your lordship to ask witness about the townships that did exist on the farm of Drynoch.

1731. *The Chairman.*—You know the farm of Drynoch?—Yes.

1732. Do you remember townships, or a township, there?—Yes.

1733. Give us the names?—Meadle, Somerdale, Crossbreck, Glenbracadale, Glencrossal, Boust, Achalean, Fearann-nan-cailleach, Amar, Achadh-a'-char, Crossal, Beinn-dubh.

1734. Do you remember all these townships yourself?—I remember some of them being inhabited, but the places themselves will show; the remains of the houses are there yet.

1735. How many families in your recollection resided on Drynoch?—I cannot say; I was so young at the time.

1736. Is it possible to trace the evidence of the townships you have mentioned upon the farm?—Yes, I will take the Commission to every one of these places.

1737. Can you give us the locality of each one of these townships you have mentioned?—Yes, I will show you the sites of the houses.

1738. *Mr Maccallum.*—The crofts at Glendale to which the people went from the glens were spoken of as new holdings made for them. Do you know if these were made out of a crofting township that was then occupied by crofters?—They got new holdings, not among other crofters.

1739. Did they remain long in that place?—Some of them died there, and some of them were cleared out from there again.

1740. Did some go to the township of Milovaig?—Some of them are in Milovaig yet.

1741. And that is a crofter township?—Yes.

1742. Did Macleod build houses for them there?—No, never.

1743. Was the number of the crofters doubled by the number going there from Bracadale?—I cannot tell that.

DONALD MACDONALD, Ose, Bracadale (75). Donald Macdonald.
(Examined in Gaelic through an Interpreter.)

1744. *The Chairman.*—Did you hear Mr Mackinnon's opening statement?—Yes.

1745. And you quite concur in his evidence?—Yes, and he might have said more too.

1746. Is there anything that you would like to add?—He said enough, but I could tell a good deal more of what I have seen and heard.

1747. *Mr Macleod.*—Are you a crofter?—Yes.

1748. What is your rent?—£2, 7s. and rates.

1749. Was it reduced?—No.

1750. You were not before the Commission?—No.

1751. To whom do you pay your rent?—To Macleod.

1752. Were you born at Ose?—I was born at Ebost.

1753. Why did you leave there?—I don't remember being in Ebost; my father left there and went to Ose.

1754. And do you remember when those townships that were spoken about were peopled?—Yes, and I remember many of the people occupying them.

1755. Were they in more comfortable circumstances than the people are to-day?—Yes, they were better than the sort of tenants who are left to-day.

1756. Had they more stock than they have to-day?—Yes, sheep, and cattle and horses; they were not under the necessity of buying food or drink.

1757. What arable land have you got?—I have not much; it was not measured.

1758. How many bolls have you sown?—Sometimes I sow 2½ bolls.

1759. Can you tell us what stock you have got?—Two cows; that is all, except hens.

1760. No sheep?—No, never had a sheep; I am in good hopes I will have them now.

1761. *Mr Shaw Stewart.*—At the time you speak of when they were more comfortable, was there any reclaiming of land or fencing going on?—Yes, they were doing that, and they were enclosing their ground with dykes, not with wire fence, as now.

1762. Was there not a good deal of work going in the way of trenching ground which Macleod was reclaiming from the waste?—I don't think there was; but the sheep farmers were certainly draining.

1763. So that there was a little work going, and wages for labour?—Yes, there was. The wages were not much. Struan, Bracadale. Skye.

1764. They were not entirely dependent upon what they got from their crofts?—The crofts would not do much for them. Donald Macdonald.

1765. *Mr Maccallum.*—Were the houses more comfortable then than the houses which they built in the corner to which they were sent?—The houses that they had served their purpose very well.

1766. Were they better than those they put up in the corners to which they were put?—To tell the truth, I myself have built three houses in succession, and each house was better than the one before, but the expense was entirely my own.

1767. Had they separate byres in the olden times?—In some cases.

1768. *Mr J. T. Mackenzie.*—The witness has told us that he was in the habit of sowing 2½ bolls of corn. I should like him to say what return he had from those 2½ bolls.—I sowed that quantity last year, and I bought this year a quarter of oats to sow the ground. I did not make a particle of meal last year, and I sold no part of the crop.

1769. *Question repeated.*—I never measured it, but I am thinking it would be quite enough if I got back the quantity that I sowed.

JOHN MACLEAN, Ebost, Bracadale (38)—*examined.* John Maclean.

1770. *The Chairman.*—You are a crofter at Ebost?—Yes.

1771. What rent do you pay?—£2, 10s.

1772. Were you before the Crofters Commission?—Yes.

1773. Recently?—Yes.

1774. And have you heard their decision yet?—Not yet.

1775. You heard the whole of Mackinnon's statement?—Yes.

1776. And do you concur in it?—I concur in every word.

1777. Do you wish to make any addition to that statement?—No, I have no addition to make, with the exception of this. There is one township on the farm of Drynoch that has been omitted—Glenvidigill.

1778. Are you able to speak of these townships of your own knowledge?—No.

1779. Was there a tenant on the farm of Drynoch?—No; he was a sub-tenant on Talisker farm.

1780. Have you anything more to say?—No.

1781. *Mr Gordon.*—Are there any crofters in this neighbourhood who would willingly take a small patch of ground at the seaside and prosecute fishing if they had a good house?—I believe there are, but I am not going to give that as the opinion of the whole.

1782. Do you think there are a few who would take to fishing naturally as an occupation?—I have no doubt there may be a few.

1783. *The Chairman.*—Mr Gordon means, who would live by the sea and not by the croft?—Not at present.

1784. As fishermen occupying a small cottage with a patch of potato ground?—There may be a few.

1785. The object of my question is to see if we can ascertain the number of applications for new holdings?—I believe they will all go in for new holdings.

1786. Taking to fishing as an industry, I mean?—Yes, I believe there are; but at the same time the means of getting the fish to the southern markets is so slow that the fish is quite useless before it gets there.

1787. Is there a harbour in which you can land fish?—In good weather.

1788. But not for certain?—No.

1789. Does the steamer call round here?—Occasionally.

1790. Not regularly?—There is a weekly steamer and a mail boat, but very irregular.

1791. *Mr Munro.*—I suppose you would prefer more land to fishing?—Yes.

1792. *Mr Macleod.*—Would the quantity of fish

Struan, Bracadale, Skye.

John Maclean.

that could be got here pay for a steamer to call?—Not without a good many fishing.

1793. And do you think that if there were fishermen here they would get the fish? Is there fish to be got?—Yes.

1794. And do you fish now?—On a small scale.

1795. Are there any who fish on a large scale?—No.

1796. And yet the fish is there?—The fish is there.

1797. There is no regular white fishing?—Yes.

1798. As well as herring?—Yes.

1799. Is the reason there is so little fishing done the difficulty of transport?—As a rule.

Mr J. G. Mackay.—I wish to bring out that there is really no herring fishing on this side of the coast.

1800. *The Chairman.*—What is the extent of herring fishing on this side of Skye?—It is very limited indeed. In an occasional year we may get a haul, but not as a rule.

1801. Do they go away to the herring fishing from this part of Skye?—Very few.

1802. Are there any big boats on this side of Skye?—None.

1803. What is the largest keel of boat that you are accustomed to here?—About 18 feet keel.

1804. You have a boat, I suppose?—A small boat.

1805. Fourteen feet?—About that.

1806. But there are plenty of white fish in the sea?—Plenty. There was a boat's crew from Portsoy here last winter, and they prosecuted the fishing very successfully. But the steamer called so very irregularly that the fish was sometimes useless, and they had to throw it over the side.

1807. Do the crofters and cottars here get as many fish as they need for their own purposes?—As a rule they have no fishing here.

1808. Do they not go out to catch fish for their own use?—A little in summer time.

1809. *Suggested by Mr H. V. Maccallum.*—Suppose facilities were afforded for the transit of fish to the southern market, are there a good many in this locality who would be satisfied with small patches of ground and to live by the sea as an industry?—Oh, there are a few.

1810. Only a few?—Yes.

1811. The inclination is rather for a self-supporting holding?—Yes.

1812. *Suggested by Mr Myles Macinnes.*—Do you think a man who intended to live by the sea could do so all the year round, supposing he had proper boats and gearing?—I should answer that question by the evidence of the Portsoy fishermen last year, who said they could make a living on this side of the coast.

1813. Yes, if they could transport their fish?—Yes.

Donald Maclean.

DONALD MACLEAN, Carbost, Minginish (32).

1814. *The Chairman.*—Are you a crofter at Carbost?—A cottar.

1815. Do you pay any rent?—£4 to Talisker the tacksman.

1816. Do you work at the Distillery?—Yes.

1817. What wage have you?—£1 a week.

1818. Have you any written statement?—The person who was entrusted with the written statement left it behind; but I can make a verbal statement.

1819. We shall be happy to hear it?—It is the desire of the people to be reinstated in the townships from which they were evicted, and, if necessary, I can give the names of the townships on the tack of Talisker.

1820. Give us their names, please?—Talisker, Scalpatote, Ardhoelmore, Ardhoelbeg, Fiscavaig, Ardthreic, Neille, Lagmore, Ferrinlea, Gortanfhirich, Buaile-nan-clach, Carbostbeg, Tuasdail-iochdarach, Borlin, Leachd-a'-Chleirich, Cnocloisgte.

1821. Are you giving these as the names of townships, or the names of individual holdings?—The names of townships in which a number of people stayed.

1822. Can you tell us the number of families?—In some of them I can, but the statement which will be sent on contains them all.

Struan, Bracadale, Skye.

1823. Are these lands fit for occupation now by crofters?—Yes. There is no better land in the island of Skye.

Donald Maclean.

1824. Are there a number of crofters anxious to get holdings on these lands?—Yes; the poor remnant that was left of them.

1825. How many crofters are anxious to get holdings on this land?—They are not crofters, but cottars. Every family in which there is a male head.

1826. And how many will there be altogether?—About thirty families.

1827. What size of holdings do they desire?—As much land as would keep four cows and a horse, and fifty or sixty sheep.

1828. Do you mean the sheep to be kept in common, or sheep upon separate grazings?—Just as it would suit best.

1829. Which would they prefer?—To the best of my knowledge, and as I have heard the opinion expressed, it is a joint stock they desire to share.

1830. Would they be able to stock the crofts if they got them?—They are not able to stock them right off.

1831. But could they do so in course of time without assistance?—If they got assistance it would be better; it would put them on their feet sooner.

1832. Both for the stock and the buildings?—Yes.

1833. Of these thirty families, have a number of them employment in connection with the distillery?—Three or four.

1834. Have these families right to seaware or peats at present?—Yes, at present they have.

1835. What rents do they pay, what is the average?—£4 or £3. I understand that those of them who are working for the tacksman himself get the land for £3.

1836. How far is this land distant from the present places of occupancy?—We, the township of Fernilea, are right in the middle of them, and our township is worse off than any of them.

1837. In what respect?—That the soil in our township is worse than the rest, and that accounts for our being sent there.

1838. It is exhausted now?—There is nobody living that can tell when the particular bit that we are working began to be cultivated first; it has been turned often since then.

1839. Would any of these families be willing to take small patches of ground on the seashore, and devote their time to fishing?—They are not given to fishing at all.

1840. They want self-supporting holdings?—Yes.

1841. How far are they from the sea at present?—We are beside the sea at present.

1842. And is the white fishing there good, if it was prosecuted?—We have herring sometimes.

1843. And have you plenty of white fish?—White fish sometimes too.

1844. Have some of the families there got boats of their own?—A few have boats.

1845. And what rents do you think would they be able to pay?—We are not judges, but according to the rents which our tacksman is paying, such a holding would not be above £6 or £7. The tacksman has about 12,000 acres in his own holding.

1846. It is on that ground that these old townships stood, is it?—Yes, and I believe there are 700 acres of arable land in these 12,000 acres.

1847. What stock of sheep does it carry?—I am not sure, but I think it is 10,000. It used to carry 10,000, but the ground is deteriorated now, and it may be less.

1848. What rent does it pay, do you know?—I believe it is £800.

1849. Do you know how many pair of horses he keeps?—I believe he keeps two pair.

1850. Is the land under lease at present?—Yes.

1851. For a term of years?—Yes.

1852. Does the steamer call there?—Two steamers a week.

1853. What is the name of the port?—Carbost, at the distillery.

1854. Is the desire among the persons whom you represent very strong to get additional holdings?—Yes, and I believe they have a sevenfold reason.

1855. How many cottars are there?—Eighteen, some of them having as little as ¼ acre.

1856. What is the average of their rents?—Those who have cattle pay £4. I don't know what those who have not cattle pay.

1857. Are there no crofters there?—They are all sub-tenants.

1858. No cottar, I take it from what you say, pays a higher rent than £4?—Not now.

1859. Do all these cottars get employment from the farm in one form or another?—Not one of them, except two; unless at sheep shearing time.

1860. What do these two work at?—Draining to the farmer.

1861. How do the others live?—Just the earning throughout the kingdom; the common way for them to live is to leave the place and obtain wages elsewhere.

1862. Is it from that labour that they pay their rent, and not from the outcome of the holding?—The tacksman himself is in the habit of buying the stirks from them, and that helps them.

1863. They get along partly from the prices of the stirks, and partly from the labour they do elsewhere?—Yes.

1864. I suppose the tacksman gives them as good prices for the stirks as they can reasonably hope to get?—They are not complaining about the prices.

1865. *Mr Shaw Stewart.*—What wages do they get at shearing time?—Two shillings a day, and their food.

1866. And how long does the shearing time last?—Not above seven days.

1867. How many were employed at the distillery besides yourself?—Three others get constant work there.

1868. Do some of the others get occasional work there?—Yes, when a vessel with coal or with barley comes to the port, they get employment unloading; but that does not last long.

1869. How often is labour required for a cargo during the year?—There are not above twenty cargoes in the year.

1870. I want to know if the four men regularly employed at the distillery desire to get new holdings?—Yes, they are desirous of having new holdings.

1871. Could they work their holdings and do the work at the distillery too?—No, but they have no certainty of how long the distillery work would last.

1872. But they wish to give up the £1 a week they are getting now for the chance of making a better livelihood on the holding?—They are not all getting £1 a week; some of them are down to 15s. or 17s.

1873. But they would prefer to give that up on the chance of making a better livelihood from new holdings if they got them?—Yes, they would, without doubt. They are not sure but they may be put out of the distillery any day.

1874. Then if the distillery went, they would not be able to sell their stirks in the neighbourhood?—The distillery has nothing to do with the buying of the stirks; it is the tacksman.

1875. The tacksman is quite separate from the distillery?—Yes.

1876. But still, if the new holdings were made out of the tacksman's land, the tacksman would no longer be there?—If that was the case it would give good crofts to those that were left behind.

1877. Where would they sell their stock?—There is a market a Portree frequently.

1878. Have you any reason to believe the lease of the tacksman is likely to be given up?—I know nothing about it.

1879. Would the land that you describe as so bad be included in the new holdings?—I wish to say this on behalf of those from whom I am a delegate, that they would like to have the land that surrounds their present holdings, because their houses are on it, and it would be easier for them to get at. Struan, Bracadale, Skye. Donald Maclean.

1880. Yes, I understand the houses are there; but if the land is so bad it would cost a good deal of labour and money to improve it while you were ploughing the rest of it?—There is good land as near as within a mile of us.

1881. They would not like to leave their present holdings although the land is bad all round it?—Yes, they would leave if they got an opportunity of doing so; but what makes them desire to remain where they are is that if they got land in addition to what they have already, they could easily get on.

1882. Even although the land was some distance away?—There is good land that they could get on either side of them.

1883. How far off?—Quite close; there is only a march dyke between.

1884. How many yards?—The march dyke completely fences us in; the walls of some of our houses are built on the march dyke, and the good land is just beyond that.

1885. Arable or pasture land?—All sorts, in plenty.

1886. Now under the tacksman?—Yes.

1887. Can you show that land to the Commission if they visit your place?—Yes, with pleasure.

1888. *Mr Munro.*—Do you know anything about the farm of Glenbrittle?—It is in the neighbourhood of us.

1889. Do you know anything about the evictions that have taken place there some years ago?—There were evictions on the tack on which I am myself, as well as some other place.

1890. Are your father and mother still alive?—My mother is.

1891. Does your mother remember any evictions taking place there?—Yes, well.

1892. Does she remember the case of 35 evictions taking place in one day?—Yes, and to the best of my recollection she said it would be about thirty-five or forty years ago.

1893. *The Chairman.*—I want to put this point to you. You are making £1 a week. Now, suppose you got a holding which required all your time, and therefore must take you away from your present employment and deprive you of your present wage, do you think it would be a wise thing to venture on that new holding and give up your present wage?—I would wish to tell the Commission that I am only engaged for a fortnight where I am, but if I got a croft I would have the croft all the days of my life, and my family would have it after me; and after some time they should have the croft for nothing too.

1894. How long have you been in the employment of the distillery?—Eight years.

1895. In constant employment for eight years?—No; some parts of the year the distillery is not working, and I then go south to work.

1896. Did you go south last year?—Not last year.

1897. Or the year before?—No.

1898. Then you have been in constant employment from the distillery for several years past, at least for the greater part of the year?—Yes.

1899. But you would be quite prepared to give up that if you got a holding large enough to meet your purpose?—Yes, I am quite ready to give up the work any day for such a holding, and I hope it will not be long before I get it.

1900. *Suggested by Mr J. G. Mackay.*—Do you remember the rent of Talisker farm in 1881?—I heard that it was £1500.

ALEXANDER MATHESON, Carbost, Minginish (62)—*examined.* Alexander Matheson.

1901. *The Chairman.*—You are a Carbost man?—Yes.

Struan, Bracadale, Skye.

Alexander Matheson.

1902. What rent do you pay?—£4.

1903. How long have you been at Carbost?—Twenty-three years.

1904. Where were you before?—At Fiscavaig, at the mouth of the loch.

1905. Did you come up of your own accord?—I came along with my father-in-law.

1906. What brought him up?—They were removed to make room for sheep.

1907. Are you anxious to get out of your present holding, and get another holding?—A larger one.

1908. You heard the evidence of the previous witnesses; do you desire to add anything to that?—No, nothing in particular; I only want a larger holding.

1909. A holding you can live by?—Just that.

1910. If there is anything you would like to add to what has been said before, we shall be glad to hear it?—Nothing but what has been said; we are sub-tenants paying rent to the tacksman, and we feel keenly that we are excluded from the Act.

1911. Do you get work from the tacksman?—No.

1912. Have you any work with the distillery?—No, I have no connection with it; I sell groceries.

1913. You keep a shop, do you?—Yes.

1914. Who are your principal customers?—The people of Carbost and all the neighbourhood.

1915. Do you hold any license?—For tobacco.

1916. Is £4 the rent of the whole subjects you possess?—Yes.

1917. No separate rent for the shop?—No.

1918. Then I suppose if you got a holding you could put the necessary stock upon it?—Yes, to a certain extent.

1919. And you could build a new house with a steading?—I have built a new house already.

1920. In your present place?—Yes.

1921. At your own cost?—At my own cost.

1922. What did you lay out upon it?—I did it by degrees.

1923. How much have you laid out by degrees?—I would say about £80.

1924. And you could build a new house if you got a new holding?—Yes, I could make it.

1925. *Mr Shaw Stewart.*—I suppose if you had a number of people living round about you in better circumstances it would improve your grocery business?—Certainly.

1926. Would you still look to cultivating your holding, or would you give most time to extending your grocery business?—I could cultivate a middle sized croft.

1927. As well as attend to the business?—Yes.

1928. What do you call a middle sized croft, 15 acres, or less?—Between 15 and 20 acres, with 6 or 7 cows and a horse.

1929. *Mr Gordon.*—Hove you a horse just now?—I have what I call a jennet, a kind of mule.

1930. Do you use that for travelling through the country with a cart?—No.

1931. You do not travel?—No.

1932. Have you any cows just now?—One cow.

1933. *Mr Maccallum.*—Can you tell us about Glenbrittle farm, and the townships that were on it?—Yes. It was cleared in my own day with Satran, and Grula and Craiknish.

1934. Do you remember any more?—There were a number of townships cleared early in the century.

1935. There are evident signs on the farm that it was cultivated?—Yes, and the ruins of the houses are still there, and the marches of their crofts and boundaries of their townships are still visible.

1936. In whose hands is the farm of Glenbrittle now?—It is in the hands of the proprietor.

1937. It is evident from the ruins on it that it was thickly populated?—Very thickly populated.

1938. Do you think it is capable of maintaining a large population still?—Unquestionably it supported a large population before.

1939. Is there a church there?—The church is in ruins. It was supported by Queen Anne's bounty, and it went in ruins at the disruption; but the manse is still up, and the shepherd lives in it.

Struan, Bracadale, Skye.

Alexander Matheson.

1940. And there was a minister regularly officiating in it?—Yes, I remember him; the man that baptised me, Donald Macdonald.

1941. When did he leave, or was he put away?—He left of his own accord. After the disruption there was no congregation for him.

1942. There were not people in the place to attend church?—Oh, plenty; but they all left.

1943. And there has been no minister there since the disruption?—No.

1944. Is there a population there that could use the church?—No, very few; there are only three or four cottars in Glenbrittle.

1945. *Mr Macleod.*—Can you give us a full list of the townships that are in Glenbrittle, or is there any other witness who can do so?—There is another witness who can do that better.

1946. Would you be prepared to show us the townships you know?—Yes, any time.

JOHN CAMPBELL, Fiscavaig, Minginish (60). (Examined in Gaelic through an Interpreter.)

John Campbell.

1947. *The Chairman.*—Are you a crofter or a cottar?—A cottar.

1948. Where do you live?—At Fiscavaig.

1949. What rent do you pay?—£4.

1950. To the tacksman of Talisker?—Yes.

1951. Do you get work from him?—No, I go south to railway work sometimes.

1952. Have you been listening to the evidence of the previous witnesses?—Yes.

1953. And do you agree with that evidence?—Yes.

1954. Do you wish to make any addition to it?—No; it is no good telling all we have seen.

1955. Do you remember the names of the townships that were cleared in Glenbrittle?—Yes.

1956. The whole of them?—Yes, but I don't remember the actual evictions.

1957. Give us the names of the places?—Rudha-an-Dunain, Buaile'-n-tuir, Glenbrittle, Crackinish, Brunal, Gruile, Brae-Eynort, Carbostmore, Trithean, Satran, Mearcadal, Buaile-Shuain, Salachary.

1958. Were these townships cleared about fifty or sixty years ago?—I myself saw some of these townships about forty years ago, but the most of them were cleared before that.

1959. Are the places where these townships stood suitable for cultivation now?—Yes, fine townships.

1960. *Mr Shaw Stewart.*—Were the people comfortable on these holdings before they left them?—Yes.

1961. And it is all good land?—Yes, good land. There is a great deal that was in cultivation at that time gone under heather now.

1962. But is it in a sheep farm now?—Yes.

1963. When you say the people were living comfortably, were they getting better prices for things in those days than they get now?—I don't think the markets were very good at all; they were getting good out of the soil.

1964. Just living on it, or selling the produce?—Yes, the stock would pay the rent, and they had a good deal of land, and were getting much good out of it. They could kill a sheep then; nobody can kill a sheep now.

1965. Why?—We have no sheep. If we killed a sheep now we would get to prison.

1966. But they had not all sheep in those days?—I believe they had.

1967. *Mr Maccallum.*—How do you account for there being no delegates from Glenbrittle?—I don't know.

1968. Do you think it is because there are no people there?—There are very few people, but there are some.

1969. Are they scattered?—Yes.

1970. At the time of the disruption was there a fair number there?—Yes, there was a good number. The rules were so strict that if a young man married

he dared not show his head within his father's house, and of course he would have to clear out and leave the place.

1971. And the reason the church was left vacant was that the minister left the Established Church?—I don't think that was the reason.

1972. Was there any minister in it after the disruption?—Yes, in the Established Church.

1973. *Mr Macleod.*—Who has got the farm of Glenbrittle now?—Macleod of Macleod.

1974. How long is it since it has been in the proprietor's hands?—Seven or eight years.

1975. Who was the last tacksman?—Donald Cameron, Glenbrittle.

1976. What became of him?—He went to Inverness.

1977. *Suggested by Mr J. G. Mackay.*—What rent did Cameron pay?—I believe he paid £1800.

1978. And at what rent does the farm stand now?—£1000 in the Valuation Roll.

JOHN MACASKILL, Fernilea, Minginish (50). (Examined in Gaelic through an Interpreter.)

1979. *The Chairman.*—Are you from Fernilea?—Yes.

1980. What rent do you pay?—£3, 10s. for an acre of land and grass for a cow.

1981. Are you a crofter or a cottar?—A cottar.

1982. To whom do you pay rent?—To Talisker.

1983. And do you get work from Talisker?—About seven or eight days at shearing time.

1984. How do you make your livelihood?—By shoemaking at home.

1985. You have heard the evidence of the previous witnesses?—Yes,

1986. And do you concur in that evidence?—Yes.

1987. Do you wish to make any statement of your own?—Yes.

1988. You heard the holdings mentioned that the other witnesses would like to see formed?—Yes.

1989. Would you like a holding of that sort?—Yes.

1990. Could you stock such a holding, and put up the necessary buildings without assistance?—It would not be easy for me to do it at the beginning.

1991. *Mr Shaw Stewart.*—Would you be able to attend to your business well, and work the holding too?—Yes, sometimes; I myself could work outside at the croft, and get others to carry on the shoemaking.

1992. Employ others?—Yes.

1993. By paying them?—Yes.

1994. Do you think the new holding would return you enough to pay the wages of some one to carry on the shoemaking work as well as work the farm?—No, but the shoemaking business itself would pay them.

1995. And have you considered all the burdens on the land,—the rates and taxes that you would have to pay?—Yes, I consider all that.

1996. *Mr Sutherland.*—Would you prefer to be a successful small farmer, to being a shoemaker?—I believe it would be better for me to be a small farmer; in these days shoemaking is not a paying business. The trade is run out, the people have got so poor. They now buy the cheapest shoes they can get.

DONALD MACLEAN, Carbost (Recalled)—*examined.*

1997. *The Chairman.*—You desired to add something to your previous evidence?—I wanted to say something about Eynort church and the minister. I heard my mother say that the congregation became so few at last in Eynort after the evictions had taken place that it had dwindled down to four or five people, and that the minister used to take them to the manse for the services.

1998. Was that after the disruption?—Yes. Another thing I wanted to say, in reference to the people being in comfortable circumstances. I have heard my mother tell of her father and grandfather in Tuisdale being for three years at law with Talisker's trustee in endeavouring to retain hold of the crofts; and those who were the tenants at Tuisdale had 18 head of cattle a piece at that time.

1999. I think it was stated that the steamer calls here twice a week?—The 'Dunara Castle' calls twice in the one week, and the next week it does not call at all; the 'Hebridean' calls weekly.

2000. Are there any shipments of fish made by these steamers to the south?—Very little fish out of our port.

2001. *Mr Maccallum.*—And your mother, who gave you information about these things, is still alive?—Yes, and she was very desirous to speak to the Commission about these things.

2002. How old is she?—72.

JOHN TOLMIE MACKENZIE, Dunvegan (64)—*examined.*

2003. *The Chairman.*—You are factor to Macleod of Macleod?—Yes.

2004. How long have you held that position?—I have been factor since 1886, but I have been connected with the estate otherwise since 1860.

2005. You wish to make some remarks to the Commission?—Yes. We have heard a good deal to-day about forced removals on this estate, but a large part of it is full of inaccuracies and quite unreliable. A witness stated a short time ago that to his own knowledge there were only three tenants or cottars still remaining on the farm of Glenbrittle. The fact, however, is that there are 38 at this moment, 28 of whom have got cattle and 10 have none. Now, as to the evictions that are said to have taken place on Macleod's estate in bye-gone days. The whole of the estate was originally and still is to a great extent in the hands of large farmers; there never were small tenants there at all, but on each of these farms there was a colony of cottars or squatters who used to be employed by the tacksmen to cultivate the land. In exchange for that labour they were paid in kind, as they very often were in those days,—even farmers often paid their rent to the proprietor in kind. These cottars got a patch of potato ground where they could grow corn, and in addition to that any member of their family who might be employed on the tenant's work got his food during the time he was so employed. That is the rule that was adopted on all the farms on Macleod's estate. Glenbrittle was the first tenant who introduced sheep farming into Skye, and his having done so is borne out by the fact that the first sheep that came to Skye (being the Rhu-an-Dunain-sheep) were branded S, a brand which still holds good as the mark on the Glenbrittle sheep. When the sheep began to be more numerous, agriculture began to go back, and as a consequence the work of these cottars was not in such demand, till at last, within my own recollection, there was very little agriculture at all, simply because sheep paid better than agriculture or cattle.

2006. Was it at any particular time that sheep began to be more profitable than agriculture or cattle?—Very soon after they were introduced into this country; that would be about the beginning of this century. Glenbrittle having found that it paid, the rest of the farmers followed suit. After the lapse of years, the people who were thus thrown out of employment began to complain just as they are doing now-a-days, and wanted to get holdings elsewhere. They did not feel themselves at liberty to do as they liked when they were under the tenant but got no employment, and merely lived on sufferance, so they petitioned Macleod, the father of the present proprietor, in the early part of this century, to give them land somewhere else. Macleod then decided that as a farm became vacant he would endeavour to lay it aside for the purpose of taking these cottars and planting them there. In 1810 I find that certain districts having become congested on the tenants' farms, were placed on the three farms of Harlosh, Roag, and Dunvegan. These are some of the evictions that are now recorded, and these are the houses that are now shown as having once been peopled by 'evicted' tenants.

Struan, Bracadale, Skye.

John Tolmie Mackenzie.

2007. You used the word 'evictions.' Were these people evicted against their will?—No. They themselves petitioned to be removed to new holdings, and that was done as far as possible.

2008. But you see, Mr Mackenzie, we heard a great deal as to removals, in the first place from the farm of Drynoch, secondly from the farm of Talisker, and thirdly from the farm of Glenbrittle, and we have noted a very long list of old townships on these several holdings. Were all these people removed?—Oh no, not the half of them; just as many of them as these new townships would accommodate.

2009. These different townships were depleted, and the people were sent out, or went away elsewhere?—Elsewhere.

2010. Now, were these removals all on their own petition, or were some of them on their own petition, and some of them against their will?—As far as I can make out, the petitions show that they wanted to be removed.

2011. The whole of them?—Not the whole of them but some of them.

2012. Were some of these removed?—Yes.

2013. Forcibly?—Not forcibly.

2014. Well, they were warned to remove, and went because it was the will of thy landlord? How many of them would there be?—I don't know. I did not expect that a written statement would be admitted, or I would have brought it with me. I will send that in yet with all these particulars.

2015. I would like to know from you, taking the removals as a whole, how many resulted from petitions of the crofters or cottars labouring for farm tenants, and how many were against their will? I suppose you admit there were both?—Well, I never heard that they were removed, except as I have stated.

2016. These people are complaining of removals, even down to the present moment?—They are.

2017. Does not that look as if some of them at least took place against the will of the predecessor who occupied the holding?—Possibly some of them might have; but no evictions took place in my day,—that is, since I knew the property.

2018. But these witnesses have gone back sixty years, and you are only 64; you were not responsible for them. I suppose it is the fact that a good many removals took place in the early part of this century against the will of the occupying crofter?—That is a thing I cannot say.

2019. Surely you, as factor on the estate, know the history of the place?—Yes, I know this much of it, that a good many were removed on their own petition.

2020. Yes, that is exceedingly probable; but was there not another principle applied?—Possibly there might have been others evicted; I don't know anything about that.

2021. Do you tell us, as factor on the estate, you know nothing about that?—Nothing about the evictions. I have no documents whatever proving any such. But I have heard that there were people who left Rhu-an-Dunain many, many years before I was born; and they emigrated to America. I believe they went of their own accord. It may or may not have been the case; I cannot say. The tenant of the farm went to America, and brought them to his own land there, and remained with them two years, and then left them, as we were given to understand, in good circumstances.

2022. Just continue, if there is anything further you would like to acquaint us with?—I did not altogether make up my mind upon the subject that has been brought before the Commission: I thought the attention would be entirely devoted to the point as to whether there was land available in the district, and upon that point I have heard no one give quite a direct answer.

2023. The answer they have given is this: they have specified these townships upon those different farms as places where there is land available for the formation of holdings where a man could carry on a croft to a profit, where he could subsist by his holding. That is what they say, and we would like to hear what you have to say in connection with that?—My experience is that no land in Skye would pay its cultivation, and so confident am I on that point that I took the opportunity of putting in my pocket a few notes to show what the return from a croft of £10 would be. Without troubling you in the meantime with a long statement, I may mention that in my opinion a £10 croft, well farmed, in a good year will only return £44 of money, selling all its produce.

2024. Gross?—Gross. The expenditure upon that croft will be £22, leaving £19, or 1s. 3d. a day for the man to work it for the whole year, and that is all that he can put in his pocket.

2025. I would like very much if you would give us the details of that, and show how you arrive at that result?—The following is the statement:—

Return from a £10 croft in an average good year. Stock to consist of four cows (£36), forty sheep (£50), and one horse (£15); one cart (£10), one plough (50s.), set harrows (30s.): in all about £115 of a capital to start with.			
Return from four cows would be three calves annually, which at the term of Martinmas would be worth at an average not more than 50s. each,	£7	10	0
Butter from four cows, besides feeding the calves, and reckoning on their milking for six months, at the rate of 6lbs. a week, . .	7	16	0
Cheese made from the four cows, besides feeding the calves, .	3	5	0
Forty sheep would have thirty lambs, less deaths four to the score, say twenty-four alive in September, twelve of which would be wedder lambs, and sold at the average price of £8, 10s. per clad score,	4	17	2
Wool of forty sheep, four stones at 12s. per stone, ...	2	8	0
Eight cast ewes to sell at £12 per clad score, ...	4	11	4
Sixty barrels of potatoes, less ten kept for seed, leaving fifty to go to market, to sell at the average price of 3s. per barrel, . .	7	10	0
Fifteen bolls of oats, less six bolls kept for seed, and four bolls for the horse, leaving five bolls to go to market at 16s. . . .	4	0	0
Total Return from a well farmed £10 croft in a good year, . . .	£41	17	6

Deductions:—					
Rent of croft, . .	£10	0	0		
Poor, school, and road rates, ...	1	5	0		
Township bull, 6s.; ram, 6s., . . .	0	12	0		
Sheep dip, . . .	0	6	0		
Shoeing horse twice, and changing, .	0	10	0		
Repairs to implements,	0	10	0		
Average mortality in cattle, 2½%, . .	0	18	0		
Assistance in spring £1, in harvest £1, 10s.,	2	10	0		
Interest on capital at 5%,	5	15	0		
				22	0	0
Total clear earnings of the crofter for twelve months,				£19	11	6

equal to 1s. 3d. a day; or if the croft was his own paying no rent, he could make 1s. 11d. for every working day.

(Signed) JOHN T. MACKENZIE,
Factor for Macleod of Macleod.

DUNVEGAN, 20*th April* 1893.

2026. Have you any crofters on the Macleod estate under your charge paying a rent of £10?—Not exactly £10, but some pay £9.

2027. Can you point to any one of these holdings that is worked to a profit in average years?—They were ver

anxious to get them, and have only got them recently; but according to my calculation they cannot work them to a profit. They answer very well as a place to live in, when they supplement it by working elsewhere.

2028. Is this the characteristic of every crofter's holding on the Macleod estate, that it serves as a home, but is not cultivated to profit?—Most certainly.

2029. Then there is not a solvent crofter's holding on the Macleod estate?—There is no crofter subsisting upon his croft.

2030. You depend for the getting in of the rent upon the extraneous assistance which the crofter derives from the labour or the trade or fishing or whatever it may be?—Either that, or he must starve even if he got it for nothing.

2031. But don't you think it would be a vast improvement if holdings could be formed which were self-supporting?—If that could be done.

2032. But don't you think it is possible?—No, not under £100 of rent.

2033. Don't you think a holding could be formed with a rent of £20, or £30, or £40, which would be self-supporting, and leave the crofter with a sufficient margin to live?—He might make a small wage by it, but not wages equal to £1 a week. No £30 crofter could make £1 a week by the croft and pay his way. He could make it if it were a grazing croft.

2034. Then the only way in which, according to your view, the crofting system can be carried on is to serve as a home for a man who gets his living in other ways?—Yes.

2035. There is no other way of doing it?—No other way of doing it.

2036. That, of course, is very precarious?—Still, it is the best way.

2037. And there must be constant occasions of a man falling into arrear of his rent, when the fishing fails, or his labour fails, or his health gives way, he must get into trouble with his landlord?—If his rent is small, he will not fall into arrear; it is when his rent is large, and his land will not bring it in.

2038. But must not he fall into arrear if he goes away to get work and cannot get it? does not that sometimes happen?—Very seldom.

2039. Must it not happen occasionally?—It does, but not often.

2040. Suppose the case of a crofter who depends in the main upon fishing, and the fishing fails, as we know is often the case, must he not fall behind with his rent?—He is a fisherman depending on his fishing.

2041. But if the fishing won't pay, does not the rent fall behind?—Certainly, if he has a rent to pay.

2042. I am assuming that; and does not that happen frequently?—Very often.

2043. Therefore, according to the view which you take of the crofting system, the crofter must often be behind with his rent, from the failure of labour, or the failure of fishing, or the failure of trade?—Any disaster of that sort would be sure to make a crofter fail to pay his rent.

2044. Take the case of a failure of fishing in a certain place, and in that place there is a man who carries on trade as a tailor, or a shoemaker, or a joiner; in consequence of the failure of fishing the people who employ him are not able to pay him,—must not he fall behind with his rent?—Certainly he must.

2045. That is inevitable?—Inevitable.

2046. What is your remedy, as a skilled man having long years' experience of this part of Skye, for the present state of matters, which is undoubtedly undesirable?—Small holdings for the fishermen.

2047. You would give them patches of land, and send them to the sea for their livelihood?—To the sea, or to labour elsewhere, where they could get work.

2048. That is to say, you would just carry on the present system?—Well, I would not have them so congested as they are just now.

2049. Tell us where they are most congested on this estate?—I don't know that they are congested at all.

2050. I thought you said they were?—Not on this part of the estate: they were congested at one time, but they are not so now.

Struan, Bracadale, Skye. — John Tolmie Mackenzie.

2051. Is not there some congestion?—There are some who want land, and can't get it.

2052. Where would you assign them land on the Macleod estate to relieve them?—Near wherever they are situated. There is a colony across here just now.

2053. What is the name of it?—Coillore. That is a township where it was in view to give them land, but through some mistake it fell through.

2054. But you think they should get land?—I certainly think so.

2055. Where do you think it could be got?—Close to their own lands.

2056. And you are willing to give it?—I have not it in my power to do so at present. When I had it in my power, I offered it to them, but from some cause or other which never came to my knowledge they refused the offer. First they were offered a piece of land, which they said was too small; then they were offered a piece of land, but it was too far from the sea. Then Macleod and the tenant, whose lease was about to terminate, offered to give them £60 hard money, £10 to each family, to build new houses upon this piece of ground which had a stock of 500 sheep. The excuse then was that it was too far from the sea.

2057. Are these men sub-tenants or crofters?—Sub-tenants.

2058. Paying rent to whom?—To the tenant, a Mr Scott.

2059. What is the average rent?—I cannot tell.

2060. What is the average extent of the holdings. What extent of arable have they?—I have not the figures beside me.

2061. Will it be more than two acres arable each?—Yes, I think so.

2062. More than three?—More than three.

2063. At any rate, whatever it is, you are satisfied it is much too small?—Oh, it is too small; I always thought it was too small.

2064. And you think they should be taken out of their holdings, and get larger crofts somewhere else?—I don't think they would like that; I think they would rather be left where they are, and get additional land.

2065. I see in the Valuation Roll that Neil Macdonald and Donald Cameron are rented at £1, 10s. What extent of addition would you deem it advisable if you had the power to make to these holdings so as to make them large enough?—I think if they had an additional cow each they would be pleased with it.

2066. You think that would satisfy them?—I think it would.

2067. Are you of opinion that a man whose arable does not exceed two or three acres, and who is not a fisherman, has much too small a holding?—No, I think his holding is enough if he gets work elsewhere. He must have a holding that will give grass for his two cows. It is not, however, by agriculture that he will live.

2068. You scout the idea of such a man living off his holding?—Certainly, because he cannot do it.

2069. You think he ought to have a small holding, and get wages elsewhere?—Yes.

2070. And that is your idea of the crofting system?—Yes.

2071. On the Macleod estate what is the natural harbour accommodation? There are piers built at different places.

2072. Where, on the Macleod estate?—There are natural harbours.

2073. Take the piers first?—There was a pier built here at Struan by the Destitution Committee for the purpose of helping the fishermen, and there is another one at Fiscavaig across the water.

2074. Where else?—Except at Dunvegan, I don't know that there are any more.

2075. The Dunvegan pier allows a steamer to come in?—Yes.

2076. Does either of the others?—No, only for boats. It is to the Fiscavaig pier that most of the east country boats come.

2077. Would you go on to specify the natural

Struan, Bracadale, Skye.

John Tolmie Mackenzie.

harbours on the Macleod estate?—It is cut up with harbours. There is one at Struan, where the inn is.

2078. A good natural harbour?—Yes.

2079. Sufficient in all weathers?—Yes.

2080. Where are the others?—Orbost has a fair harbour, Varkasaig I think it is called; and one at Vatten. On the Dunvegan side there are any number of harbours. On the Dunvegan Loch there is Stein harbour, Dunvegan harbour, Colbost, and the landing place at Mainish, the best station on the coast.

2081. All these are good harbours?—Yes.

2082. So that if the fishing were prosecuted there is no lack of natural harbour accommodation?—No lack of harbour accommodation, except at Glendale, where there ought to be a pier.

2083. What is the greatest stretch of coast-line on the Macleod estate without a harbour? What is the furthest distance a boat at sea would have to come, say, that left one harbour before it reached another harbour?—If it went round from here, it is twenty miles to go round to Glendale.

2084. But there are as many as twenty miles of coast without any harbour accommodation?—And where no harbour could be put.

2085. Now, don't you think, looking to the amount of harbour accommodation there is,—good natural harbours and pier accommodation,—that an extension of the crofting fisher system would be an advantage,—that is to say, giving small patches of land on the sea-coast, and leaving the occupier to find his living from the sea?—That is my idea.

2086. You are in favour of that?—I am in favour of that.

2087. Do you know if there is any disposition among the crofting or cottar tenants on the Macleod estate to take up holdings on these terms?—I think that is what they are most likely to take up.

2088. Is there not also a strong disposition among them to get holdings further inland of a larger and self-subsisting kind?—There are some that are inclined that way.

2089. Now, don't you think that that is a laudable ambition?—I think it is quite laudable.

2090. And that it is worth your while to consider how it might be carried out?—It can be carried out upon a reasonably sized farm, but not on a small.

2091. What is the smallest croft you would give to a man in the anticipation that it would be self-supporting?—Certainly not under £80 a year of rent.

2092. How much land would you assign to such a tenant, taking the average of the arable on this part of the estate?—Possibly there might be 40 to 50 acres arable, and 1000 grazing.

2093. And a rent of £80?—A rent of £80.

2094. Don't you think, Mr Mackenzie, that the experiment might with equal safety be tried with regard to a holding of half that rent? If a man could make a holding of £80 pay, might not equally a man who was only asked to, and who could only be asked to pay a rent of £40 do as well?—I know it would be a very popular thing on my part to acquiesce in the opinion, but I must be candid, I don't think the experiment would succeed.

2095. If you had it to do at your own hand and the ground was clear, you would not make a holding of less than £80 rent?—No, except the small holding of £5 or £8 for a fisherman.

2096. Would you have any holding between the £80 one and the fisherman's? Would you not prefer to have a gradation of holdings?—I would like to see that; but I am talking now from a financial point of view, and I have thrown all sentimental arguments aside altogether.

2097. And looking at it from a financial point of view, you would have no holding between the fisherman's holding and the £80 one?—There might be smaller holdings.

2098. Just tell us about these?—It would be a good thing for the country to have land of that sort.

2099. What kind of holding do you point to?—They might be of any size, from £80 downwards.

2100. What is the lowest you would make for a crofter's holding in a good country?—Not above £10. I don't think any of them would ask above £10.

2101. Do you think there might be a self-supporting croft at a rent of £10?—I don't say it would be self-supporting, but it would be a great help.

2102. How would you have the crofter to live?—He must live by something else.

2103. Labour?—Labour or a trade; not upon his croft.

2104. Then on what principle do you fix the rent of such a holding?—Suppose a man takes a holding from you, and you charge him £10 of rent; is that rent for the agricultural value, or is it a rent which you think you can get from him because he is a skilled labourer who makes a good wage?—It is the value which I put upon the land which he gets, which is both agricultural and pastoral.

2105. It is an agricultural rent?—An agricultural and pastoral rent.

2106. And you do not look for payment of the rent to wages he earns elsewhere?—I need not do it.

2107. Just pin your mind to the point for a moment. Do you look for payment of the rent to anything else than the agricultural value of the holding and pasture?—I look to the rent from that size of holding.

2108. Where do you expect to get your rent there from a £10 holding: do you expect to get it from its agricultural and pastoral value?—Scarcely.

2109. You want to get it from his wages?—To get it from his wages.

2110. Do you think that is fair?—Yes.

2111. Then you would seriously propose to rent a man, not upon the agricultural value of his croft, but upon his wages?—I should put the rent upon the croft.

2112. Yes, but you expect to get the rent out of his wages?—He cannot do it otherwise.

2113. So that your £10 rent is not a rent restricted to the agricultural and pastoral value of the croft, if you expect to get it from his wages?—From his wages, yes.

2114. *Mr Sutherland.*—Your statement regarding the status and history of the Highland people was at least to me novel, and contrary to the authorities we are accustomed to look to. You state that the people lived on sufferance: how far back, may I ask, does that statement refer to?—Probably 200 years, and 150, and down to the beginning of this century.

2115. Then your assertion is that the Highland clansman lived on the sufferance of the chief?—Well, he lived on the land, and he gave his labour and got paid in kind, in cattle and sheep.

2116. Who paid him?—The tenant paid him for his labour, and paid him in kind.

2117. You mean the sub-tenant?—The tenant paid the sub-tenant or the cottar for his labour, in kind.

2118. The sub-tenant surely paid the tenant, you mean?—He gave the tenant his labour, and in exchange he got land, and cattle, and sheep.

2119. That is on the clan territory?—Yes, on all the territories on the estate.

2120. You refer, I presume, to the introduction of the feudal system into the Highlands of Scotland?—No, that is going further back: I am not going into historical matters.

2121. Was the Macleod estate a feudal tenure, or the clan tenure?—I cannot tell you that.

2122. You said that when sheep farming was introduced agriculture went back?—Yes, I said so.

2123. So the tendency of the introduction of sheep farming is to set agriculture back?—Yes.

2124. That implies that there was more agriculture in the Highlands 200 years ago than there is now?—No doubt.

2125. So the land has been going out of cultivation?—Out of cultivation.

2126. Then you made what to me was a very novel statement, that the people petitioned to be sent away?—No, I did not say that.

2127. That they petitioned to be removed?—To be removed to other townships that became vacant, and that system has gone on till now.

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2128. It implied that they went of their own accord; it was voluntary?—Yes.

2129. And that it was not by process of law?—Not by process of law at all.

2130. To what date does that statement refer?—I mentioned it already,—it commenced in the year 1810.

2131. And went on until?—The next was in 1844, when another farm was taken from a tacksman and given to a large number of small cottars or sub-tenants. Another took place in 1888, when Roag, which was peopled from these large farms in 1810, got congested. Macleod followed out his old principle of relieving the congestion by taking another farm from a neighbouring tenant, who paid £130 of rent for it, and giving it to eight cottars or squatters. He sent them to Vatten, where they are now. Very probably a generation after this it may be said that these were evicted. The farm of Ullinish is in the same way. Whenever that farm went out it was divided among the cottars who were on the land: they were here to-day. Eighteen of them got additional land. They were first under the tenant as sub-tenants, and when it came into Macleod's hands he gave them additional holdings, or additions to their holdings. There are eighteen of them; and he divided the rest of the farm between five tenants of the £30 or £40 class.

2132. Am I right in supposing that these removals were conducted by the sub-tenants, and not by Macleod of Macleod at all?—I don't know that they were removals at all.

2133. Listen to this. [Reads from document]. It is headed 'Number of decrees of removal from agri-'cultural holdings, &c., in the island of Skye, between '1840 and 1883, ascertained from the records of the 'Sheriff Court of Portree.' Macleod's estate, I see, totals up 223, and there is a note at the foot which says:—The above decrees have proceeded upon summonses containing on an average four sets of defenders each. Multiplying the 223 by four, you have a total of 892 different tenants who have been served with process of law?—These are what are called warnings to pay rent. The people were not removed by means of these; the process was merely for the recovery of rent.

2134. Were none of these ever carried out?—Not one of them; excepting four.

2135. These removals, I understand, were not carried out by process of law at all?—No, they were removed voluntarily.

2136. And other holdings obtained for them?—Yes.

2137. So that what we have heard of people living below high water mark and under tents has got no foundation?—I cannot call anything of that to my recollection: there might have been such.

2138. You said also that you believed the general wish of the people was that they should have small holdings, and prosecute the calling of fishermen?—I think a good many of them would prefer that.

2139. But you have heard the evidence given here to-day?—Yes.

2140. We have not heard that stated at all by any one?—Neither did I.

2141. Could any of the people be brought forward, do you think, to give us evidence to substantiate what you have said?—I don't assert this: I merely give it as my opinion.

2142. Your own opinion of their opinion?—Yes.

2143. But we have the direct evidence of the people themselves?—Yes.

2144. You gave us in a statement showing what in your opinion the financial result of a small croft would be. Do you know Mr Mackintosh, Lord Macdonald's factor?—I do.

2145. Do you consider him a good authority?—I am not intimately acquainted with him.

2146. From the fact that he is factor, the presumption is that he is a competent authority?—I suppose so. I don't know anything of the gentleman at all.

2147. Would you be surprised to learn that he handed in to the Commission this week a statement in which he gave as the return on a croft, smaller, I think, than the one you took, that if the crofter got the labour in his own family he would be £27, 10s. to the good on an average year, after paying all charges of every kind: would you agree with that?—No, I could not.

Struan, Bracadale, Skye.

John Tolmie Mackenzie.

2148. But still you throw no doubt on Mr Mackintosh's ability?—No, certainly not. But, for example, you have had a witness here, who stated that he sowed $2\frac{1}{2}$ bolls of oats, and only got $2\frac{1}{2}$ bolls in return. You will find in my statement that I give the crofter credit for $2\frac{1}{2}$ returns.

2149. I can believe that, because you give him better land than he has now,—it would be impossible to give him worse; there is something in that, is there not?—I don't give him more than three: I don't think he could do better.

2150. In the best land in Skye?—Yes.

2151. Do you commit yourself to that opinion regarding the whole of the land in Skye?—Regarding what has passed through my hands. It may not have been of the best land?—Perhaps it was not.

2152. *Mr Shaw Stewart.*—Do you think that there are men who would like to go to the fishing in the present state of facilities for transport of fish?—The more fish that is caught, the better would the facilities for transport become. There would be a greater inducement for the steamers to call for fish if there was a larger quantity to be taken away.

2153. Yes; but they would only wish to go to the fishing, and have a small holding if there were really good facilities for sending their fish to market, it would only be in those circumstances that they would wish to go to the loch side?—There are people there now.

2154. *The Chairman.*—I think what Mr Shaw Stewart means is this: Does your observation, with regard to the desire of the people to obtain small fishermen's holdings, apply to this place with its present facilities for transmit of fish, or with increased facilities?—Improved facilities. It would apply better then certainly, but it applies even as it is, I think.

2155. But they could not live in any number without a market for their fish?—But there is a market.

2156. Once a week?—Yes, and it would be oftener if it would pay the steamers to call.

2157. *Mr Gordon.*—You have mentioned a minimum size of a farm that you think would be self-supporting, with a rent of £80. Could you give the Commission any idea of the size of such a farm; or could you tell us what your opinion would be regarding stock?—The stock would be about 600 ewes, 4 cows, and 1 horse.

2158. Would that be black-faced or cheviot stock?—Black-faced.

2159. What would your sales be?—If the farm was good there should be about 500 lambs, but if the farm was not a good one perhaps 450.

2160. That makes you a good deal higher than your statement, where you estimated $\frac{3}{4}$ in lambs, or allowing for deaths six-tenths, which, on a stock of 600, would give only 360?—360 in September.

2161. How much would you get from that?—Only the half; only the wedder lambs would be sold.

2162. 180 at 8s. 6d?—That is a low price, but it is the average.

2163. What else would you sell?—Wool; cast ewes.

2164. How many cast ewes,—about 100?—Say 90.

2165. At what price?—I think I put down 12s.

2166. Anything else?—Wool, which should realise from £60 to £70.

2167. Would you require two shepherds, or one?—One.

2168. At £40?—About £33.

2169. I am afraid that after allowing for expense of dipping, &c., and calculating interest on capital, you would be down below your £80 before you would make much profit?—Possibly, at the prices of the present day.

2170. You see it comes to be all a matter of rent?—All a matter of rent.

2171. *Mr Maccallum.*—Do you think that the greater part of those who left Bracadale went at their own desire, having petitioned to the proprietor therefor?—Those who did go went at their own desire

Struan, Bracadale, Skye.

John Tolmie Mackenzie.

2172. All?—Those who did go went at their own desire.

2173. There were none evicted?—I am not aware of any being evicted.

2174. How do you account for the very general desire that arose for leaving the place?—No work having been carried on upon the farms, they were not fed as usual, and in consequence they were getting congested, and they wanted to get a holding of their own.

2175. They had the use of land?—Free.

2176. I thought they were giving their labour?—Yes, until the labour was not required.

2177. But before this desire arose, they lost the land, and they lost the right to pasture, is that so?—Yes, they did, but I don't think they lost it after all; but they lost the right to it.

2178. So they were landless when this petition arose?—They could not be said to be landless, for they occupied the land. I have documents to show that letters passed between the proprietor and the big tenants to say that the small tenants could not pay their rents, but that they had their lands as formerly. That was the correspondence following on the transfer of them from one part to the other.

2179. Their holdings were not interfered with at all?—Their holdings where they sat were not interfered with until they removed from them.

2180. And they had the same right of pasture?—I would not call it a right, but they had the same privilege.

2181. Do you mean that they were not paying for it?—I say they were not, after their labour was dispensed with.

2182. And they might be sent away at will?—That is the position they were in.

2183. And that position became so unpleasant that they wished to get away.—Well, they expressed the wish to leave whatever the cause.

2184. And were they all put upon unoccupied holdings,—those whose petition was acceded to?—Yes, they were all put upon farms that had been in the occupation of big tenants who did not re-occupy them.

2185. Are you aware that it is asserted that 25 tenants from Bracadale were placed in the two Milovaigs where there were 8 crofters?—That was in 1848.

2186. Were the two Milovaigs vacant then?—I rather think so, for the farm was in the hands of a tacksman up to that date.

2187. But it is asserted that there were 8 crofters there, and that 25 tenants from Bracadale were placed amongst them?—I cannot speak quite with certainty on that point, but I may mention that when the Bracadale people went there were no people either at Milovaig or Ramasaig.

2188. Is it your opinion that there were not 8 tenants there?—I never knew that there were. I do not say that they were not, they might have been there. I know it was a sheep grazing, and the idea occurs to me that it would be strange if there were 8 tenants in an old grazing of that sort. Some fishermen at the shore might have been there.

2189. How do you account then for there being such a great desire on the part of the descendants of these people to get back upon the land? They seem to look back to those times as happy times when their ancestors had the land, and as you have heard to-day there is a great desire to get back to the occupation of these lands?—I heard that said.

2190. Does not that seem to point to the fact that their ancestors must have been pretty comfortable?—I do not admit that their ancestors were so comfortable as these people are at the present day. I know these labourers that used to be working on the farms were fed on the farms, they got porridge and milk to their breakfast, potatoes and herring to their dinner, and perhaps sowans and milk for their supper. I should like to know what farmer to-day would dare to offer his ploughman such feeding as that? he would be hounded out of the country. Yet these people in the old days worked for that cheerfully. The very paupers now-a-days get better fare than that. Therefore I say that the change of circumstances must be taken into account.

2191. On the crofts that you recommend, would you have sheep?—I think I mentioned that in the paper.

2192. The crofters that are on your estate just now, have they sheep?—Some of them have and some have not.

2193. Are there crofters on Soay?—Yes.

2194. What is the size of the croft there?—It has never been surveyed, but it is a 10s. croft.

2195. And do you know what stock they keep?—They were entitled to keep a cow, but they have been keeping more.

2196. Have they the whole of Soay?—No.

2197. How is the rest of it occupied?—The rest of it is part of the farm: the sheep stock is on it.

2198. That part is quite separate from the crofters' holdings?—No, the crofters holdings are in the middle of the island. All the arable land in the island is under the crofters, and their cattle are through the island the same as the sheep.

2199. That is, they have a right of pasturage on the whole island?—Yes.

2200. Are they allowed to put sheep there?—No.

2201. Don't you think it would be a good thing if they had sheep on the island?—I daresay it would be a good thing for them, but it would not be a good thing for the farmer.

2202. Who is the farmer?—Macleod, at present.

2203. And it would be an injury to him that they should be allowed to keep sheep there?—It would be an injury to the farmer, whoever he may be, that their sheep should be mixing with his sheep.

2204. Might they not have the whole island of Soay?—They might; but it was offered to them, and they would not have it. Not only is that the case, but one of the best hirsels at Glenbrittle was offered to them, and they would not go.

2205. They have no desire to get sheep there?—I am sure they have.

2206. They have a desire for sheep?—I have no doubt.

2207. And you don't allow them?—Certainly not.

2208. Do you encourage any home industry, such as spinning, for instance?—No, I do not go into any of these matters.

2209. But in the management of this estate, is there any encouragement given to these things?—The ladies on the estate used to do so.

2210. How are the crofters' wives and daughters to get the wool?—I know the ladies of the estate used to employ all the old women about here, and on the whole estate, in stocking knitting and that sort of thing.

2211. Would it not be a very good thing if the people had wool of their own to experiment with?—It would be a good thing for all those who have not, to have a thing.

2212. Is this not a very favourable opportunity to allow the crofters of Soay, for instance, the right to keep sheep?—I think the best way would be for them to take the whole island.

2213. Are they not prepared to put sheep on it?—I don't know. They would be prepared to put one or two sheep on, but that would not be a fair thing to do, because the sheep would not match with the other sheep of the island, and would do a very great deal of injury to the stock.

2214. But would they not take the whole of the sheep stocking on the island?—They might take the whole island at a fair rent.

2215. But you will not allow it at a fair rent?—Yes, I will give it to them at a fair rent.

2216. Under the Crofters Act?—Well, I don't know; but if we take the best valuations I don't know but we could give it even at that.

2217. Then you are prepared to give them the right of sheep pasture?—No, not unless they take the island as a farm.

2218. But it would be a good thing for them?—It would be a good thing to have the whole island.

2219. *Mr Macleod.*—You spoke very confidently,

Mr Mackenzie, about the manner in which the removals or clearances, or as you yourself called it, evictions took place on this estate of Macleod's. Were you speaking of your own knowledge?—Well, yes partly, and partly from what I could gather from documentary evidence.

2220. But you have seen some of the evictions, or what you termed evictions, yourself?—I just remember four.

2221. And all the others that you spoke of, or that were spoken of to-day, you know simply from what you have heard?—Yes, from the estate documents.

2222. And these four cases were all voluntary?—No, I would not say they were voluntary.

2223. They were all four by process of law?—Yes.

2224. You have handed in a statement bringing out a profit of 1s. 3d. a day to the crofter?—Yes, that is what he could make out of it.

2225. Are you prepared to say that all the crofters on Macleod's estate at the present time, living as they presently do, make as much all the year round as 8s. or 9s. a week?—They ought to make that out of the croft, 7s. 6d. a week.

2226. And do you think that at the present time the majority of Macleod's crofters are doing better?—I don't know that they are.

2227. They are not?—I don't know that they are. They would do better if there were better times; but I don't think they are doing well now, because I don't think any crofter could do more than I have given credit for, and according to the statement of the witnesses they could not do so well.

2228. So that a man with a £10 croft would be better off than the majority of the crofters on the Macleod estate are at the present time?—I don't know that they would be so well off, because the £10 crofter is to spend his whole time upon it. The little crofter only spends a part of his time, and he can go on earning wages elsewhere.

2229. But you don't seriously maintain that it is necessary for a man with a £10 croft to spend the whole of his time on his croft, if he can get work elsewhere?—Most certainly.

2230. How could a man work an £80 holding, if it takes a man all his time to work a £10 croft?—Simply because it is differently worked. One is an agricultural and the other a grazing holding.

2231. You meant to say then that the holding you spoke of was meant to be an arable holding?—Yes, the little holding.

2232. Then where was he to graze his sheep?—On the hill outside.

2233. And it is your opinion that an £80 croft could be worked to a profit?—To a profit as a grazing holding, but not as an agricultural holding.

2234. And you said, I think, that it would take not only the farmer himself but a shepherd to work it successfully?—Either the tenant or a shepherd,—one individual.

2235. You think that a man could work that holding without the assistance of a shepherd?—Yes.

2236. Would not it be as well to have a £40 holding, and let every man manage his own?—But you see the £40 holding would not be enough for a man to attend as a shepherd: there would not be enough of sheep. It would be just as expensive to have a shepherd for 200 as for 600 sheep.

2237. But I am contemplating a holding where the man would do the herding of the sheep himself, and you are contemplating, as I understand, a holding where the tenant and a shepherd would look after the sheep?—I don't give two men to 600 sheep.

2238. But that is according to your statement?—Yes, but it must have been misunderstood. I meant that one man should attend the sheep: I don't care whether he is the shepherd or the owner.

2239. So that to that extent the statement is to be corrected?—To be corrected to that extent.

2240. A shepherd would not be required?—A shepherd would not be required. I look upon an £80 farmer as a working man, not a man going about giving directions to his shepherd. He must go about his farm.

2241. *Mr Munro.*—Could you kindly tell us the gross rental of the Macleod estate?—£6000.

2242. Would you consider it a proper question if I asked you what proportion of that amount would be expended within the island itself?—I could not tell you that without my books.

2243. Give a rough estimate?—Possibly £2000

2244. £2000 spent in Skye; that is £4000 spent elsewhere. Now everywhere that we have gone here we have been met with evidence certainly suggestive of extreme poverty in the island. To what do you attribute the poverty?—It is not a point upon which I have prepared myself with any decided opinion.

2245. Do you not think it probable that the island is likely to be impoverished from the fact that the main part of the rental gathered in the island is spent elsewhere?—It may contribute to it.

2246. Are you aware of the reason that the late tenant of Glenbrittle, Mr Cameron, gave for the poverty and depression of the people here?—I don't remember it.

2247. Are you aware that he publicly stated that it was owing to the influence of the Free Church?—Yes, I believe that is so.

2248. You don't agree with that?—No, I don't agree with that.

2249. Can you tell us at this moment what the population of Bracadale is?—It is over 900.

2250. Do you know what the population was at the beginning of the century?—No. The only reliable census we have begins in 1851.

2251. Are you aware that it was about 1800 at the beginning of the century?—I know it was a good deal more than it is now.

2252. Do you consider it is conducive to the well-being of any parish or district to deplete the country of its population in that way?—No, provided the country could maintain them.

2253. Are you aware whether the poor rates have gone down or gone up as the people were decreasing?—Well, I heard a statement on that matter at Portree, which very much surprised me, to the effect that as the people decreased the poor rates increased. I have been connected with Parochial Boards since 1852, and my experience is quite the contrary.

2254. You can, of course, ascertain whether the poor rates have gone up or down. I have got a statement here put into my hands that, at the time of the last Statistical Account, the population was 2250 souls, since that period there has been a farther decrease, so that it has now gone down to 1800?—What was it in 1851? That is a date I could rely on.

2255. I can give you the figures of 1842?—The statistics were not reliable.

2256. You have handed in a statement here showing a problematical balance sheet of a croft, and in that you bring out on the whole a result unfavourable to the crofter?—Yes.

2257. Well now, considering that the crofters live at all in their present poor holdings, do you not think it probable that if they removed to larger holdings in better land they would attain some measure of comfort?—It is put down there, what I think they would obtain. That is all I admit or can find out that they would ever make out of their holdings.

2258. You think they would not succeed in working a holding of that size, allowing some remuneration to themselves?—You could allow them just as much as I have stated there, and if the man had a large family the family would work the holding. That is only the work of one man. It is financially I look at the matter, not sentimentally.

2259. You look, no doubt, at the position of the crofter from the landlord's point of view?—Possibly.

2260. But you would consider it an advantage to the whole country if these people were to be put back on the soil, and allowed reasonable conditions of existence?—It might be an advantage to some.

2261. *The Chairman.*—The gross rental of the Macleod estates we find is £5832, 13s. What will the net rental be, after paying all rates and taxes, and public

Struan, Bracadale, Skye.

John Tolmie Mackenzie.

burdens; will it be more than the half of that?—Yes, more than the half. The rates and taxes are £1500 themselves, speaking at random.

2262. Would there be a net rental of £4000?—I think so.

2263. After paying upkeep?—No. The upkeep will cost at least as much more, £1500.

2264. That leaves a net rental of £1832, or say £2000. Is that not much nearer the mark? Will the landlord put more than £2000 in his pocket?—No, nor so much.

2265. Now there is another matter which I should like to have cleared up in your own interest. Did not most of the Bracadale tenants at one time hold from the tacksmen?—That is what I said all along.

2266. But these tacksmen removed the tenant from the land?—I believe some were removed by the tacksmen.

2267. Now, was the petition we have heard so much about a petition presented to Macleod by persons who had been removed by the tacksmen?—No, it was from another section of them.

2268. You are certain?—I am certain. They were not removed by the tacksmen; they were taken away by Macleod from one part of his estate, and planted in another.

2269. You have given in a statement, which we have not had time to examine. Would you be willing to be examined at Dunvegan?—Certainly; and I should also like to state, on Macleod's behalf, that he would like to reserve the right of making his own statement at Dunvegan.

2270. *The Chairman.*—We shall be delighted to hear him.

2271. *Mr J. G. Mackay.*—I had been asked by the people of Bracadale at a public meeting to appear here on their behalf, but I did not intend to make any remarks, except in reference to some observations by Mr Mackenzie. He repudiated the idea that there were any evictions carried out by Macleod of Macleod on his estate. I have in my possession a copy of a summons at the instance of Macleod of Macleod for the removal of tenants numbering 220 from various townships.

2272. *The Chairman.* — We know from former experience in Skye that these 'summonses' were merely the system which the landlords in Skye took to enforce payment of the rent.

2273. *Mr Mackay.*—But that is not the case here. These were for the purpose of removals.

2274. *Mr Forsyth.*—Do you know that the summonses were actually carried out, and the people removed?

2275. *Mr Mackay.*—Decidedly.

2276. *Mr Forsyth.*—Have you any direct evidence?

2277. *Mr Mackay.*—I have, because these people turned up in some other part of the estate.

2278. *Mr Forsyth.*—Are you aware that the ordinary way of getting in rent is by applying to the Sheriff for a summons of removal, and you would have to find out whether these were absolutely carried out, otherwise it would only be the usual method of putting pressure upon tenants?

2279. *Mr Mackay.*—That might possibly be a more modern style, but the date I refer to was from 1792 to 1802.

2280. *Mr Forsyth.*—But the old process was the same?

2281. *Mr Mackay.*—No; because at this time I know for a fact that some of these townships were thus created into sheep farms.

[Adjourned.]

FOURTH SITTING.

Uig, Skye.

UIG, SKYE, FRIDAY, APRIL 28, 1893.

Present:—

David Brand, Esq., Advocate, Sheriff of Ayr, and Chairman of the Crofters Commission, *Chairman.*
Angus Sutherland, Esq., M.P.
James Noel Muller Forsyth, Esq.
Rev. Malcolm Maccallum.
John Macleod, Esq.
Henry Munro, Esq.
William Mackenzie, Esq., *Secretary.*

John Murchison, Glenhaultin (63). (Examined in Gaelic through an Interpreter.)

John Murchison.

2282. *The Chairman.*—You are a crofter from Glenhaultin, on Lord Macdonald's estate?—Yes.

2283. What is the name of your holding?—No. 4 Keistle.

2284. What is your rent?—£5, 12s.

2285. And what was it formerly?—£7, 2s. 6d., I think, and I believe the road rates were included in that.

2286. Have you a statement to lay before us?—Yes. The following is a petition from tenants of Renetra and Glenhaultin:—

> Unto the Honourable the Royal Commission on Deer Forests, Portree. The humble petition of Tenants of Renetra and Glenhaultin, on the estate of Lord Macdonald,
>
> *Humbly showeth,—*
>
> That your petitioners desire to bring the following facts before your Honourable Commission:—
>
> For sixty years past and more our fathers occupied the lands we now hold. Eighteen years ago, on the death of Mr Peter Macdonald, merchant, Portree, who held the lands in common with us, the hill pasture, which represented his share, was added to ours, and, to our great loss, the low ground of his portion, extending to 25 or 30 acres, partly arable, where we wintered our sheep, was added to the tack of Skerrinish. We begged the whole from the factor, but he declined to give it. He charged us £9, 16s. for the hill pasture added, while the late joint-tenant paid for all only £12. By being deprived of the winter grazing we lost several hundred sheep. The factor, besides, planted a cottar upon us without granting us any reduction. We took the farm of Glenhaultin, formerly occupied by the parish ministers of Snizort, eighteen years ago at a rent of £70, for which we pay rates severally. Trustees were appointed over us, as we had upon security to borrow the money, of whom one still acts, viz., Mr Donald Clow, farmer, Cuidreach. The factor, in presence of the trustees, as prices fell, held out the hope that our rent would be reduced to £50. The rent, however, is placed to our credit. We are paying heavy interest on the borrowed money.
>
> Your petitioners humbly trust you will look into our case, and see justice done to us; and as one of our appointed delegates left the country, and the other was disabled, grant us liberty to explain our case still farther. And your petitioners will ever pray, &c.
>
> (Signed) Alex. Lamont.
> Lachlan Matheson.
> Roderick M'Innes.
> Alex. Lamont.
> James Gordon.
> John Murchison.
> John M'Innes.
> Donald M'Lean.
> John Beaton.
> Allan M'Leod.

Uig, Skye. — John Murchison.

2287. What is the name of the large farm nearest to your township?—Skerrinish.

2288. You are aware of the object of our inquiry here?—Yes.

2289. Can you indicate the locality of any land which you think we should look at in carrying out that object?—In the first place, it is the land that was taken from us, and the want of which has caused us a great loss, that we want back again.

2290. What land is that?—The lower part of Renetra.

2291. In whose occupation is it now?—Skerrinish, for the past eighteen years. It was taken from us to suit Mr Peter Macdonald, who had two crofts in our township.

2292. Was there an old township on that land?—It was part of our own holding.

2293. You mean of Renetra?—Yes.

2294. What use is made of that land now; is it grazing?—I will tell you first, so that you may understand it. Skerrinish has three tenants paying rent on that ground; it is in the possession of parties who pay rent to Skerrinish.

2295. Are there any other lands that you would like to mention?—There is a bit that we specially wish to be added to our holdings.

2296. Do you wish these tenants removed?—No, but it is the grazing that we want. We would not wish to put out these parties.

2297. But you wish to put them out of their grazing, do you?—It is the grazing attached to these holdings that we wish to have, and which is not occupied by them, but by Skerrinish.

2298. Then you don't wish any arable land?—No; we want wintering for our sheep; we are losing money for our sheep without the wintering.

2299. Do these three tenants have any share in the grazing?—No; they pay simply for the grazing of any cows they have.

2300. On that land?—On that land. Two of them pay rent to Lord Macdonald, and they are getting cows' grass on Skerrinish.

2301. It may be convenient for us when we go to the ground to know their names. What are the names of these tenants?—Hector Mackenzie is one, Widow Morrison is another, and the third is Widow Donald Macleod.

2302. *Mr Sutherland.*—Are you speaking for yourself only, or are you a representative?—I am speaking for the township of fourteen crofters.

2303. And they have never, have they, expressed a desire to be removed to larger holdings?—I did not hear about that; I cannot say anything about that. There is another small farm that was added to our holding (Glenhaultin) which is rented too dear. We cannot keep it.

2304. *The Chairman.*—We cannot go into any question of rent; that is not our present object.

2305. *Mr Sutherland.*—Are there any other places, then, that, in your opinion, are fit for holdings except this piece of Renetra?—Yes; there are plenty places about.

2306. *Mr Macleod.*—Can you tell us how many sheep the Skerrinish farmer has under his present arrangement?—No. The burn is the march on the lower part of Skerrinish on this side; the lower part of Renetra was taken from us, which was keeping our cattle alive in the winter. One acre of such ground is better than 20 acres of hill ground.

2307. But you don't know the extent of it?—I cannot say; there are big pieces in it. There are between 25 and 30 acres, I am told.

2308. *The Chairman.*—Did you make any application to the Crofters Commission for enlargement of holdings by taking this land that you have in view?—No.

2309. Why not?—We did not consider it; it did not occur to us.

2310. *Mr Mackintosh,* Factor for Lord Macdonald.—I should like to ask if the witness himself wishes a new holding?—Yes, if I could get it, and I need it too.

2311. Do you wish to remove from where you are?—Yes, if I got a convenient place elsewhere; the place that we have is without hill. The place that I myself have just now is too far out on the hill, and I am getting old and heavy. Uig, Skye. — John Murchison.

2312. Are you a tenant of Renetra or Keistle?—Keistle.

2313. You speak of having been deprived of pasture in Renetra?

2314. *The Chairman.*—He says this land was formerly in their possession eighteen years ago.—*Mr Mackintosh.* I got notice that they were delegates from Glenhaultin; I would not have appeared here if I had known they were only from Keistle. I might have a few words to say in regard to Glenhaultin, now or at some other time.

2315. *The Chairman.*—Have you anything more to ask, Mr Mackintosh?—*Mr Mackintosh.* Not from this witness.

2316. *The Chairman.*—Do you wish to make any addition to what you have said, Murchison?—No, nothing further occurs to me; that is the special business that brought me here to-day.

DONALD MACINNES, Renetra, Snizort (21). (Examined in Gaelic through an Interpreter.) Donald Macinnes.

2317. *The Chairman.*—Are you a Renetra crofter?—My father is a crofter there.

2318. What do you wish to say?—Nothing, except to concur in what the previous witness said.

2319. How far is Renetra from Glenhaultin?—About a thousand yards.

2320. Are you representing Glenhaultin now on behalf of your father, or are you representing Renetra?—Both Glenhaultin and Renetra.

2321. What your father desires, as I understand, is an addition to his grazing by the restoration of the lower part of Renetra?—Yes, that it should be added to the grazing of the crofts which we occupy.

2322. Your father made no application to the Crofters Commission for enlargement, did he?—No, but that place was promised us when the lease of Skerrinish would be out; the lease has run out since then, and we have not got it.

2323. *Mr Sutherland.*—Is the new land that they want in addition to their own grazing contiguous to their present holdings?—Yes, there is just a fence between.

2324. *Mr Macleod.*—You don't know the rent of Renetra?—No.

2325. Why did your father not come here himself, is he unwell, or too old?—He had to go south to earn money to pay the landlord.

JAMES MACKINTOSH, Factor for Lord Macdonald, Ostaig, Sleat—*examined.* James Mackintosh.

2326. *The Chairman.*—Do you tender any evidence?—Yes; may I be allowed to say a few words regarding Glenhaultin?

2327. *The Chairman.*—Certainly. — Up to Whitsunday 1885, Glenhaultin was held by the late Rev. Angus Martin, the parish minister of Snizort, at a rent of £105. About that time it was thought that that place would be a suitable place to give to crofters as an addition to their holdings. The sheep stock on it was taken over at valuation in the usual way, and the place given to the crofters of Renetra and Keistle; fourteen crofters got each a share in the grazing of Glenhaultin.

2328. The whole of it?—The whole of Glenhaultin as formerly possessed by Rev. Mr Martin. The rent of £105 was reduced for the crofters to £70.

2329. This was given to them under the Act?—No, my lord, it was before the Act came into force. Sheep stock to the value of £588, 16s. 3d. was handed over to the crofters. Several gentlemen in the district interested in the crofters, who wished to befriend them,

Uig, Skye.

James Mackintosh.

became security for this amount. The amount was lifted from the Caledonian Bank in Portree, and the total amount for which these gentlemen became security was £608, 10s. 10d., the difference being interest and incidental expenses, I presume. The names and amounts of the cautioners respectively are as follows:—

D. L. Ross, Esq., of Cromarty, at that time Commissioner on Lord Macdonald's estate,	£93	12	6
Alexander Macdonald, Portree, who was then factor on the estate,	93	12	6
Lewis Mitchell, tacksman, Kingsburgh,	93	12	6
D. A. Clow, Cuidreach,	93	12	6
James Macdonald, tenant of Skerrinish,	93	12	6
John Mackay, Home Farm, Portree,	93	12	6
Rev. Joseph Lamont, Snizort,	46	15	10
	£608	10	10

As far as I can understand, the amount now due, at least the amount of the bills current, is as follows. After the place being for so many years in the possession of the crofters, there is still this amount due to the bank:—

I myself am security for	£90	0	0
I inherited the bill from Mr Macdonald, who became security for that amount as factor on the estate, and when I succeeded him I took over the bill.			
Mr Clow is also security for	90	0	0
Rev. Mr Lamont for	45	0	0
John Mackay of the Home Farm, for	16	4	0
James Macdonald of Skerrinish or his executors,	80	12	6
And the past due interest on that bill amounts to	15	0	0
D. M. Ross of Cromarty,	80	12	6
And there is past due interest due to the bank,	27	10	0
Total indebtedness to the bank,	£444	19	0

There may be more due, but I am not able to give any information. They are due two years' rent, £70. I have no information as to the stock now on the ground, but Mr Clow, who is one of the securities, has taken the greatest interest in the matter, and he will doubtless be able to supply any information in regard to the stock. The crofters when they got this land got the stock that was on the ground.

2330. They had not to stock it?—They got the stock on the ground. They did not treat the subject as a sheep grazing: they cultivated parts of it, cropping parts of the ground, and of course that curtailed the grazing for the sheep. I have no doubt the sheep stock suffered on that account. It is a mere matter of calculation when that sheep stock would be cleared by the crofters.

2331–32. Have you any addition to make, Mr Mackintosh?—I consider Glenhaultin is such a place as the Commission might be inclined to give to crofters were it not in their possession now; and the fate of the parties who became security for the amount advanced to them will no doubt be a warning to others who may be called upon to do the same again.

2333. Now tell me, of this total sum, for which these gentlemen became security, how much was paid by the crofters themselves?—Mr Mitchell's bill has been entirely paid up.

2334. By the crofters?—By the profit secured from the working of the farm.

2335. By the crofters?—Yes. They have been able to pay that, and to reduce Mr Mackay's.

2336. The late Mr Mitchell's bill was paid up by the profits derived from the crofters; what other sums, if any, were paid, or profits derived from, crofters?—They paid Mr Mackay's bill, except £16, 4s. The other bills have been reduced from the original amounts to what I have stated.

2337. Well, then, the difference between £444 and £608 has been got by the profits derived from the crofters?—Yes. And they have paid also some of the rent; they paid all the rent except two years' rent.

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James Mackintosh.

2338. You said there was due £70 of rent?—There is due two years' rent, £140.

2339. How much rent have they paid, then?—They have paid six years' rent.

2340. That is £420?—Yes.

2341. That makes £584 in all—£420 of rent and £164 of capital loan—that they have paid?—That is the gross payments made by them.

2342. What interest have they paid?—The interest, as far as I can make out, altogether has been £45, 10s.

2343. And have they paid that?—No.

2344. But my question is, What interest have they paid?—I am not aware.

2345. They have paid some, I suppose?—There has been some interest paid.

2346. The Caledonian Bank is the creditor?—The Caledonian Bank holds these bills.

2347. What rate of interest did it charge?—I am not aware.

2348. Something smart?—It ought to be, considering the risk.

2349. But, at any rate, you are satisfied the crofters did pay some interest?—Mr Clow is here; he manages the financial part of it, and perhaps the practical part, and he will be able to give you information as to that.

2350. Now what I want to be at, Mr Mackintosh, is this,—Do you think, speaking impartially, as I am sure you wish to do, that the crofters did what they could to meet the obligation imposed upon them by this land being taken over?—I am afraid they would not manage the place as Mr Clow wished them to do it. I am afraid he had a difficulty in doing that.

2351. That is hardly my point. There might be a difference of opinion as to how the place should be managed, and possibly a farmer might take one view and crofters a different view. But, allowing for all that, do you think they honestly made an endeavour to meet the obligations laid upon them or taken up by them? You see they have paid £584—not enough, no doubt, but still it is a deal of money—do you think they have fairly endeavoured, allowing for their want of knowledge perhaps in working a large tract of ground and a large sheep stock, to meet the obligations coming upon them?—No, I do not think they did.

2352. You think they could have paid a good deal more?—They might have been able to pay more from other sources.

2353. But do you think they could have paid a good deal more from the working of this grazing?—Not in the manner in which they work it.

2354. You think, I suppose, they meant to work it to a profit, and meant to pay when they began?—I have no doubt that was their intention.

2355. Had they applied for land before?—I am not aware; it was before my time.

2356. What I would like to be at is, how did this land come to be handed over to them? It was considered to be suitable for crofters, and so on; but had they asked for it?—I don't know. It was at the time that the crofter agitation or the difficulties of recovering rents were felt, and Mr Ross, who was a kind-hearted gentleman, thought that this might be a means of lessening the grievance, and giving the people a fair chance of doing well.

2357–58. Who started the movement?—I think it was Mr Ross or Mr Macdonald, Portree No doubt the crofters themselves would have been speaking about it, or they would not have got the neighbouring tacksmen interested in the matter.

2359. Who was the leading crofter on their side of the negotiation?—I don't know.

2360. *Mr Forsyth.*—Did you consider the rent when reduced to £70 a low rent for the times?—The rent was fixed before my time; and, considering the time it was held by Rev. Mr Martin at £105, I think the reduction of £35 was equal to any reduction that had been given on land at that time.

2361. And was the sheep stock handed over at a moderate valuation?—At a Whitsunday valuation.

2362. In the ordinary method of valuation?—In the ordinary method.

2363. *Mr Macleod.*—Can you tell me what the valuation was; can you give us any information as to the valuation, or would you prefer us to get that from Mr Clow?—Mr Clow can do so; it never came before me.

2364. Then there is the question about the stock: is the stock still on the ground, do you think?—Well, there is stock there; but, of course, it is not the same stock.

2365. But do you think there is an equal number of stock on the ground to-day to what there was when it was handed over to them?—I don't think there is, seeing they have cultivated part of the land.

2366. *Mr Sutherland.*—In your very interesting statement regarding this club farm, Mr Mackintosh, you have shown, I think, that in the six years the people of Glenhaultin have had this enlargement of their holdings they have paid off £608, or £628, 10s. taking all the charges,—that is what you have shown, is it not?—I don't exactly follow the figures. They had £608 to pay, and eight years' rent of £42, that is a gross obligation of £944.

2367. What I want you to do is to save myself making the calculation when their obligation would terminate at the rate at which it is going on. But I should think that in a term of years, such as 30 or 33, as is generally allowed, so far as I can see at the present moment without making the calculation, there is a probability that they would wipe off all their obligation?—That is so; but what of those securities who live out to the last? Some of the securities have died, and others must take up the obligations.

2368. Yes, yes, they would not lapse of course until they were paid off?—No.

2369. Then, with regard to the money that they have paid out of their holding, viz., the local rates, can you give us any idea what they would amount to?—I could not say for certain about that.

2370. *Mr Maccallum.*—At the time the crofters entered was the price of sheep very high?—I don't think they were very high at 1885; they have been higher in 1889.

2371. But during those six years prices have come down considerably, have they not?—Prices went up and have come down.

2372. When did they begin to come down?—Within the last ten years; prices were at their highest I suppose in 1890–91; they have come down in 1892.

2373. And they have got no reduction since they entered on this holding?—No, they have not.

2374. But other farms in Skye have been reduced in that time?—No farmer in Skye, on the Macdonald estate, who entered on a new arrangement at that term, or since that term, has got any reduction of rent.

2375. No reduction for six years?—No reduction since 1885. Any tenant who entered on a farm at Whitsunday 1885, or since then, has not in my recollection received any reduction.

2376. *Mr Sutherland.*—Do you mean independently of the lease?—Independently of the lease.

2377. *Mr Maccallum.*—And have the crofters been quite free in the management of the croft?—They were certainly allowed to manage it to the best advantage.

2378. Without any interference on the part of the guarantors?—I think Mr Mitchell and Mr Clow were specially appointed to see that the place was properly managed.

2379. Had they the appointment of the shepherd, for instance?—I am not aware.

2380. Then with regard to the arable land, do you think that the crofts are better cultivated now since they got the additional grazing?—I cannot speak as to how they were cultivated before, and therefore cannot make any comparison.

2381. Are they well cultivated now?—There are very few crofts in Skye well cultivated, and I do not think the crofts of Renetra and Keistle are better cultivated than others.

2382. Do they sow grass?

2383. *Mr Sutherland.*—It is not generally the custom.

2384. *Mr Maccallum.*—Have they improved their houses since they got the grazing?—I think the houses in Renetra and Keistle have improved in the last few years.

2385. *Mr Munro.*—I am rather interested in this venture, Mr Mackintosh, and I should like if possible to come to an approximate balance-sheet. The amount originally advanced was £608, 10s. 10d.; the amount now due is £444, 19s.; that is inclusive of interest no doubt?—Add £140 of rent, making £584.

2386. Yes, but I am speaking now with special reference to the bank loan. They are due to-day £444, 19s., inclusive of interest?—Yes, to the bank.

2387. Now, can you give us any idea of the value of the stock at the present moment?—No I cannot, for I do not know the number.

2388. Do you know whether it has appreciated or depreciated?—The price of stock is lower in general now than when they entered; but whether the quality of the stock is equal I cannot say.

2389. That is what I meant—you can have no idea beyond a rough sketch?—No.

2390. So that it is just possible they may have been making considerable progress since then, seeing that they paid £163, and have still the stock on hand?—I don't think they have the same kind of stock on hand now as they got when they entered; Mr Clow can probably give you exact information as to that. But their total indebtedness to-day is only £24 less than it was the day they entered.

2391. But it is not unusual in business transactions, Mr Mackintosh, even for business men to take a considerable time to pay off their indebtedness?—It is not usually allowed.

2392. I am familiar with transactions that took a much longer time to square up; but if we can estimate the amount or value of the stock in hand.—Mr Clow will give you information as to that.

2393. *The Chairman.*—What was the total area of additional land?—I have not beside me the book showing the area. I gave it to the surveyor, and he will give you that information. There is a book of areas of the Glenhaultin and Macdonald estates specially. I think it will be about 3000 acres, but I cannot say for certain.

2394. Well, now, how many crofters were to take that over?—Fourteen shares.

2395. What additional rent fell to be paid by each in respect of this enlargement?—Each of them paid one-fourteenth of £70, or £5.

DONALD ALEXANDER CLOW, Farmer, Cuidreach (42)—*examined.* — Donald Alexander Clow.

2396. *The Chairman.*—How do you describe yourself, Mr Clow?—As a farmer.

2397. And the name of your farm?—Cuidreach.

2398. You have heard the whole of Mr Mackintosh's evidence?—Yes.

2399. Now, do you know the circumstances under which this land was given over to the crofters?—I think so.

2400. Well, just tell us?—When Mr Martin gave it up they applied to Lord Macdonald for it; it was just at the beginning of the great crofter agitation.

2401. You mean the crofters applied?—The crofters applied for it. Mr Ross of Cromarty was Commissioner then, and I suppose, to keep them quiet, they gave them this piece of land.

2402. The whole of it?—The whole of the Glenhaultin farm.

2403. What was the stock on the farm at the time?—I cannot tell you that. I did not know I should be asked to speak about it, and I am not prepared with figures.

2404. You have been referred to by Mr Mackintosh as knowing all about it. What was the stock they got?—I cannot say.

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2405. Can you give us any idea?—I cannot say as to the numbers on the ground then.

2406. What was the specific arrangement made with the crofters? You became obligant on a bill to the amount of £93, 12s. 6d.?—Yes.

2407. Well, you will know all about the transaction. What was the specific arrangement made with the crofters?—They got this farm of Glenhaultin at a rent of £70, if they could find security for the stock, which they could not get without security.

2408. And the security was as described by Mr Mackintosh?—Yes.

2409. Now, after the land was handed over to the crofters, with the stock upon it, who managed the ground?—I was appointed one of the managers.

2410. Was there any one else along with you?—The late Mr Mitchell of Kingsburgh.

2411. Anybody else?—No more.

2412. Who appointed you?—The other securities and the crofters.

2413. Was the bank one of the appointers?—I did not hear.

2414. Who managed the farm, along with you and Mr Mitchell, on behalf of the crofters?—Nobody; we managed the whole thing ourselves.

2415. And the crofters took nothing to do with it, except that they were parties to your appointment?—They were seeing what was going on.

2416. Was there no crofter manager along with you?—No.

2416*a*. Then how was the stock dealt with from year to year?—Just in the usual way of farming—the usual cast was sold at the highest prices we could get.

2417. Then was the English of it this, that you and the late Mr Mitchell just went on managing the farm as if it had been your own?—Just the same.

2418. So that, suppose there had been no transaction with the crofters at all, but by some circumstances you and he had come in as obligants on bills to manage this farm, the result would have been what has occurred?—Just the same.

2419. You don't blame the crofters then for the shortcoming?—No, no.

2420. *Mr Macleod.*—You have said, Mr Clow, that you don't know the number of sheep that were on the farm when it was entered on by the crofters. Do you know anything about the price—what price they paid?—I don't remember the price.

2421. You will remember the circumstances, though, about the valuation?—Well, yes.

2422. And the valuators?—Yes.

2423. Who were the valuators?—Mr Macdonald, Ord, who acted for the outgoing tenant, and a Mr Forbes at Portree for the incoming tenants.

2424. Did you consider that it was a fair valuation, or was it rather heavy?—It was just about the usual prices at the time.

2425. Were the sheep blackfaced?—No, they were Cheviots. They are blackfaced now.

2426. Why did you change the stock?—Because the crofter stock was blackfaced, and we thought it would be better to have the two stocks the same.

2427. Do you think there was any loss in the change?—There was a lot of loss.

2428. And you think that to a considerable extent would account for it not doing so well as it might have done?—Yes, a great deal.

2429. You think, considering everything, you have done fairly well?—We have done just as well as we could.

2430. But, taking all the circumstances into account, you think that, considering the times and the changing of the stock, you did fairly well?—Oh, yes.

2431. I daresay you, as one of the obligants to these bills, will know the rate of interest that was charged by the bank?—I am not very sure.

2432. It was an ordinary bill?—An ordinary bill.

2433. And ordinary bills have been running, at least, 6 per cent. during that time?—Oh, no; about 5 per cent.

2434. You think that the average would be about 5 per cent.?—Yes.

2435. Not more?—I don't think it would be more.

Uig, Skye.
Donald Alexander Clow.

2436. Do you know about the rent? Are the crofters jointly and severally liable for the rent and for their obligations, or are they just liable for their shares?—The crofters did not pay any of the rent: the rent was paid from the money made out of the farm. All the rent that was paid was paid by me since Mr Mitchell died.

2437. But you don't know whether the proprietor holds all fourteen liable for the rent, or only for shares?—I believe they are entered separately in the valuation roll.

2438. As to the reduction on the bills, has that been done by you?—Yes.

2439. There has been no money contributed by the crofters?—They paid Mr Mackay's bill except the £16.

2440. That bill would not then be paid out of the profits from the sheep?—No.

2441. It was reduced from £90 to £16?—Yes.

2442. So that the crofters have not only not received any profit from the stock since they got this farm of Glenhaultin, but they have actually paid out of their own pockets a sum of £74?—They paid Mr Mackay's bill.

2443. For the sake of making out a fair balance-sheet, might I ask whether you received any remuneration yourself for all the trouble you have taken in connection with the farm?—Not a penny. Whatever I spent I got.

2444. Nor any of the others?—No.

2445. There has been no outlay for management at all?—Not a penny.

2445*a*. *Mr Sutherland.*—I think that with regard to the responsibility of this venture that attaches to the crofters, they have not much, so far as the success or non-success of this experiment is concerned?—Well, they have been cropping some.

2446. But they have had no voice, practically, in the management?—They could have the place.

2447. But they have not the place?—No.

2448. *Mr Maccallum.*—Are they managing their own crofts pretty well?—Oh, just like the ordinary crofter.

2449. But they have been improving the houses, have they not?—I don't see very much improvement in the houses.

2450. *Mr Munro.*—I understood from Mr Mackintosh, Mr Clow, that you could give us a fair idea of the state of the stock at this moment on the farm of Glenhaultin. Can you do so now, after thinking over the matter a little?—I don't believe there is much difference between the value of the stock, if prices were to-day as high as they were when the stock was taken over. But the stock has improved the last two or three years. Of course, in the changing of the stock, we lost a number of them.

2451. That is, estimating the value at the date on which they went in. The stock to-day is considerably enhanced in price. Is that the case?—I think so.

2452. It would bring more?—Yes, if the prices were the same.

2453. So that the venture has resulted in a considerable profit?—I am not very sure of the great profit, but there is no loss.

2454. But if the stock to-day is more valuable than when they entered, and they managed to pay £163 to account of their obligation, then, of course, the venture must have resulted in a profit; that is the precise state of the balance-sheet?—There would be no loss on it. I do not think there would be any loss even with the low prices.

2455. Must there not be a profit, seeing they have paid £163 apart from the valuation?—Yes.

2456. *The Chairman.*—Did the crofters put any sheep stock of their own upon this ground?—They put a few one year, about 40 small lambs.

2457. Nothing to affect the grazing?—No, nothing.

2458. Did they put any cattle stock?—They used to have a beast each there in summer.

2459. There was no objection to that?—No, no.

2460. That does not affect the matter?—Not a thing.

2461. You say they cultivated arable,—was it to any very great extent?—Not very great.

2462. You and your colleague, Mr Mitchell, did not make any complaint to them, I suppose, of their taking in a little arable?—No, it only improved. It was old arable, which was all under fog.

2463. They did it good?—Yes.

2464. And did not steal very much from the grazing?—Very little, because they had it in winter. It was the low land.

2465. Which of the crofters concerned in this, do you know, happens to know most about it?—Alexander Lamont, jun., who is present.

2466. *Mr Sutherland.*—I asked for the calculation from Mr Mackintosh, and he thought that perhaps you might assist me. Have you considered in what time they would terminate their liability altogether, at the rate at which they are going on?—I was just keeping it as far away as possible.

2467. It is a little over twenty years, is it not?—It will be all that.

2468. And they are paying at the same time the high rate of 5 per cent. interest upon the money advanced?—I suppose so.

2469. You have not made the exact calculation as to the number of years?—No.

2470. It is less than thirty, is it not?—I would think so.

2471. *The Chairman.*—I should have asked you this question, Mr Clow. Does the whole of this arrangement between Lord Macdonald and the crofters, and between you and the late Mr Mitchell and the crofters, stand upon verbal agreement?—I had to sign a trust deed. I was appointed a trustee over this place.

2472. By whom?—It was written by Mr Macdonald, factor for Lord Macdonald.

2473. Who granted the trust deed?—The crofters. We were appointed by the crofters and by the securities, in the deed.

2474. Have you got the deed?—Mr Macdonald has it.

2475. I should like very much to see that deed. On what narrative does it proceed?—I am not very sure.

2476. Have you a copy of it?—No.

2477. But the transaction took the form of a trust deed by the crofters, to which you and Mr Mitchell were parties?—Yes.

2478. Anybody else?—I am not very sure.

2479. Is Mr Alexander Macdonald in possession of the deed?—I think so.

2480. Did he act as agent for all the parties concerned?—Yes.

2481. And drew up the deed, and saw to its execution?—Yes.

2482. *The Chairman* to Mr Mackintosh.—Have you a copy of that deed, Mr Mackintosh?—*Mr Mackintosh.* I have not.

2483. *The Chairman* to Mr Maclachlan, Banker, Portree.—Have you a copy of it, Mr Maclachlan?—*Mr Maclachlan.* I believe I have. I think I have all the details of the valuation and everything.*

2484. *Mr Mackintosh.*—May I be allowed to put a question to Mr Clow?—*The Chairman.* Certainly.

2485. *Mr Mackintosh.*—The crofters paid up a certain part of Mr Mackay's bill, reducing it from £90 to £16. Did the benefit they derived from cropping the ground amount in value to that difference?—*Witness.* Oh, I daresay it did.

2486. *The Chairman.*—Is that a mere rough estimate?—*Witness.* Oh, just a mere rough estimate: I am not at all sure.

2487. *Mr Mackintosh.*—The total obligation by the crofters just now is £584. It was originally £608, so that at the present time their obligation is only £24 less than at entry. They have had eight years' possession of the land, so that they have paid up on an average £3 per annum. At the same rate, £584 divided by three brings out a period of 194 years as the time it will take to repay the loan?

2488. *The Chairman.*—That is not a question to Mr Clow. Before we leave this matter, we would like to know if any of the crofters are present who can tell the story from their point of view. Is Mr Lamont, jun., here, or Mr Lamont, sen.?

* See below, Question 8615.

ALEXANDER LAMONT, JUN., Keistle (46)—*examined.*

2489. *The Chairman.*—Have you a holding as a crofter?—Yes.

2490. Where?—At Keistle.

2491. What rent do you pay?—£6.

2492. What was your rent before it was dealt with by the Crofters Commission?—£8, 5s.

2493. You had something to do, I understand, with the management of the Glenhaultin grazing?—No, not with the management.

2494. Can you tell us anything about it?—I have a share of it from the trustees, that is all.

2495. Are you in the same position as the other crofters who have a share?—The very same.

2496. Did you confer with the late Mr Mitchell and with Mr Clow as to the management?—We all agreed to that.

2497. Was the thing entirely in their hands?—Yes.

2498. The crofters then, as I understand you, took nothing to do with it during the time it was in their possession?—They would always consult us before they did anything.

2499. The crofters and they worked harmoniously together?—We never cast out.

2500. Was the deficiency due to bad management, or decline of prices, or to bad times?—I don't think it was bad management, but at the time we took the farm there was a big slice of it cut off: perhaps that was the reduction.

2501. You mean cut off the grazing?—Cut off the grazing.

2502. Before being given to the crofters?—Most certainly.

2503. Who got it?—It was added to the farm of Scorrybreck.

2504. How much was taken from Glenhaultin and added to Scorrybreck?—It is impossible for me to say. It was a good run.

2505. Sheep run?—Yes.

2506. What would the carry of the run be?—I cannot give evidence on that.

2507. Can you tell me what the consequent reduction upon the stock was from the days of Mr Martin, by reason of the loss of this grazing?—We were told that Mr Martin paid £105, and we got it for £70; but a fence was erected first, and then this fence was knocked down by hammers and axes in the presence of the proprietor and the trustee by the crofters from the one end to the other. Then another fence was put up, but Mr Martin never agreed to this march. He said his march was further on, but we were told that unless we took it at this march we would not get it.

2508. Who told you that?—The factors and the ground-officer. But Mr Martin told us not to take it at this march. He advised us to get a map from Black in Edinburgh, and to go by it. I don't think we ever saw that map.

2509. But, at any rate, was there a considerable stretch of ground taken away?—Yes.

2510. Allowing for the rent of the land that was taken away, was there any real reduction in the rent after all?—There was from £105 to £50.

2511. To £70?—To £70.

2512. But then you lost land?—Yes.

2513. Would that account for the difference?—So I believe.

2514. Then there was no reduction of rent in reality?—No, but we were promised to have a reduction. We had a meeting with the two trustees and the factor; we got notice to have a meeting in the Royal Hotel, Portree, and at the meeting there the factor promised, in the presence of the two trustees, that we would get about £18 of reduction. The trustees complained first that they would put it off unless they got that, and the

Uig, Skye. — Alexander Lamont, Jun.

factor promised that. But after all the thing was left where it was, and the rent was put to the credit.

2515. Can you tell us anything more about this grazing?—We were trying to get it clear off our hands as well as we could. Everything was in our power; we were working it and paying it; we put on 60 of our own sheep, and we paid our own rates every year.

2516. You mentioned the trustees in the deed. Who were all the trustees?—Only Mr Clow and Mr Mitchell.

2517. Was that the whole?—That is the whole—two trustees. Mr Mitchell was a very kind gentleman to us, and he gave us fourteen years.

2518. To work it out?—To work it out.

2519. Has any trustee been assumed since Mr Mitchell's death?—No.

2520. The only trustee is Mr Clow?—Yes.

2521. *Mr Forsyth.*—I should like to ask whether the shifting of the stock from Cheviot to blackfaced was not the occasion of a good deal of loss?—I believe it was, at the beginning, for the first two years.

2522. But now that the shifting has been made, do you think that the blackfaced sheep would do better there?—I think they will now. They are doing that.

2523. And the place is fairly stocked now with good blackfaces?—I don't know.

2524. Have you any idea whether it is much understocked, taking the difference between what the land will carry in Cheviot and blackfaced?—I think it has been under, since I first saw it.

2525. *Mr Macleod.*—We were told by Mr Mackintosh that one thing which had gone against this farm doing well was that the crofters had cultivated some of the land, and in that way reduced the amount of feed that there was for the sheep. Was there much land cultivated in the farm?—In my opinion it was to the benefit of the sheep, all that we cultivated of it.

2526. It is out in grass now?—Out in grass now.

2527. And it is better than it was before you cultivated it?—Better in the winter.

2528. *Mr Sutherland.*—Do you admit that there has been any failure in this grazing? Are not you better off since you got it, than you were before you got it?—Yes, most certainly.

2529. So you do not admit that it was in any way a failure?—No.

2530. You believe it was a success?—Yes, and it is so still, although we met with difficulties.

2531. You had certain difficulties in the way to begin with?—Yes, and paying heavy interest on the money.

2532. It was stated that the Rev. Mr Martin had the land for £105, and that when you got it the rent was reduced to £70. But you have not the same amount of land that Mr Martin had?—Perhaps he had it all over.

2533. As a matter of fact, do you know that you did not get all the land that Mr Martin had?—Mr Martin never had a march fence.

2534. Have you got the same amount of land that Mr Martin paid £105 for?—No, and he told us that we had not.

2535. So you do not consider that the experiment was made in your case under favourable conditions?—No.

2536. They were very unfavourable, as far as the rent was concerned?—Very; according to the rent.

2537. And other conditions?—Yes.

2538. Such as having stock that was not fitted for you to carry on?—Yes. Another thing, Mr Martin had a glebe, and he would take his hoggs to the glebe and winter them there. We have to put them away to wintering, and pay 6s. or 7s. for them.

2539. And notwithstanding all these unfavourable conditions, you are in a much better position than you were before?—Yes.

2540. *Mr Maccallum.*—Then do you consider that the rent is too high?—Yes, and so did the trustees.

2541. Did the trustees ask for a reduction?—They told us they did.

2542. I think it was stated that you were promised a reduction; what reduction were you promised?—The factor stated in the presence of fourteen of us, and the two trustees, that it would come about £18 off the whole of the farm, and he said that would be about the same as other farms were getting.

2543. That would leave £52; but that would make a fair rent for it?—Yes.

2544. How did it come about that that promise was not implemented?—I don't know.

2545. It was distinctly given?—The trustee never told us, and I for my part never asked him, but he said when he paid the rent it was only put to his credit; he paid £50 for us.

2546. And if you had got that reduction, you would not now be in arrear?—I don't think it, though we might be pressed well.

2547. It was a reduction that the trustees thought reasonable?—Certainly. They said they would give it up unless they got that.

2548. And they were men who ought to know the value?—They should. They were two big farmers.

2549. So that in their opinion, as well as your own, the rent was too high?—Yes.

2550. And £52 would be a fair rent?—Yes.

2551. *Mr Munro.*—I wish to bring out the result of this transaction from a commercial point of view. How many years is it since you took possession of Glenhaultin?—About eight years.

2552. At that time you borrowed from the bank a sum of over £608?—Yes.

2553. And you have paid to account of that about £163?—Yes.

2554. How much total rent did you pay during the eight years?—It is added in the valuation roll separate to each of us; and we paid the rates ourselves, not the trustees.

2555. Was it £420 you paid in rent during the six years?—I cannot tell that.

2556. You know the value of the stock when you went in; can you tell us what the value of the stock is at this time? Is it less or greater than when you entered?—I am not very sure, but I think the ewe with lamb made £2, 5s.; that is my opinion.

2557. But is the gross value of the stock less or greater than when you entered?—The valuation day we would not get our lambs cut unless they would be paid first.

2558. But is your stock as numerous to-day as when you entered?—I don't think they are less at all events.

2559. So that you have managed to pay £163 to account of the loan, £420 in rent, and your stock is probably as valuable as when you entered?—Yes.

2560. Were those eight years exceptionally favourable to farmers, or otherwise?—Most of them were very severe.

2561. Bad years?—Bad years.

2562. *The Chairman.*—Did either of the trustees speak to you personally about the proposed reduction of rent?—Yes, they spoke to us before the meeting, and also after the meeting.

2563. You mean both Mr Mitchell and Mr Clow?—I don't think Mr Mitchell lived long after.

2564. Did they both speak to you?—I don't think Mr Mitchell did.

2565. Mr Clow spoke to you, did he?—Yes.

2566. What did he say to you?—We were there, the fourteen of us and the two trustees, in a room in the Royal Hotel, and the factor said we would get about £18.

2567. My question is, what did Mr Clow say to you?—He said that he and Mr Mitchell were to put it off unless they got this reduction.

2568. What reduction?—About such a percentage; I don't remember.

2569. But I would like if you could remember what Mr Clow said to you about the reduction of rent?—That is more than I can say.

2570. Did nothing pass at the meeting with regard to a reduction of rent?—No, not that I heard.

2571. Then there was nothing said at the meeting about a reduction of rent?—Yes, the factor said likely

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we would get off about £18, and I know well what I said myself. I said we did not get the £20 off, and he said perhaps we would get that off through time.

2572. But was there a promise made of a reduction?—I don't know. I had nothing to do with that; it was the trustees.

2573. But did the factor make any promise of a reduction of rent?—No, he did not.

2574. No arrangement was come to for a reduction of rent?—Nobody told us that.

2575. That, perhaps, you would get off £18?—That we would get that off, as the other big farmers were getting.

2576. Was that Mr Mackintosh?—Yes.

2577. Now, to your knowledge, did anything more happen, or was anything more said, regarding a reduction of rent?—No, not to my knowledge; but Mr Clow was always telling us that only his rent was put to his credit.

2578. Now, why was it that the crofters, as you said, removed the fence with axes and hammers?—Because the fence was erected on a large piece of Glenhaultin, taking a large space off the Glen and adding it to Scorrybreck.

2579. And it was for that reason they took it down?—Yes.

2580. Was that done during the time of Mr Martin's lease?—Yes.

2581. Then it was before the crofters got it?—Yes.

2582. Then, when the crofters came to get the land, they saw that they were only getting the smaller portion?—Yes.

2583. They were not deceived in any way?—No, unless they would take it along the way the officer went they would lose it.

2584. But they were asked to take the land as it had been restricted?—Most certainly.

2585. You were only offered the land on the one side of the fence?—On the one side of the fence. The first fence was broken down.

2586. Then the rent you agreed to pay, or which was agreed to be paid, was a rent for the land as fenced off?—Of £70.

2587. Of £70 for the land that was fenced off?—Yes.

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DONALD ALEX. CLOW, Farmer, Cuidreach (recalled).

2588. *Mr Maccallum.*—About this reduction of rent, was there a promise of a reduction to the trustees by the factor?—He did not give us an actual promise, but he said he would do his best.

2589. He held out hopes?—Yes, he held out hopes.

2590. And you thought it would be a very reasonable thing to grant this reduction?—Yes, we just asked the reduction that the crofters were getting at the time from the Crofters Commission.

2591. He held out hopes that you would get that, and he has not implemented that?—No.

2592. *The Chairman*, on the suggestion of Mr Myles Macinnes.—Was it owing to this prospect that was held out by Mr Mackintosh that the rent fell into arrear?—I am afraid not altogether.

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ALEXANDER MACMILLAN, Crofter, Herbusta, Kilmuir (38). (Examined in Gaelic through an Interpreter.)

2593. *The Chairman.*—What is the name of your holding?—Herbusta.

2594. What is your rent?—£6, 15s.

2595. And what was it formerly?—£8 before it was fixed by the Crofters Commission; but we got an addition to our holding to the value of 25s.

2596. Not under the Act of Parliament?—No.

2597. Was Mr Macintyre hearing about that the other day?—Yes.

2598. What is the name of the farm nearest your township of Herbusta?—Monkstadt and Duntulm.

2599. Dealing, in the first place, with the farm of Monkstadt, is there land there to which you wish to call our attention?—Yes; but I was born in Uig here, and evicted by oppression. Uig, Skye. — Alexander Macmillan.

2600. We are more anxious to hear about land that is for our consideration at present than about these old matters?—The land out of which we were evicted is there, suitable for crofter occupancy.

2601. I will come to that, but will you kindly deal with the farm of Monkstadt in the meantime?—There is plenty of agricultural land in Monkstadt—it could support 100 crofters in good circumstances—all at present in possession of one man.

2602. Is that Mr Ferguson?—Yes.

2603. Was that land which you say would accommodate 100 crofters formerly in the occupation of crofters?—Yes; eight or nine separate townships.

2604. Give us their names.—Linicro, Grealin, Feaull, Holl, Dillista, Knockow, Saltanill, Lachasay, Score, Osmigary. There is a piece of ground attached to the farm which was in possession of crofters before, being the site of a lake that was drained—Loch Chaluim Chille.

2605. Is all that rich land now?—Yes.

2606. What side of the farm is it on?—On the east.

2607. And how far from the steading?—Part of it surrounds it, and other parts are miles away from it.

2608. Do you know the total size of Monkstadt farm?—I know the stock that it carries.

2609. Tell us the stock?—About 3000 sheep, to the best of my knowledge, and the previous tenant had 400 head of cattle on it, besides that number of sheep, and about 50 horses.

2610. What cattle and horses, if any, has the present tenant?—I believe he has about that number of cattle, though not quite that number of horses.

2611. You have mentioned the ground where these old townships were. Is there any other part of the farm, at a distance from this, where there is land of the same kind?—No; there is no other land except the sites of these townships.

2612. You say that land would accommodate 100 crofters. What size of holding would you give to each?—As much as would carry eight cows and a pair of horses.

2613. Arable and grazing to carry eight cows and a pair of horses?—Yes.

2614. Taking your own individual case, could you stock that land?—Yes, and more than that, if I could get the land of my forefathers.

2615. And you could put up the necessary buildings?—Yes, I could put up such buildings as would suit me until I could gradually improve them. I am quite willing to live in a tent until I could put up better.

2616. Is there a strong feeling among your friends and neighbours to get additional crofts such as you have been describing?—Yes, especially two of my neighbours.

2617. Who are they?—Widow Ann Macdonald and Widow Christina Macdonald; very anxious to shift back to the lands where we were born.

2618. But I suppose we may take it neither you nor they would go back to the lands where you were born unless you could work them to a profit?—No, we desire to get better holdings, and go back to these lands simply to better our circumstances.

2619. Quite so. Have you many cottars in your district?—Yes; but not in my particular township, where there is only one.

2620. Where are the cottars most numerous?—In Camusmore and Bornaskitaig.

2621. Speaking roughly—I don't want precise figures unless you can give them—how many cottars will there be in Camusmore and Bornaskitaig?—About thirty, between both townships.

2622. And how many crofters?—Fifty in Bornaskitaig.

2623. And in Camusmore?—In Camusmore there are only cottars.

2624. How many cottars are there in Camusmore?—About fourteen.

Uig, Skye.
—
Alexander Macmillan.

2625. These places are close to each other?—Yes; marching with each other.

2626. Have these cottars, or most of them, got some stock?—A few sheep.

2627. Have none of them any cattle?—A short time ago they got a few sheep; some of them have a cow. Most of them would keep a cow if they got land.

2628. They have no land?—No.

2629. Have they any patches of potato ground?—Neighbours give them that.

2630. Do they pay any rent for their grazing or for their patches of potato ground?—They give work for the potato ground.

2631. Would it be an advantage for these cottars, and for the crofters also, if they got suitable holdings elsewhere?—Yes; nothing would be of so much advantage.

2632. Is it within your knowledge that they desire to get such holdings?—Yes.

2633. The crofters would like it, because it would relieve them of a burden, and the cottars would like it, because it would improve their circumstances?—Yes; quite so.

2634. How did these cottars come to be there,—I mean, what is the general explanation of it?—Most of them have been shifted from crofts, and flung out, without a place to go to.

2635. And many of them, I daresay, are related to the crofters in Bornaskitaig?—Yes; most of them are crofters' sons.

2636. Would you say, putting the cottars and the crofters together, that in Camusmore and Bornaskitaig there are far too many people crowded together?—Yes; four times more than there ought to be.

2637. Now, passing from the farm of Monkstadt to the farm of Duntulm, do you know it pretty well?—Yes; every inch of it.

2638. Is there land of a similar kind there?—Yes; land that was occupied in former times by crofters. Those that left these townships never forget it as long as they live.

2639. Are these lands now suitable for cultivation and occupation?—Yes.

2640. Can you give us the names of the old townships there?—Shulista, Erisco, Aird, Duntulm, Brunistad, Lachasay, Urucag, Glomaig, and Scuddaburgh.

2641. How many crofters would these lands accommodate in your estimation?—About forty.

2642. In holdings similar to what you have described?—Yes; and according to the ability of the people.

2643. Are these townships too closely crowded together?—In these townships that I mentioned there is nobody at all.

2644. Were these townships scattered or on a compact piece of ground?—They are scattered throughout Duntulm.

2645. Is there any other part of Duntulm farm to which you would like to ask our attention?—No; except the grazing land which Kilmuir lost about twenty years ago.

2646. What is the name of that grazing ground?—Braemore, Glen Sleisdale.

2647. Was that land taken away about twenty-eight years ago, and added to the farm of Duntulm?—Yes; and the land that was left to us was doubled in rent.

2648. You were going to begin by telling us something you thought of importance with regard to the land near here?—Yes; it was there I was born.

2649. What land is that?—Peinchoinnich.

2650. Does that land belong to a farm now?—It belongs to the tack occupied by James Urquhart.

2651. That is Glenuig?—Yes.

2652. Is it suitable for crofters?—Yes; there is not the like of it in the island.

2653. It is the best bit of Skye?—It had that name.

2654. What is the extent of it,—how many would it carry?—There were six crofters in the township in which I was born, and I think it would accommodate four now.

2655. Were you born in the township of Peinchonnich?—Yes. It would now accommodate four enlarged holdings. My mother was evicted twice, though her rent was paid. She could not get leave to put the manure that she had on the one holding there; she had to carry it to her new holding.

2656. *Mr Forsyth.*—You say that you would like land for eight cows and a pair of horses. How much arable do you think you would need to carry that stock?—Twenty acres.

2657. And some infield grazing besides?—Yes; for summer grazing.

2658. By eight cows, do you mean eight milch cows, with their followers?—Yes; to provide a living to a crofter who could keep such a holding, and a number of sheep besides.

2659. I was going to ask that. How many sheep would each have?—Thirty ewes and their followers.

2660. Do you think you could winter eight milch cows and their followers with a croft of 16 acres, or say, 16 to 20 acres?—Yes; or up to 26 acres. There is plenty ground there to afford such crofts, and people quite willing to give the value for them.

2661. How would you work the land? would it be on the ordinary crofters' rotation of half oats and half potatoes? or would you propose to alter the system if you had plenty land?—I would leave the third part of it under sown grass, and I would have part of it in potatoes and turnips and part under oats; and I have both the knowledge and ability of working such a croft in that way if I only could get it.

2662. You have means to stock a croft of that kind at once?—I have a little stock, and, besides, I could manage it if I could only get the land.

2663. What rent do you think would be fair for a holding of that kind?—I think we would be quite willing to pay the rent that was on it when we left it.

2664. But you did not leave such a large holding as that, did you?—The croft out of which we were put contained about 15 acres of arable ground, and I think if we had a croft and a half of such a size to-day it would be a very good croft.

2665. Then you are not able to state what you think would be a fair rent for the new holding?—My father and grandfather and predecessors had such a croft for £7.

2666. Have you made any calculation as to the amount of stock you would sell each year so as to produce the same return for yourself, besides paying the rent?—Yes; I have considered that.

2667. Can you give any description of the prices, or any result of your consideration?—That would be according to the prices; they would be up and down; but I would make my living out of such a croft.

2668. Taking the average prices, you think you could make your living at a fair rent?—Yes. I think, judging by the average of past years, I would both make a living and pay a rent out of such a croft. I am very sure of that; only to get the land at the rent it was before.

2669. How would it be with a man who has not got means like yourself? how would he get on in a holding like that without means?—I believe that he would get on in such a holding, even entering it with borrowed capital.

2670. Would he not be in difficulty the first two or three years until his young stock came forward for selling?—Yes; but then there is the difficulty of supporting a family in the present day without land.

2671. Then, even if he had to pay interest on borrowed money, you think he could get on?—Yes, I am sure of it; if the man could manage the croft properly.

2672. But he could not pay more than £7 for the holding you have described?—I would like to have the croft at its value, more than that if it was worth it.

2673. Have you considered the fencing and the draining that might be necessary in some places?—Yes, I could do all that myself.

2674. You would put in stone drains if required?—Yes, I have done that already; thousands of 'rods' of draining without anything for it, in bad ground.

2675. *Mr Macleod.*—You said there were some thirty cottars between Camusmore and Bornaskitaig. How many of these do you think would be able to take holdings, supposing suitable ones were available?—About twenty of them.

2676. You think twenty of them would be able without assistance?—Yes, but not crofts of any great size. There is a man here to speak for the cottars, who knows more about them than I do.

2677. What is his name?—John Macpherson.

2678. You are appearing more particularly for the crofters?—Yes.

2679. *Mr Sutherland.*—One question with regard to the rent. In the event of your getting a croft such as you describe, I suppose you would be content to pay the rent that the Crofters Commission would fix?—Yes.

2680. And, doubtless, it would be easier to pay an increased rent for an increased holding, than the present rent for the holding you have?—Yes, it would, than even the dues for the present holding.

2681. You stated you were a crofter yourself; have you been brought up on a croft?—Yes, and my forefathers were all crofters. It was by the forced removals we had to undergo that we lost a number of our family.

2682. *Mr Mackenzie*, Factor for Baird's Trustees.—May I be allowed to put one or two questions to the witness?—*The Chairman.*—Certainly: let us hear them.

2683. *Mr Mackenzie.*—How many crofters are there on Osmigarry?—I heard that there were three, but I never saw any of them on it.

2684. Do you know the last tenant of Osmigarry?—Yes, I was speaking to an old woman who had land in Osmigarry, and she is living to-day.

2685. Are you aware that there was only one man, Donald Macleod, living there about a hundred years ago?—I know that there was.

2686. Are you aware that it was afterwards occupied by the parish minister?—Yes, I saw it in possession of two ministers of the parish.

2687. Can you state any other one?—No; but I was told by the woman, to whom I have referred, that a man of the name of Macpherson had it.

2688. You spoke about Feaull: in whose possession is it at present?—It is in possession of about eighty crofters to-day, for grazing.

2689. You spoke also of Linicro: can you tell about what date the crofters went there?—Forty years ago. I have seen the people who were living there.

2690. That was in the time of Lord Macdonald?—Yes.

2691. Have you any idea how or why they left that place?—It was so long ago, I cannot tell.

2692. Was it about the time of the destitution?—I cannot say whether it was landlord's oppression or the famine, or what it was.

2693. Then as to Bornaskitaig, how long is it since crofters occupied that place?—I heard that it was before then occupied by three; there are old men here belonging to the place.

2694. Are you also aware that it was occupied by one tenant at that time, Donald Macdonald?—No, I know nothing about that.

2695. And there is Knockow: when were the crofters there?—I have seen an old woman who was born there.

2696. Are you aware that over a hundred years ago it was occupied by one tenant, Alexander Macdonald?—I don't know.

2697. You spoke also of Lachasay: are you aware of any tenants by name that have been living there?—Yes, I knew two or three that were there.

2698. And are you aware that they are living there still?—No.

2699. What name did the place now called Peingown formerly have?—I only knew it by the name of Peingown.

2700. Not by the name of Lachasay?—Score is attached to Peingown.

2701. And practically also Lachasay is attached to Peingown?—Yes, I have known it by that name.

2702. You spoke also about Glenuig. I am not in a position to enter into the details of this matter, I take it from the late factor who had to do with this. In the Report of Lord Napier's Commission, he says:—'I have only seen two or three forcible evictions carried 'out by officers of the law for the last twenty years' (Q. 8318); and about the tenant of Glenuig, 'I have 'seen the tenants of Glenuig voluntarily going at the 'request of the proprietor, but they were not turned out 'by officers' (Q. 8319)?—I entirely repudiate the accuracy of that; I saw the summons of removal being served, and the people weeping and wailing.

2703. Is it not the fact that Colonel Fraser gave new crofts and new houses to the tenants removed?—He gave us new holdings certainly, but we were no better off than if we were planted on the sea-shore, we had no houses. We got nothing for the stock that we had upon our holdings. We were deprived of our hill pasture, and had no place to keep our sheep on. We got nothing for the houses we left behind, and we were sleeping in houses with the snow falling on our beds.

2704. Are you aware that Colonel Fraser paid the tenants for their houses when removed, or gave them compensation for them?—Not a penny, unless we would set fire to them. I was an eye-witness of the performance that day.

2705. How many acres of arable land have you got just now?—Eight acres 22 poles, with 2 acres 1 rood 19 poles of outrun, and a share of 201 acres of common pasture. It is reckoned at 8 acres, but it will not yield as much as sow it back, and has not done so for the last twelve years.

2706. *Mr Sutherland.*—As the point has been introduced, I think I might have some questions to ask the witness with regard to these evictions, though I deprecate their introduction altogether. The matter has been introduced, and we are bound to ask some questions to rebut the statements made.—*Mr Mackenzie.* I did not introduce the subject; I merely asked for certain information to elicit the point as to the people who occupied these townships.

2707. *Mr Sutherland.*—I wish one point cleared up, Mr Chairman. The witness stated that certain families were in the township known as Knockow. Mr Mackenzie stated that there was only one tenant. Does the witness still say that there were more than one tenant?—The outline of the crofts is still visible on the ground.

2708. Is it not possible that Mr Mackenzie might have referred to the tenant principal, and that the witness might have referred to sub-tenants of his?—No, they were paying rent to Lord Macdonald.

MURDO MACKINNON, Crofter, Hungladder (54)—*examined.*

2709. *The Chairman.*—What is the name of your township?—Hungladder.

2710. You heard the evidence of the previous witness, I think?—Yes, I heard the most of it.

2711. Which is the farm nearest your township?—Duntulm farm.

2712. How far is it from you?—It is quite close.

2713. It marches with your township?—Yes.

2714. Are there any lands near your township on the Duntulm farm suitable for occupation and cultivation?—Yes.

2715. Have these lands any particular local name?—Yes, Osmigarry is the nearest.

2716. Do you desire to get out of your holding and into a better one if you can obtain it?—Our township has put in a petition for enlargement.

2717. Has it been heard?—No, owing to the death of the landlord the thing has been postponed.

2718. The application is for grazing ground?—Yes.

2719. If you got that grazing ground which you have applied for, is that all you want?—If we got plenty of it; but what we have applied for might be too limited for the township. But there is plenty of land beyond that.

2720. Suitable for cultivation?—Yes.

Uig, Skye. Murdo Mackinnon.

2721. Such holdings as Macmillan described?—Yes, or thereabout.

2722. Do you wish to make any addition to his evidence? Have you anything special to say yourself?—I should do with one horse on that size of a croft, and more sheep.

2723. How many sheep?—Sixty at any rate.

2724. The previous witness said 30 ewes, with their followers; do you mean 60 ewes?—From 50 to 60 ewes, with followers.

2725. And how many acres arable do you think you would require for the wintering of that stock?—20 to 25 acres arable.

2726. You know the whole farm of Duntulm, I suppose?—Yes, very well.

2727. How many crofters could, in your estimation, be accommodated on the arable land and grazing of that farm, able to cultivate it to a profit, and graze it?—I have seen four in Lusta, and four in Lower Lachasay. In Erisco they were evicted before I came.

2728. Any more?—I think there were nine there, and in Shulista I think five, and in Aird there was one, but I think there were some sub-tenants; and in Clachan there were seven, whether sub-tenants or not I cannot say. There were some crofters in a place called Urucag, but I don't remember that.

2729. You think there is accommodation for thirty at any rate?—Oh yes, I think so.

2730. Are there many cottars about Hungladder?—No, there are only two.

2731. Are they desirous, do you know, of getting holdings if they could get them?—One of them is an old man, who has a small farm already, but he has a young boy who would be very glad to get one.

2732. What is his name?—Donald Nicolson.

2733. How old is he?—About 24.

2734. And the name of the old man?—Colin Matheson.

2735. They have some stock, I daresay?—Matheson has a cow, but the young lad has no place to keep any stock.

2736. And they pay no rent?—No.

2737. *Mr Sutherland.*—In giving your estimate of the number of tenants that could be accommodated on the Duntulm farm at thirty, you had in your mind, I suppose, the old size of holding?—Yes, provided I would get the hill pasture connected with the place.

2738. But do you think that would be a large enough size under the changed conditions?—Yes, if the farm was broken up. I am not referring to the original farm of Duntulm, but only to the land that was available in the townships.

2739. *Mr Macleod.*—Do you think that that portion of the present farm of Duntulm, which is not part of the original farm, could be profitably converted into crofter holdings with grazing attached?—I think so; because I knew some of the men that were there, and they were very comfortable.

2740. Have you ever improved any land, Mr Mackinnon?—Yes.

2741. You have trenched land?—Yes.

2742. And you have drained land?—Yes.

2743. And enclosed land?—Yes; I was a farm-servant for a long time. I have enclosed a little piece that I have myself.

2744. You said you knew the farm of Duntulm very well. You have been over Duntulm frequently?—Oh, yes.

2745. Do you think there could be any considerable addition to the extent that could be put under crop by taking in land which was not even cropped by the old people?—Yes.

2746. That is your opinion as a man who knows about land?—Yes.

2747. And you believe that land could be taken in by crofters on the farm of Duntulm that was never under crop before, and that they could do it profitably?

It was mostly all under crop, except there was grazing sometime.

2748. *Mr J. Mackenzie,* Factor.—Do you say that Lower Lachasay is now, or was in former times, under crofters?—I have seen crofters in Lower Lachasay.

Uig, Skye. Murdo Mackinnon.

2749. What were their names?—One of them was Alexander Macphie, one Angus Macleod, another Angus Macleod, jun., and another Donald Macleod.

2750. I have a rental book here, dated 1855 or 1856, which mentions Murdo Mackenzie, No. 2 Donald Maclean, No. 3 Angus Macleod and Donald Macdonald. Who occupies that land at present?—It is part of the tack of Duntulm. The crofters were evicted from that place thirty years ago.

2751. Are you aware that Lower Lachasay is part of Peingown just now?—Yes.

2752. You are, of course, aware that Duntulm has been a farm from time immemorial?—Yes.

2753. And are you aware that the place called Clachan has been occupied by one tenant,—I am speaking just now from the old records of the estate in 1751?—I am not aware of it.

2754. *The Chairman.*— Do you know the farm of Monkstadt?—Yes.

2755. Do you know it well?—Very well. I went there when I was 11 years of age, and remained there until I was 25.

2756. What was the name of the place?—I was just at the farm; I went there as a farm-servant.

2757. Then you know a good deal about the farm. Were you a ploughman?—Yes, when I left it.

2758. Are there considerable tracts of ground on that farm suitable for occupation by crofters?—It is all, in my opinion, suitable for occupation by crofters, the whole of it.

2759. As arable or grazing?—Arable and grazing.

2760. And how many crofters of the kind you have in view would it accommodate?—It would accommodate a good many.

2761. There are two general questions I would like to put to you. First of all, with regard to the farm of Monkstadt: has that farm within your knowledge and recollection, greatly increased in size, been greatly extended?—Oh, yes.

2762. By additional lands being added on to it?—I believe twice the size of the original farm.

2763. Was that by taking in lands that had been in the possession of the crofters?—Yes.

2764. The whole of these additions?—The whole of these additions.

2765. You are able to say that, as I understand, from your personal knowledge and recollection?—Yes, I have seen the men in the townships. There is one township that was added which I remember well—Linicro. I was a very young boy when the men were sent away from that place.

2766. The land was added to the farm?—Yes.

2767. Now I pass from that, without going into further detail, to the farm you have spoken so much of,—Duntulm. Has it, in your recollection, increased in extent?—Oh yes, it is three times as big as when I first remember.

2768. There was always a farm of Duntulm, but it is a much larger farm now?—Far larger.

2769. Was the extension brought about by the same process, adding on crofters' land?—Yes, by adding crofter townships to it.

2770. So that the same process has been going on in the case of the two farms?—Yes.

2771. And are the lands which you and others have been speaking about to-day, as suitable for cultivation in each of these farms, lands which have all been formerly in the occupation of crofters?—Yes, the land that was added to the farms.

2772. *Mr Mackenzie,* Factor.—When the enlargement of Duntulm farm was made, was it made from crofters' land, or from good-sized holdings that had fallen into arrear of rent—small farmers?—There is Glen Shulista, that was taken from the crofters as they were. Lower Lachasay was, a few years prior to being added to the farm, let to one of the tenants that was in that township before, and he had to leave.

2773. *The Chairman.*—What rent did he pay?—I cannot say.

Uig, Skye. Murdo Mackinnon.

2774. Had those holdings that were larger than the ordinary crofters holdings been in the possession of separate persons before?—Yes.

2775. It is a gradual process of consolidation and extension—first, of small holdings, then of bigger holdings, next of small farmers, and then the small farmer is swallowed up by the large grazier?—Yes.

John Martin.

JOHN MARTIN, Crofter, Upper Bornaskitaig, Kilmuir (43)—*examined.*

2776. *The Chairman.*—Do you come from Bornaskitaig?—From Upper Bornaskitaig.

2777. Which is the farm nearest your township?—Monkstadt.

2778. What rent do you pay?—£2, 15s.

2779. What was your old rent?—£4, 15s.

2780. You have heard all the evidence we have got already to-day about Monkstadt and Duntulm?—Yes.

2781. And do you agree with it?—I cannot say, for I don't remember it all. I remember men being in many of the townships that were named.

2782. Is there any additional information you would like to give us?—I concur in the evidence of the previous witnesses.

2783. Would you like to get a larger holding if available land can be obtained?—Yes, if it can be obtained, or if the present holding can be enlarged.

2784. But if it could be enlarged, you would be content to stay where you are?—Yes.

2785. Which do you prefer?—What I want is to get my present holding enlarged. I am here for the rest of the township.

2786. And is the view of the township of Upper Bornaskitaig this, that they would be content if they got enlargement of their present holdings?—I am not prepared to answer that question, for some of them would remove if they got suitable places, and some would remain where they are if they got enlargements.

2787. Which class do you yourself belong to?—To those that would like to have their present holdings enlarged.

2788. What kind of enlargement are you aiming at?—More arable land and pasture, and the hill grazing that was taken from us for sheep.

2789. What hill grazing was that?—It was mentioned here already,—Braemore and Glensneisdale and Ben-Sca', and over to Sartil. I remember when it was taken from us.

2790. What extent of addition to your arable do you desire?—A dozen or fifteen acres.

2791. What additional pasture do you wish,—the whole of that hill grazing, I suppose?—The share of the hill grazing; we had it between us in common.

2792. You would be ready and willing to pay the rent of such an enlarged holding?—Of course, the fair rent.

2793. *Mr Mackenzie,* Factor.—You spoke about Ben-Sca'. Had the crofters the privilege of putting their stock on Ben-Sca'?—Yes, the whole of Kilmuir had.

2794. Had any others,—the Kilmaluag people, for instance?—That is a thing I cannot go into, for it was not in their possession in my memory, but it was in Kilmuir's.

Murdo Gillies.

MURDO GILLIES, Crofter, Lower Bornaskitaig, Kilmuir (54).
(Examined in Gaelic through an Interpreter.)

2795. *The Chairman.*—You come from Lower Bornaskitaig, I understand?—Yes.

2796. What rent do you pay?—£3, 5s.

2797. And what was your old rent?—£5.

2798. Are you desirous of enlargement of your present holding, or a new holding?—A new croft.

2799. Tell me where you would plant it?—Where I was born and brought up,—in Holl.

2800. Is that now a part of the farm of Monkstadt?—Yes. Uig, Skye.

2801. Where is the nearest place to it?—It marches with Balgown or Dilista. Murdo Gillies.

2802. You are of opinion that there is land there suitable for the object you have in view?—Yes. I was 25 years of age when I was put out of it.

2803. Were there seven crofters there?—Six crofts in the township.

2804. You heard the evidence given here to-day?—Yes.

2805. And do you agree with it?—Yes, I agree with it.

2806. Do you wish to make any additional statement?—I should like if arrangements could be made to advance money from Government or the landlord to stock our holdings.

2807. Do you mean that you could not remove to a new holding without assistance from the State?—We could not get on quickly enough on a new holding without assistance.

2808. To what extent would you require assistance, calculating everything?—About £200. I myself would require about £200.

2809. You mean in the form of a loan?—Yes.

2810. At a small rate of interest?—Yes.

2811. And within what time would you anticipate being able to repay that?—I have not gone into that subject.

2812. Twenty years?—Twenty or twenty-five.

2813. Interest and capital?—Yes, interest and capital.

2814. And your rent?—Yes, rent besides that.

2815. Fixed by an independent tribunal?—Yes, by a land court.

2816. On the holding you have in view, what stock would you wish to possess?—Seven cows, a good horse, and between fifty and sixty sheep with followers.

2817. How many acres arable do you give?—Twenty acres.

2818. *Mr H. V. Maccallum,* of the Highland Property Defence Association.—I should like to ask this witness whether he is a fisherman?—No.

2819. I understand you live near the sea. If you had a good harbour near where you live could you obtain a livelihood from the fishing?

2820. *The Chairman.*—Have you a good anchorage where you are?—No.

2821. How far is your croft from the sea?—Less than a quarter of a mile.

2822. Do you go to sea at all?—Sometimes; I used to go to the fishing also.

2823. Suppose you had a small croft near the sea, do you think you could get your livelihood there by fishing instead of crofting inland?—Not where I am.

John Macpherson.

JOHN MACPHERSON, Cottar, Upper Bornaskitaig (38).
(Examined in Gaelic through an Interpreter.)

2824. *The Chairman.*—You are a cottar?—Yes.

2825. Where?—At Upper Bornaskitaig.

2826. Have you any land?—A small bit from the people of the township.

2827. Do you pay rent for it?—A little.

2828. What rent do you pay?—About 30s.; but I have the grazing of a cow.

2829. Have you any sheep?—I bought five this year, but I have no grazing for them.

2830. What quantity of potatoes do you grow on this bit of land that you have?—It is only a very small bit, and not many potatoes would grow on it.

2831. How many barrels did you grow last year?—Four or five.

2832. You are anxious, to be made a crofter on land elsewhere than you are?—Yes, that is what I want.

2833. Is it on one of these farms we have been hearing about so much?—Yes.

2834. Which of them?—We put in a petition to the landlord last winter for a slice of Duntulm.

Uig, Skye. John Macpherson.

2835. And what came of that petition?—It went through the factor's hands, and we have not heard a word about it since.

2836. Did you not get an answer to the application in some form or other?—No, nothing.

2837. What land did you ask for?—About 20 or 30 acres: we wanted Lower Lachasay.

2838. Were the 20 or 30 acres arable?—That is what we said in the petition.

2839. You have heard the evidence that has been given already?—Yes.

2840. And do you concur?—Yes.

2841. Do you wish to say anything more?—Only that I am here as a delegate from all the cottars of Bornaskitaig, and that they won't be right until they get new holdings.

2842. How many cottars do you represent?—Fourteen in Kilmuir.

2843. Are all these cottars anxious like yourself to get crofts somewhere in the neighbourhood?—Yes, they put their names down in a list which I produce. The names are as follows:—John Macpherson, Martin Mackinnon, Charles Mackinnon, John Macpherson, Donald Beaton, Donald Nicolson, Peter Macphie, William Ramage, Alexander Macpherson, John Graham, Neil Buchanan, Angus Beaton, William Macnab, Lachlan Macleod, and Samuel Macleod. These are the names that were adhibited to the petition sent in for land.

2844. Do these cottars, of whom you are one, cause a good deal of inconvenience to the crofters by being there?—Yes.

2845. In fact, they are obliged, whether they will or not, to live upon the crofters to some extent?—Yes; if it was not for the crofters I don't know what they would do.

2846. The crofters are very good to them, as far as they can?—Yes; if the landlord was as good to them as the crofters they would be well off.

2847. It would be a great advantage to the cottars themselves, and to the crofters also, if the cottars could get more land?—Yes.

2848. And, in saying that, you represent the views of the whole of them?—Yes.

2849. And are you also conveying what you know to be the views of the crofters?—I believe the crofters need all they have of land, and it is too little.

2850. *Mr Maccallum.*—How do the cottars get their means of living just now?—In the south country, most of them. They earn wages in the south during the summer months.

2851. Are they able to prosecute fishing on the coast?—Some of them.

2852. Would they prefer a croft of such a size that they could make their living by it without going to fishing?—Yes, and it would be a surer source of income.

2853. *Mr Macleod.*—Supposing you got a larger holding, would you be able to stock it, and to build the necessary buildings without assistance?—If I got the croft I would do my best.

2854. You would not be afraid to take it even although you got no assistance?—I would be the better of a loan, but I would rather have the croft without it than no croft.

2855. You mentioned fourteen as applying for land. How many of these would be able to take holdings if they got them?—I don't think there are many of them who could take a new croft without assistance, for their families are heavy on them. I myself bought 22 bolls of meal last year for my family.

2856. You did not get any assistance for the building of your present house?—No.

2857. Nor for the buying of the cow and the sheep?—No, nothing.

2858. So you think if you had more land you would come to stock it in the way you have already done?—I am certain of that. I would take food out of it for my family, and plenty too.

2859. What family have you?—Five living.

2860. *Mr H. V. Maccallum.*—I should like to ask this witness about the lobster fishing.

2861. *The Chairman.*—Do you engage in lobster-fishing during winter?—Yes; we have to do something. Uig, Sye. John Macpherson.

2862. Do a number of your neighbours also engage in lobster fishing?—I do not see any of them idle.

2863. In fact, they scrape a living as best they can?—Yes; but they will not make their living off lobster-fishing.

2864. They do a great deal of outside labour?—Yes, that is the most.

2865. But they all wish to better their condition by getting holdings which would be self-supporting?—Yes.

2866. Could the cottars live there at all if they were not frequently receiving assistance from the crofters?—They would only be very middling.

2867. They would be worse off than they are?—Yes, a good deal.

2868. Do the cottars there at any time get assistance from the landlord?—No, not the black of my nail.

2869. Do any of the other cottars you have mentioned pay rent besides yourself?—Only one or two besides myself. Three or four of the cottars work for the tacksman, Mr Ferguson.

2870. And are paid wages, of course?—They get bits of land from him for work.

2871. *Mr Mackenzie,* Factor.—None of these cottars hold land directly from the proprietor.

2872. *The Chairman.*—That is not suggested. They have no tenure of any kind; they are there by tolerance.

JOHN GILLIES, Crofter, Balgown, Kilmuir (60). John Gillies.
(Examined in Gaelic through an Interpreter.)

2873. *The Chairman.*—You come from Balgown?—Yes.

2874. What rent do you pay?—£6.

2875. What was your old rent?—£10, 10s.

2876. You have heard all the evidence given here to-day, I suppose, or most of it?—Yes.

2877. And do you concur in that evidence?—Yes, some of it.

2878. Do you wish to say anything different, or anything in addition?—I don't wish to say anything different from what was said, and not much more.

2879. In short, you would like to get a new holding, larger and better than the one you have?—Yes, if I got the croft out of which I was put before.

2880. What farm is it upon?—Dilista.

2881. Is that on the farm of Monkstadt?—Yes, on Monkstadt.

2882. When were you put out of there?—Twenty-five or twenty-six years ago.

2883. You think that land now would be suitable for a holding to you?—I don't know of any land that was better when it was occupied before. I was about thirty years living on that croft, and I believe I did not eat anything during that time that was not yielded by the croft.

2884. You were able to support yourself and pay rent?—Yes. We were put away out of the croft without being a penny in arrear.

2885. What was your rent there?—About £6.

2886. Were you better off at that time than you are now?—Oh, yes.

2887. *Mr Maccallum.*—What stock had you then?—Six cows. We ourselves had four cows; the other crofts had some five and some six.

2888. And sheep?—Yes, plenty.

2889. What number?—Forty or fifty.

2890. And horses?—One horse. The whole of the pasture was taken away from us at the time we were evicted.

JOHN GRAHAM, Crofter, Peingown, Kilmuir (68). John Graham.
(Examined in Gaelic through an Interpreter.)

2891. *The Chairman.*—You come from Peingown?—Yes

Uig, Skye.
John Graham.

2892. What rent do you pay?—£11, 15s.
2893. What was your former rent?—£16.
2894. Did you hear the evidence given in the forenoon?—Yes.
2895. And do you concur in that evidence?—Yes.
2896. Have you any additional statement to submit?—Yes, about the hill pasture that was taken from us.
2897. What was the name of that hill pasture?—Braemore and Glensneisdale and Ben Sca'.
2898. You want that pasture back?—Yes.
2899. And you would be satisfied with that; you don't want to change your holding?—There is a croft belonging to Lower Lachasay which was taken from our township, and we want that added to our township too.
2900. So that you wish additional grazing, and this croft of Lower Lachasay to be restored?—Yes.
2901. But if you had these two things would you be satisfied?—I don't think there is much desire to leave the present holdings; what they want is to get the grazing back, and to get new houses built.
2902. You mean advances to enable you to build?—We should like that too—we need it. The township is very small for the number of crofters in it at present.
2903. What is the number of crofters in Peingown?—Five. There is another thing I want to tell; there was a piece of land set apart for providing sods to cover the grass in the churchyard; it was set apart by Lord Macdonald, but we cannot get the use of it now, as it is all fenced in.
2904. *Mr Mackenzie*, Factor.—There is no objection to their getting these sods; we will put steps over the fence if desired.—*Witness.* Sods cannot be taken over steps at all.
2905. *The Chairman.*—That is not a matter in which we can interfere.
2906. *Mr Macleod.*—What is your souming?—Five cows, two 2-year olds and a heifer.
2907. Any sheep?—Three ewe sheep.
2908. How many acres of arable land?—17 acres on my croft.—*Mr Mackenzie.* It is 11 acres arable land.
2909. *The Chairman.*—Is this one of the cases dealt with recently?—*Mr Mackenzie.* Yes.
2910. *The Chairman.*—And how many of outrun?—*Mr Mackenzie.* Six.
2911. *The Chairman.*—Your present rent is £11, 15s., and your fair rent you don't know yet?—That is so.

lexander
acdonald.

ALEXANDER MACDONALD, Crofter, Kilvaxter, Kilmuir (58)—*examined.*

2912. *The Chairman.*—You come from Kilvaxter?—Yes.
2913. How many crofters are in Kilvaxter?—Twelve.
2914. And how many cottars?—There are no cottars in Kilvaxter.
2915. What rent do you pay?—£4, 9s. 6d.
2916. What was your former rent?—£9.
2917. Are you anxious to get a new holding?—No; my ancestors have lived there since 1492, and I would not leave that holding for any amount of money. I want my holding enlarged.
2918. Do you wish additional arable?—Yes.
2919. How much?—About five or six acres.
2920. And grazing?—And grazing as well.
2921. Is there land to get?—Oh yes, adjacent to the croft.
2922. And on a farm?—Of Crochtore, part of Monkstadt.
2923. Do you think you could cultivate that land to a profit?—Yes.
2924. And could you stock it?—No, I think that is a great mistake. I think we must have Government aid to stock the land.
2925. You think you could not do that without aid?—Perhaps I could as regards myself, but I think it is a mistake in the long run. In my opinion Government should advance the money to stock enlargements of holdings at a reasonable rate of interest. The land is there and plenty of it, and it is the very best for cultivation—it is the granary of Skye.

Uig, Skye.
Alexander Macdonald.

2926. Are you of opinion that money should also be advanced by Government for buildings?—Decidedly.
2927. Dwelling-house and steading?—Yes. As I believe the Commission was started for the interest and for the welfare of the crofters, why not? There is enough money spent in human butchery; should it not be devoted to the agricultural interests, and to the interest of the poor people that suffer, and the loyal people, as loyal as are to be found in the land of Queen Victoria. Should they not be encouraged as well as others who are traitors and cut-throats? We have been loyal and industrious—we are not lazy as some of our opponents say, but how can we live in such a way as we are now? Thousands of pounds we have sent to Dunlop in Glasgow, the money that should be circulating among the crofters here if the land was properly cultivated.
2928. I suppose you heard most of the evidence here to-day?—Yes.
2929. Do you wish to make any additional statement?—Yes.
2930. We shall be glad to hear it?—I should make large holdings for large families, and small holdings for small families. I remember the time when one crofter in Monkstadt had more potatoes than Mr Ferguson had for the last ten years. He was selling potatoes at 6d. a barrel. There are thousands of bolls of meal brought in charity, hundreds of seed oats,—but why not cultivate the land as it should be done? that is what I want, the land for the people, not for the few. It is far better for us to give our work to the land than to be pulling and ploughing the Atlantic and the German Ocean for fish. I don't believe in charity at all; I believe in manly work. It is a well-known fact that we are paying 15 and in some cases 30 per cent. for interest on money lent.
2931. To the bank at Portree?—No, to private individuals, money-lenders.
2932. *Mr Munro.*—I was glad to hear you say that you disapproved of the principle of charity being given to crofters; but you would not object to receiving a loan from Government to assist you in taking a large croft. Now, have you ever considered what amount you would require to put you in a position to start a large croft fairly?—Yes, I have made some calculation about that.
2933. How much would you say then?—About £200 would make a pretty fair start for a working man.
2934. That agrees with what another delegate said here to-day. Now, in what period of years do you think you could overtake that loan and repay it?—According to the lines of the Royal Commission, about thirty years. I don't mean to pay rent perpetually. I think something should be done in regard to that. My ancestors have paid rent for four hundred years; am I to pay rent, and my children after me?
2935. The loan has no connection with the rent at all; you would have to repay the loan, and pay the rent as well?—Yes.
2936. Now, do you think you could do both? £200, at say 3 per cent. interest, would be £6 a year. How much in addition to the £6 could you pay?—If I got a good start, say two years.
2937. You are quite satisfied you could repay the £200, principal and interest, within a period of thirty years?—I am quite certain of it.
2938. *Mr Maccallum.*—You consider that the crofts in your district are too small?—Yes.
2939. And there are several townships congested, having too many crofters?—Yes.
2940. But is there land that would afford to give self-supporting crofts to all the crofters and cottars in the district?—There is a portion of it, a fair share I should say.
2941. They could easily be accommodated with self-supporting crofts?—Yes.
2942. Is the land that the crofters have just now

Uig, Skye. — Alexander Macdonald.

equal in quality to the land in Monkstadt farm?—The land in Monkstadt farm is far better than the land the crofters have. The latter has been under cultivation since I was born—a part of it.

2943. Do the crofters cultivate just now with the caschrom?—Yes, some of them: not so much as they used to.

2944. And that is because they cannot afford to get horses. But there would be no necessity for such cultivation if they got holdings on Monkstadt?—No.

2945. It could be easily ploughed?—Yes.

2946. And that would be the mode of cultivation that they would adopt,—they would not use the caschrom?—No.

2947. *Mr Sutherland.*—You have stated that your ancestors have been about Kilvaxter since 1492?—Yes.

2948. You have no doubt as to that?—No.

2949. And I suppose the same could be said about most of the Macdonalds?—I don't know, I am sure. They say I am a descendant of Somerled.

2950. You do not consider that residence there for 500 years has led to the result you would expect?—No.

2951. Would you expect that if they had been in the country they ought at least to have a right to live there, apart from the will or whim of any individual?—Yes.

2952. And the State has found it necessary to step in and give them that at last?—Yes.

2953. I suppose you do not see any reason why they should not go a step farther and assist in the way you have stated?—Yes.

2954. They neglected the interest of the clansmen in the past?—Yes.

2955. You base your argument upon that?—Yes.

2956. Then with regard to starting a new holding, and the wish of the people to be put back upon these lands, would they have any greater difficulty to meet than they had when they were turned out of their holdings and planted where they are now?—They would not be so great.

2957. The people built up their homes and reclaimed their land in many instances without help from any person?—From nobody.

2958. And they always managed to pay, for hundreds of years in some cases, or at least for eighty years in some cases, large rents over and above that?—Yes.

2959. So that you do not see any insuperable difficulty in making a fresh start under more favourable conditions?—Not the least.

2960. Like Mr Munro, I was very glad to hear you repudiate the idea of charity for Highlanders. You feel strongly on that point?—I scorn the idea.

2961. And you say that it is degrading to the people of the Highlands that they should have to ask for charity in their native land, with so much land around them lying waste?—Yes.

2962. Are you aware that that feeling is pretty general among the people of the Highlands?—Yes.

2963. And you have very good opportunities of knowing the prevailing sentiments of the people in the Isle of Skye? You think it is a great pity that the Highlanders should be reduced to the position of ever asking for or receiving charity?—I do.

2964. And you think it would be for the benefit of the nation in every way that they should be taken out of that position?—Yes.

2965. And the restrictions removed from the land which have put a block to their industry?—Yes.

2966. You have heard what has been said regarding fishing here to-day?—Yes.

2967. Do you think that it is best to exhaust the resources of the land before you go to the sea?—Yes.

2968. The sea is always free to you, is it not?—Yes, it should be free to everybody.

2969. And you can go there when you like?—Yes, to catch what I like, and kill what I like.

2970. And you think that if the people had all the resources of the land placed at their disposal they would then, of their own accord, turn to the sea-fishing,—is it not so?—Yes.

2971. And if you planted the people judiciously up and down upon the land, there would be a home market, would there not, for the fish? You would not require to send it to Glasgow, London, Liverpool, and Manchester when you would get a sale for your fish at your doors?—That is so. Uig, Skye. — Alexander Macdonald.

2972. You are aware, I have no doubt, of the incidence of the poor-rate throughout the Island of Skye?—Yes.

2973. You are no doubt aware that before a certain date the poor were maintained voluntarily?—Yes.

2974. Just in the same way as the crofters help the cottars now?—Yes.

2975. They were maintained by the church-door collections?—Yes.

2976. And now the poor-rate in Skye is very high?—Very high.

2977. Is there, in your opinion, any connection between the clearing of the people off the land, and the increase in the poor-rate?—There is.

2978. Do you think that the one is to a large extent the cause of the other?—Yes.

2979. You could point back to the time when there was no poor-rate?—No poor-rate at all.

DONALD MATHESON, Crofter, Kilvaxter (52)—*examined.* Donald Matheson.

2980. *The Chairman.*—Is your holding near Kilvaxter?—Yes.

2981. Close to it?—Close to it.

2982. What is your rent?—£9, 10s.

2983. And what was your former rent?—£14, 7s.

2984. You have heard Macdonald's evidence, I suppose, and that of the other witnesses to-day?—Yes.

2985. Do you wish to make any addition to their statements? I have no desire whatever to exclude any statement that you think important, but my colleagues and I are against going over the same ground repeatedly. If you have anything additional to state, however, we shall be glad to hear it?—Nothing in particular.

2986. You concur in their evidence, I suppose?—One thing I want to add to it, is this: I don't think there is a township in Skye like the township of Kilvaxter, which is without run for pasture except the bare crofts.

2987. The outrun is so poor?—There is no outrun. And if we put down anything like what is required to winter the souming we have, we cannot keep the souming in the summer-time, because we have no place for them: if we keep the souming, on the other hand, we cannot cultivate the ground. Another thing is, that we cannot keep the ground in rotation, owing to the smallness of the crofts.

2988. You are obliged to scourge the land?—It is just run out.

2989. With sea-ware?—Oh, there is no manure of that description. We are not allowed to go to the sea.

2990. I think you know Feaull very well?—I have been there, and my father, and grandfather, and great-grandfather.

2991. You were tenant of it before it was added to Monkstadt?—Yes.

2992. Is it suitable for crofters' holdings?—Yes.

2993. Good land?—Yes, good land.

2994. Now, what size of holding is, in your judgment, suitable for the crofters in your vicinity,—how many of them would you put on Feaull?—Four tenants.

2995. What size of holding would that give to each?—There were nine crofts in Feaull, and I would allow four.

2996. What arable would you allow to each?—The five crofts were taken in by my father, and improved,—drained and trenched and fenced, as is visible to this day. My relatives have been there for the last 160 years: as far as I can see, my namesake Donald Matheson was there in the year 1730, and one Lachlan Mackinnon, and the rent was then only £1, 8s.

2997. The whole of it?—There was another tenant

at the other end, one Mackay, whose rent was £3, 8s., to my recollection.

2998. What extent of arable would you give to each of the four crofters you propose for Feaull?—I would think they would require between 25 and 30 acres arable.

2999. Each?—Yes.

3000. And is there land to afford that?—It was calculated about 14 acres, the bounds of the crofts. The most of it is trenched and drained, and some good parts are quite visible from the road.

3001. Is there enough of old arable in Feaull to allow 25 acres to each of four crofters?—To my mind there is.

3002. And grazing?—And grazing. During my time the souming was, to my recollection, 20 sheep for each croft on the hill, a horse (there were nine horses), and 180 sheep for the township; and the rent was £45. For five crofts I paid £81 some odd shillings, without the right of sea-ware and very little of the outrun.

3003. That was when you had the whole of it?—No; there were four crofts taken from my father, and when I took my father's place I got only five crofts, and the last rent was £81 odds.

3004. What stock would you give to each of these four crofters?—Eight cows, two horses, and about fifty sheep to each.

3005. A ewe stock?—Yes, ewes.

3006. Are you satisfied, because you know this land probably better than any of us, that, with a croft of the kind you mentioned, you could make it self-sustaining?—I would feel satisfied if I got anything in addition to my present holding, because I can make no living out of it. I am a man with eight of a family—eight boys—and I am obliged to allow them to go south and north to earn money and help me.

3007. And you think, if you had a holding on Feaull of the kind you are describing, you could do well?—Yes, for myself, not for my family.

3008. *Mr Macleod.*—You say that you have no pasture at Kilvaxter?—Not an inch.

3009. Is there any pasture marching with your holding that you could get?—That is the only place that is suitable for outrun, Feaull, which was given to other tenants.

3010. Feaull has been given to other tenants?—Yes.

3011. There is no suitable pasture for Kilvaxter?—There is another pasture on the other end of it, at a place called Loch-Chaluim-Chille.

3012. Who has got that?—Mr Ferguson.

3013. It is part of the Monkstadt farm?—Yes.

3014. What was the old pasture of the township of Kilvaxter?—To the best of my recollection it had no pasture; but some old people told me that there was a slice of land that they had on the north side of the hill.

3015. But there is at the present time pasture contiguous to Kilvaxter, on the Monkstadt farm, that might be added to the township of Kilvaxter?—Loch-Chaluim-Chille is on the end of the lower crofts of Kilvaxter and Feaull on the upper, and Dilista Hill on the south side of Kilvaxter and Balgown.

3016. You spoke of what your father did in the way of reclaiming land at Feaull and otherwise. You have yourself some knowledge of the reclamation of land?—Yes; I have been working there since I was a little boy.

3017. What I wanted to be at was this, Mr Matheson. Do you think now, giving your opinion as a practical man knowing about the reclaiming of land, that there are considerable extents in those large farms that were never under cultivation that might be brought into cultivation? Is there any land, say at Feaull itself, that has not been under crop that could be taken in?—It is the case with every township in the outrun they have. They used, in former times, to till what they call the parks which they had for keeping the cattle; they used to take them in.

3018. Occasionally?—Occasionally. And there are patches of that description in every outrun that I am aware of in this end of the island. In the farm of Monkstadt these townships that were added to it are set out in crofts, and the marches are visible there. There is not a township that was added since I recollect but has crofts, and the runs of the old houses are there, and the marches of each croft, except Linicro.

3019. You know that in the large farms, whilst there is a very great extent of grazing, there is a comparatively small extent of old arable land to winter the stock that could be grazed in summer on the grazing land. Now, as you are a practical man, I want to get your opinion whether you think the boundaries of the arable portions of the old townships could be extended, or whether, in the case of the farm of Monkstadt and the farm of Duntulm, you think there is a sufficient area already of old arable land to supply wintering?—There is.

3020. There is, in your opinion?—There is. In these townships that were added to the farm of Monkstadt the outruns and the boundaries are there, and there is sufficient grass on these outruns for the amount of arable land in the townships; and in the other end of Monkstadt there is any amount of arable land that people do not recollect of seeing with tenants.

3021. So that, supposing a case where the whole farm of Monkstadt was put under crofters, you do not think there would be any difficulty about the wintering of the stock?—I do not think there would be, because there is any amount of pasture on both ends of the arable land in Monkstadt. There is a kind of outrun between that and the sea on both sides and at both ends.

3022. You would think it a good plan, supposing you were laying out a new holding, to include in the new holding a proportion of the old township land, and a proportion of land that might be improved, so as to increase the area under crop?—There is none of these townships that were added to Monkstadt, that I am aware of, which has any arable land close to it, except some patches on the outrun.

3023. So you think the old people did their work so well that they have not left any land to reclaim?—Yes.

3024. *Mr Sutherland.*—Could the pasture between Kilvaxter and the sea on the west be added to your arable land with advantage?—That is the place that I mentioned, Loch-Chaluim-Chille.

3025. But, as I understand generally, the case of Kilvaxter is, that it has good arable land without any pasture attached to it at all, or at least very little?—It is ten years since I went there, and I was obliged to buy seed every year.

3026. You said you had no access to sea-weed?—None.

3027. What is the nearest point of the sea-shore you could get it from?—Kilvaxter lies in the centre of Kilmuir, and the easiest road is going down the way of Kilmuir, where the small tenants are.

3028. Why don't you get access to that?—It is little enough for themselves, there are so many of them. There are fifty small cottars in two townships, Lower and Upper Bornaskitaig.

3029. Is that the only place then where it could be got easily?—Yes.

3030. And you think it is little enough for themselves?—Little enough.

3031. Do you cultivate a rotation there?—Very little. I generally sow a little rye grass every year.

3032. And is it because you have too little land that you cannot subdivide it; you require the whole of it to be under crop?—Under crop.

3033. But with a larger holding you could give it the benefit of a rotation?—Decidedly.

3034. *Mr Maccallum.*—With regard to this farm of Monkstadt: from the description you give of it, there does not seem to be any great need of reclamation of land. You have already good arable land in Monkstadt, ready for the plough?—Yes.

3035. While you are working with very inferior land?—Very.

3036. *Mr Mackenzie*, Factor.—I am afraid there is some misunderstanding. Feaull is presently in the

Uig, Skye. Donald Matheson.

hands of the crofters; it was a part of Monkstadt till last Whitsunday.

3037. *The Chairman.*—But Feaull is now, you say, in the hands of crofters?—Yes, since Whitsunday.

3038. *Mr Sutherland.*—Is it the Kilvaxter crofters who have it?—Some of it; but we sent a petition to Mr Mackenzie the factor for outrun.

3039. *The Chairman.*—Feaull has been given over to the crofters—some of them from Kilvaxter and others from where?—It was given instead of the hill pasture.

3040. But what crofters got it?—The most of Kilmuir; there are 60 tenants have a right to it. It is given to 60 tenants on the Kilmuir estate.

3041. Some in one township and some in another?—Yes; those that petitioned for it.

Donald Macdonald.

DONALD MACDONALD, Crofter, Totescore (60).
(Examined in Gaelic through an Interpreter.)

3042. *The Chairman.*—Where do you live?—At Totescore.

3043. What rent do you pay?—£3, 5s. for half a croft.

3044. Do you wish to make any addition to the evidence we have heard already?—Yes. The hill pasture has been taken from our township for a long time past, and we are scarce of arable land. A number of us would require to have our agricultural land added to.

3045. Do you know where land could be got?—Plenty on each side of us, marching with us; there is plenty arable ground both at Scuddaburgh and at Monkstadt. We are just wedged in between the two tacks.

3046. Could you show us that land if we went there?—Yes, if I see the Commission.

3047. We have not heard so much about Scuddaburgh; does it march with the lands of the township of Totescore?—Yes.

3048. Are you of opinion that there is available land in Scuddaburgh?—Yes; it mostly consists of arable land that was in cultivation by tenantry in times past.

3049. Were there a number of townships on Scuddaburgh?—No; it was entirely in the occupation of crofters. Before being converted into a tack, Scuddaburgh was entirely in the possession of crofters.

3050. *Mr Mackenzie*, Factor.—I should like to be allowed to ask this witness whether he can give us any idea how many tenants have been at Scuddaburgh?—I cannot say.

3051. Would you be surprised to know that there were no tenants in it for 200 years?—I don't know, but it is not 200 years since there were small tenants there.

3052. I have records here going back to the year 1733, when Scuddaburgh was occupied by one tenant, John Nicolson; what have you to say as to that?—It is very strange, for it is only four or five years since a man died who was born there. It was at Scuddaburgh my grandfather's family lived, and an aunt of mine lived at Scuddaburgh when the tenantry were evicted from it. It is only four years since she died.

3053. *Mr Maccallum.*—Are there ruins of crofters' houses to be seen?—They were all cleared, and dykes and drains were made out of the stones of the houses. There is not a vestige of the sites to be seen: they are all cleared.

Donald Mackinnon.

DONALD MACKINNON, Cottar, Linicro, Monkstadt (76).
(Examined in Gaelic through an Interpreter.)

3054. *The Chairman.*—You are a cottar from Linicro, I understand?—Yes.

3055. Do you pay a rent to Mr Ferguson of Monkstadt?—Yes.

3056. What rent do you pay him?—There are three of us cottars in Linicro, and one of them has only half a croft; we pay £1 a piece.

3057. Do you get work from Mr Ferguson?—Yes; it is by work we pay our rent.

3058. Work on the farm?—Yes. We have ever been paying the rent with our work, and we think it ought to be free now to us. It is upwards of sixty years since I have been paying rent. Uig, Skye. Donald Mackinnon.

3059. Do you want to get a croft?—Yes.

3060. You want a croft on Monkstadt?—Yes, where I am.

3061. And there would be no difficulty in that,—I mean the land is there?—Yes, plenty land. I myself have seen the place in the occupation of ten crofters, myself herding as a small boy there.

3062. *Mr Macleod.*—Can you tell us anything as to the condition of the people at that time?—Very well off they were: they had milk and potatoes, and were not importing meal as they are now. Sheep and cattle they had also, and each croft was rented at £4, except one which was rented at £6.

3063. *The Chairman.*—Mr Mackenzie, have you any questions to put to this witness?

3064. *Mr Mackenzie.*—Have the seasons been very favourable for cultivation during the last ten or twelve years?—Yes.

3065. Have the crops raised during the last twelve or fifteen years been better or worse crops than those raised in the old times you have described?—The crop is worse. The yield is worse.

Donald Macpherson.

DONALD MACPHERSON, Lower Glen-Hinisdale (39)—examined.

3066. *The Chairman.*—Where do you come from?—Lower Glen-Hinisdale.

3067. What rent do you pay?—£6, 5s.

3068. What was your former rent?—£12.

3069. Do you concur in the evidence you have heard?—Yes; I have nothing to say against what was said. Those taking new holdings ought to get assistance from Government if they are not themselves able to build houses and stock their holdings.

3070. What is the name of the grazing farm nearest you?—Kingsburgh on the one side and Cuidreach on the other.

3071. In your opinion is there land upon Kingsburgh suitable for crofters' holdings?—Yes, I know that there is.

3072. And also land upon Cuidreach?—Yes.

3073. I suppose you can show us that land when we go to the quarter?—Yes.

3074. Does the township of Hinisdale march with one of these farms?—Cuidreach is on the west of our croft, and Kingsburgh on the house.

3075. How far is your holding from Hinisdale bridge?—About a mile and a quarter above the bridge.

3076. *Mr Maccallum.*—Is there a general desire in the township you represent for enlarged holdings?—Yes, some want to leave the township altogether and take new holdings, so that the holdings of those who remain may be enlarged in that way.

3077. Would you yourself be willing to leave and make room for the rest?—Yes, very glad indeed, if I got a suitable place.

3078. Could those who are willing to go to new holdings stock them?—Yes, perhaps they could; with the stock they have they would do a good deal in that direction: but if they got such a holding as they would desire on the new places, they would need some assistance.

3079. *The Chairman.*—You are not prepared to leave your holding, and take a new one without a loan?—No, not well.

3080. Do you mean a loan both for stocking and for building purposes?—Yes, for the two purposes, but especially for building.

3081. Do you represent the other crofters in Glen-Hinisdale?—Yes, the lower part of Hinisdale.

3082. Are they in the same position regarding a loan, would they require a loan as well as yourself?—I think so, every one of them.

3083. Both to stock and to build?—Yes, for both purposes

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3084. Would you leave your present holding if you did not get a loan?—Yes, if I got a better croft than the one I have.

3085. Are there any cottars in Glen-Hinisdale?—No.

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CHARLES MACKINNON, Upper Glen-Hinisdale (40) — *examined.*

3086. *The Chairman.*—You are from Upper Glen-Hinisdale?—Yes.

3087. What is your rent?—£7, 5s.

3088. What was it formerly?—£12, 10s.

3089. Do you follow some other calling than that of a crofter?—Yes.

3090. What do you do?—I am a joiner.

3091. In the township, or in the south?—No, I went abroad.

3092. Where to?—South Africa.

3093. As a joiner?—Yes.

3094. How long were you there?—Four years the last time.

3095. And the first time?—A little over two years.

3096. Are you home for good?—Yes.

3097. Are you here representing your father?—I am here representing the township of Upper Glen-Hinisdale.

3098. Does the whole township wish to leave if they get better holdings?—I don't believe the whole of them would, but some of them would.

3099. How many?—I think there are four or five of them ready to remove.

3100. Including your father?—Yes.

3101. Are these four or five ready to stock new holdings and put up the necessary buildings?—I believe some of them are, I don't mean to say the whole of them.

3102. But I mean the four or five?—I don't think the four or five would all be able without assistance.

3103. Are you and your father prepared to do it without assistance?—Yes.

3104. And in your judgment is there land suitable for the purpose?—Yes.

3105. Where?—In Kingsburgh, right opposite us.

3106. And marching with you?—Yes.

3107. Do you look to the formation of a croft that would be self-supporting?—Yes.

3108. You have a little money of your own?—Yes, I have.

3109. You would be prepared, therefore, to stock and build?—Yes.

3110. What size of holding have you in view?—Well, I believe that would depend greatly on the place where you would get a holding.

3111. Suppose you got a holding in the place you have mentioned?—I would require a holding of, I should say, about 27 acres arable, and as much as would keep seven or eight cows and a pair of horses.

3112. And how many sheep?—I should say 150 ewes with their followers.

3113. You want a biggish place?—It amounts to this: there are some in our place who would take larger holdings than others.

3114. And you want the largest?—I want as large as I can get.

3115. I see that, and you will be prepared to pay a corresponding rent?—Certainly.

3116. As duly fixed?—Certainly.

3117. You would be ready to pay a rent of £15 to £18 perhaps, supposing that to be a fair rent?—I would, but that would have to depend upon the holding.

3118. *Mr Sutherland.*—Do you think, Mr Mackinnon, it might be a good thing, in forming new holdings, that there should be a considerable difference between them in size, or would you have them the same size?—That is my opinion, and the opinion of the township as well.

3119. And do you think that would give a chance to people who wanted land, and who had some little means at their disposal?—Quite so.

3120. *Mr Maccallum.*—Is the land in Kingsburgh farm peculiarly suited for holdings?—There have been crofters there before. Uig, Skye.

3121. Is it better than the land you have in Glen-Hinisdale?—Much better. One acre there is better than two where we are. Charles Mackinnon.

3122. *Mr Munro.*—You have been abroad a good deal, and have seen a good deal of the world?—I have seen a good bit.

3123. Notwithstanding that, you would prefer yourself to come and settle down in your native Highlands to remaining abroad?—Certainly.

3124. And you think that applies to all your neighbours as well?—That is my opinion.

3125. Supposing you got a croft of the size you have just mentioned, would you undertake that croft without Government assistance?—I would myself personally.

3126. You recognise, of course, that there is no help like self-help, I suppose?—Just so.

3127. You have heard one of the witnesses here repudiate with a commendable spirit of independence the idea of bestowing charity upon Highlanders. Do you agree with that sentiment?—I quite agree with it. I believe it is greatly against the spirit of the Highlanders to ask or receive charity. I know for myself that if I were away abroad, I should not like to be told by anyone that Highlanders were in such a state.

3128. It is an easy matter to speak of taking a loan of £200, but it is quite a different matter to repay it. Do you think if the money were advanced to crofters, they would be able to repay it in easy instalments, and would never attempt to repudiate the debt in any way?—My opinion is that they would do their best endeavours to pay. I believe they would pay it too.

3129. That is, provided they get crofts of reasonable dimensions, and subject to fair conditions of occupancy?—Just so.

ALEXANDER MATHESON, Earlish, Kilmuir Estate (45). (Examined in Gaelic through an Interpreter). Alexander Matheson.

3130. *The Chairman.*—Have you a croft in Earlish?—My father has.

3131. What rent does he pay?—£5.

3132. What was the old rent?—£9.

3133. Does your township march with the farm of Cuidreach?—Yes.

3134. And with any other farm?—No; Cuidreach is the only big farm that marches with us.

3135. Do you represent the township of Earlish?—Yes.

3136. Along with Donald Maclean?—Yes.

3137. Is there a desire among the crofters there to get larger holdings?—Yes, and very needy they are of them too.

3138. Have they too little land where they are, according to your view?—Yes, and the land they have is very much impoverished.

3139. Are they not able to cultivate the land to a profit?—We have tried that in every conceivable way, and it has beat us.

3140. I see your rent was reduced from £9 to £5, and, notwithstanding that reduction, you have found it difficult to get on?—Yes, as difficult as ever.

3141. Were there any arrears left on you?—Yes, on some of us.

3142. But upon you individually?—Yes.

3143. How much?—£5.

3144. Have you paid that?—No.

3145. Have you tried to pay it?—I could not pay it.

3146. You could not make as much out of the holding as would pay the arrears?—No.

3147. What had the arrears been that were reduced to £5?—£18 odds, to the best of my recollection. It was my father who was paying rent at that time.

3148. You want to get a holding large enough to enable you to pay your way?—That is what I want.

3149. Do you think you could stock that farm and put up the necessary buildings without assistance?—No, I don't think I could. If I got the land, I would

Uig, Skye. Alexander Matheson.

work it in such a way, that I don't think it would be long before I could stock it well.

3150. Are there any cottars in Earlish?—Four.

3151. Do they pay any rent?—No.

3152. Would it be an advantage for them to be taken away, and get crofters' holdings elsewhere?—Yes.

3153. Are they a considerable inconvenience to the crofters, being where they are?—Yes; but they don't much trouble the crofters. There are two of them here who are wanting land; the crofters can give them very little land.

3154. But I suppose they could not get on without the assistance of the crofters?—It is the crofters' land that is feeding them. They give a little work to the crofters in return, but the crofters could not avoid assisting them. The cottars are people who had land before. There are 23 families in the township.

3155. That is counting the cottars, I suppose?—No, exclusive of cottars. The land is becoming so impoverished that they are very anxious to leave the place and get new holdings elsewhere.

3156. They want to migrate bodily, do they?—No.

3157. To leave the township, I mean, not to emigrate?—Yes, to new holdings. Some may stay in the township.

3158. Do you think there is a single crofter's holding in the township worth occupation at the present time?—At one time the whole place was occupied by four tenants; perhaps it might do for four tenants yet.

3159. But not more?—My great grandfather was there in possession of a fourth.

3160. You think it would not fairly accommodate more than four tenants now?—No, not more than four.

3161. Have you any questions to ask, Mr Mackenzie. *Mr Mackenzie*, Factor.—Does the witness remember as far back as thirty years?—Yes.

3162. Do you remember what kind of crops the crofts produced at that time? Were they good crops, or bad crops?—There were no good crops there since the township was divided into twenty shares.

3163. *The Chairman.*—When was that?—When Blackadder 'cut' the crofts in 1811. The land has been cultivated incessantly ever since then, and what crop could be taken out of it now?

3164. *Mr Mackenzie.*—Were the crops better then than they are now?—Yes, I suppose the crops would be better for the first few years. How can they be good now, with constant cropping? it is 200 years since part of the township began to be cropped.

3165. You have got 8 acres of arable land?—Yes.

3166. Do you work your croft by rotation?—I believe I have 2½ acres, the rest is old dykes, the sub-soil of old feal-dykes that was spread over rocks, and is now reckoned as arable land.

3167. *The Chairman.*—The question is, Whether it would not be better for you to cultivate these 8 acres by rotation, yes or no?—I have tried sowing grass and cultivating them in rotation; I have tried every conceivable way of cultivating it, and it is no use.

3168. I wanted to ask you this question: Do you know who it was that originally cut the township into four crofts?—Lord Macdonald about the year 1810.

3169. When were the additional families thrust in upon the township?—It was first set to seven, and one of these left because the seventh part was too small for him. That was my great-grandfather. It was Mr Blackadder who 'cut' the twenty crofts in 1810.

3170. *Mr Myles Macinnes*, Secretary of the Skye Land League.—I would like to ask the witness whether the farm of Cuidreach which marches with his township is not suitable for crofting.—*The Chairman.* We heard a great deal about it from previous witnesses.

Donald Maclean.

DONALD MACLEAN, Crofter, Earlish, Kilmuir Estate (60).
(Examined in Gaelic through an Interpreter.)

3171. *The Chairman.*—What rent do you pay?—£6.

3172. What was your old rent?—£9.

3173. You represent the township of Earlish, I understand?—Yes. Uig, Skye.

3174. And you heard the evidence of the previous witness, Mr Alexander Matheson?—Yes. Donald Maclean.

3175. Do you wish to make any addition to his statements?—I want that our holdings should be improved, should be added to.

3176. Do you mean additions to the present holdings, or new holdings altogether?—Either. I could not be worse than where I am.

3177. Your land is run out?—Yes.

3178. And your crofts are too small?—Yes, the arable land is too small, and our stock does not get grazing. They are dying for want of grazing. The feeding is so scanty upon our holdings, that one cow belonging to myself died last year from starvation.

3179. How many acres arable have you?—I believe it was measured as 8 acres arable, plenty of rocks.

3180. And how many outrun?—There will be as much outrun as arable.

3181. *Mr Mackenzie.*—The evidence given before the Crofters Commission shows that there were 40 acres in his holding.—*Witness.* They are giving a big area for my croft which is only covered by rocks. I have lost several cows in the last few years over these rocks.

3182. *Mr Sutherland.*—Over what is called the land?—Yes, what is measured as so many acres of land.

3183. *The Chairman.*—Is your croft held by Donald and Roderick Maclean?—Yes.

3184. I see it is stated to contain 9 acres 3 roods 16 poles arable, 40 acres of outrun; township grazing 264 acres, and 1829 of pasture common to all the crofters in Glen-Hinisdale. So that you have in your croft practically 50 acres of land at a rent of 120s., equal to about 2s. 4d. an acre?—My grandfather had the place for £2, then it was raised to £3, and then to £9, and now it is £6.

Catherine Macdonald.

CATHERINE MACDONALD, Cottar, Earlish (48).
(Examined in Gaelic through an Interpreter.)

3185. *The Chairman.*—You live in Earlish?—Yes.

3186. Are you married?—No.

3187. Are you a crofter or a cottar?—A cottar.

3188. And do you pay any rent?—No, I have no land.

3189. How do you live?—I have two sons in the south who help me. My mother has been bedridden for years: she gets 3s. a month of parochial relief.

3190. You are anxious to get a croft?—Yes.

3191. But you would require a loan to stock it and put up the buildings?—Yes.

3192. *Mr Sutherland.*—I presume that if you got a holding your sons would come back and conduct it?—Yes, whiles.

3193. And do you think there would be a chance of your succeeding?—Yes, better than being empty. My sons won't come to the place as there is no land.

3194. Do you not think they could take as much out of the land as they require?—My mother has paid rent for 60 years: she paid £3 for the croft to Lord Macdonald. When Major Fraser came in he raised it to £8. Another man who came in has got it, but my father and grandfather were in the occupation of it.

3195. What occupations do the sons follow?—One is a shepherd, and the other is at work in Glasgow.

3196. Has the one in Glasgow been working land?—He is but young, and did not do much land work.

Malcolm Nicolson.

MALCOLM NICOLSON, Crofter, Sheader, Glenuig (60)—*examined.*

3197. *The Chairman.*—Do you live in Sheader?—Yes.

3198. Have you a croft, or are you a cottar?—I have a croft.

3199. What rent do you pay?—£3, 5s.

3200. What was your old rent?—£5, 16s.

Uig, Skye.
Malcolm Nicolson.

3201. I see you have a statement. Do you want to read it to us?—Yes. It is as follows:—

'To the Royal Deer Forests Commission.

'Gentlemen,—Most people in the district know as 'well as I do that the Glen-Uig tenants were the most 'thriving in Skye. Generation after generation—'father, son, and grandson—occupied the same holding, 'large enough and so improved by them as to yield a 'comfortable living; and the people brought up there 'would, by their good conduct, diligence, thrift, and 'manliness do credit to any country.

'The comfortable look of the place so struck Captain 'Fraser, who bought the estate in 1855, that he almost 'doubled their rents, but allowed not a penny of com-'pensation. Some seven or eight years afterwards the 'proprietor, finding that sheep farming was becoming 'lucrative, and that the place would pay him better as 'a sheep farm than at even the increased rents extorted 'from the tenants, turned it into a sheep farm. And 'he did tyrannically, and under cover of our land laws, 'which are now admitted to be a disgrace to our 'statute-book, clear out the tenants from their com-'fortable houses and lands, the fruit of their own and 'their fathers' industry for generations. No more dis-'graceful "clearance" ever took place in any country. 'The hardships suffered by the unfortunate people can 'never be told. Some were forced to emigrate,—old men 'and women of 70 years of age,—others died broken-'hearted, but the greater number still eke out a 'miserable existence on poor and unproductive bits of 'land in the neighbourhood, in sight of happy homes 'and broad acres once their own, reclaimed and im-'proved by the sweat of their brow, but now a monu-'ment of landlord cruelty and landlord oppression.

(Signed) 'Malcolm Nicolson,
Crofter, Sheader,
'*Pro* Glen-Uig Tenants.'

3202. You represent the Glen-Uig tenants?—Yes.

3203. And you are of opinion that there is good land in Glen-Uig?—No doubt of it.

3204. It would accommodate a number of crofters?—Yes.

3205. How many?—We were 17 in Glen-Uig before.

3206. You lived in Glen-Uig yourself?—From the north to the south.

3207. How long since?—Twenty-eight years ago.

3208. And what rent did you or your father pay in Glen-Uig?—We paid to Lord Macdonald from £7 to £8, 10s. each, the township.

3209. You had the run of the rig land?—We had separate crofts.

3210. And grazing?—And grazing.

3211. That land is now part of the farm of Glen-Uig?—Yes.

3212. And is it arable land?—Yes.

3213. You could show us the place yet?—Yes.

3214. And if you got a croft there you would be prepared to work it and pay the rent?—Of course.

3215. And to put on stock and put up the buildings?—As much as I could.

3216. Without assistance?—Perhaps I would require a little.

3217. You would take as little as you could?—Just that; that is what anybody would mean.

3218. The land is close to where we are now?—Only the river between.

3219. And you can show us it when we go to inspect the ground?—Yes.

3220. *Mr Sutherland.*—I understand there are two cottars in the township. Would they take land if they got it?—Yes, they would.

Angus Macleod.

Angus Macleod, Idrigil, Uig, Kilmuir Estate (38)—*examined.*

3221. *The Chairman.*—You hold a croft in Idrigil, here, I believe?—Yes.

3222. What is the number of your croft?—No. 9.

3223. Is it near the new pier?—Yes.

Uig, Skye.
Angus Macleod.

3224. Sloping down to the shore?—Yes.

3225. You don't want to leave it?—I do.

3226. With a pier there?—Yes.

3227. Do you want to get into Glen-Uig?—Glen-Uig or Scuddaburgh—on either side that would be suitable.

3228. And you say there is land in both?—In both.

3229. Suitable?—Suitable.

3230. And you would like to have a holding by which you could subsist without external occupation such as fishing or labour?—Yes.

3231. But don't you think it would be a serious matter to leave your present holding when there is a pier going up beside you?—The present holding is so small, there are 37 tenants confined in about a mile.

3232. What is the size of your holding?—Two and a half to three acres.

3233. And what grazing?—I am not sure how many acres; we can only keep one cow each.

3234. What rent do you pay?—£3.

3235. What was your old rent?—I think it was £4, 5s. before I came into the croft. I have only had the croft three years.

3236. You are a crofter?—Yes.

3237. Your arable land is particularly good, if I remember rightly?—Parts of it very good, and parts bad.

3238. The arable land of Idrigil, if I remember rightly, is better than most of the arable that we saw in Skye?—I do believe it is not the worst; but we have only small bits. It is like a garden, and they are bound to be better with big, large crofts.

3239. What extent of arable would you like on a new holding?—A holding that would enable us to keep eight cows, and about fifty sheep, and a pair of horses.

3240. You wish arable suitable for that stock?—Yes.

3241. I think the Idrigil crofts are much of the same size?—Yes.

3242. Two or three acres arable, and one cow each?—Yes.

3243. *Mr Sutherland.*—I wish to ask a question regarding the extent of the holding. Have you any pasture?—Yes.

3244. What is the extent of it? You say there is only grazing for one cow, or that you have got only one cow?—We have got only one.

3245. Could you keep more?—We could keep two small beasts.

3246. And no sheep?—No sheep.

3247. And you pay for this upwards of £1 an acre?—Yes, we pay £3, and some more than that.

3248. In the island of Skye?—Yes, in Idrigil.

3249. *Mr Macleod.*—You say you would require two horses for the holding that you were speaking about. Don't you think two would be too many for such a small-sized holding,—it would be a great burden to be keeping up two horses?—One horse might do, if my neighbour had one.

3250. I naturally assume that your neighbour would have one as well?—Yes.

3251. You would never think of keeping two horses for all the work you would have to do on fifteen acres of arable; what do you say to that? You think, if your neighbour had a horse, one would be quite sufficient?—Oh, yes. I think so; we could work together.

3252. And it would be a better arrangement than keeping two horses?—Yes; if we could not afford to get them, we would have to do that.

3253. You don't think you could manage to keep two horses on fifteen acres of arable land, even supposing you had plenty pasture,—you ought to know best?—I cannot say, indeed; it would depend greatly on the kind of land we would get.

3254. But if you are able to work three acres just now without any horse at all, you would be quite able to work fifteen acres with one horse?—But if I get a pair of horses by paying for them.

3255. You think the arrangement of working with

your neighbour would be perfectly satisfactory?—In one sense it would, and in another it would not be very convenient; but it is better than having no horse at all.

3256. But supposing you had the two, what would you do with them all the year when you would not be ploughing,—you would only require two for a short time in the spring?—I would keep them working at everything I could get to do with them,—carrying peats and coals, and everything of that kind. Some have carts here that work mostly the whole time.

3257. And have they a pair of horses?—Sometimes, and at other times one.

3258. *Mr Forsyth.*—Have you any other business besides holding the croft?—Yes, I do some fishing.

3259. Would you be able to stock the holding that you spoke of?—Yes.

3260. You have the means to stock it?—Yes.

3261. And to put up the house?—Yes.

3262. *The Chairman.*—Are you in the croft that Martin Macpherson used to occupy?—Yes.

3263. How did you come to enter into that croft?—After Martin left it I got it from the factor.

3264. And that is three years ago?—I think it is near about that.

3265. It is since the Crofters Commission was round in 1887?—Yes.

3266. And you got it at the same rent that Martin paid?—Yes.

3267. You are allowed to keep the croft under the Act of Parliament, are you? there was no question made about that?—(No answer).

3268. That is so, Mr Mackenzie, is it not?—*Mr Mackenzie*, Factor. That is so.

3269. There was no question raised about his being a crofter?—*Mr Mackenzie.* There is no question about his being a crofter.

3270. Did you apply for the croft?—Yes.

3271. And you were allowed to get it at the Fair Rent which Mr Macpherson had paid?—Yes.

3272. Your case is rather different from most of those we have been dealing with. I see your holding is 2 acres 1 rood 24 poles arable, 1 acre 16 poles outrun, and a share of 271 acres of pasture common to the crofters of the township of Idrigil?—Yes.

3272*a*. The old rent was £4, 7s. 6d., and the fair rent £3. Did you agree to pay that?—Yes.

3273. And you have been paying at that rate since, no doubt?—Yes.

3273*a*. *Mr H. V. Maccallum.*—I should like this witness to be asked about the fishing.

3274. *The Chairman.*—Have you a large fishing-boat?—Yes.

3275. What keel?—Forty-six feet keel.

3276. Do you go to the coast of Ireland?—Not now, but I used to go there about fifteen years ago.

3277. What is the longest time you were away fishing?—The longest time would be seven or eight weeks.

3278. Away at a time?—Away at a time.

3279. You make your living mostly by the sea?—Of course, I have nothing else to make my living upon.

3280. Do you wish to give up the sea?—Yes, I do; because it don't pay me. The fishing is failing, and I can hardly get a crew to go into the boat now. The fishing is not paying us, and the men cannot make their living out of it, so I have a hard job to get men to go. I have to go to Stornoway in search of men to form part of my crew.

3281. What crew do you take?—Six, and two boys.

3282. Counting yourself?—Counting myself.

3283. That is eight, all told?—Yes.

3284. But if the sea were to yield you a fair return every year, would you not prefer to stay in this small croft and work the fishing?—Oh, yes, if that were possible; but the fishing has failed for the last five or six years.

3285. It has been a failing concern for five or six years?—Yes, and it is only running into debt. I see at the latter end I will lose the whole lot.

3286. Do you know any croft in Skye that has been a profitable concern during the last five or six years?—No, I do not.

3287. Then they have been failing as well as the fishing?—Yes, they have: the crofts have been so small. If we had large crofts, and could afford to keep sheep, we might manage.

3288. Were you at the Barra fishing three years ago?—It may be four or five years since I was there; it is more than three.

3289. Did it pay you that time?—It did not pay.

3290. You say that the fishing has been a failure to you for the last five or six years?—Yes, it was.

3291. Do you know any croft in the Uig district that has been a paying concern?—No, not one.

3292. Considering your previous experience as a fisherman, and the suitability of your croft in respect of access to the sea, do you not think it would be better to try fishing a little longer instead of venturing upon a large holding?—I should wish to try the land, and drop the sea.

3293. *Mr Sutherland.*—You answered a question with regard to crofts in Skye not paying for some years. Don't you think a croft pays if it returns £1 an acre?—It will pay the landlord.

3294. And I take it that you do not see a very good prospect in taking rent out of the sea to pay for land?—I had to do so to pay my croft's rents. I could not get off it as much as would pay the rent.

3295. And you prefer, and I am not going to say unnaturally prefer, that you should take the rent out of the land itself?—Yes, I mean to get as much land as I can afford to get to support itself.

3296. And that actuates you in asking for a larger holding?—Yes, that is my reason.

3297, *The Chairman.*—Do you belong to Idrigil?—Yes.

3298. I think you said already that you made application to the factor for this croft?—Yes.

3299. You knew before you took it what the rent was?—Yes.

3300. And you were desirous to get it?—Oh, yes, I had known it before.

3301. It is a very suitable croft for a man with a 40-feet keel boat?—Yes, if he does well with the 40-feet keel boat.

3302. But, whether he did well or not, you were desirous of getting this holding when you applied for it?—Yes.

3303. And were quite ready to pay £1 an acre of rent to get it?—Yes.

JOHN GRAHAM, Cottar, Idrigil (45)—*examined.* John Graham.

3304. *The Chairman.*—What is your number in Idrigil?—I am not a crofter.

3305. You are a cottar, are you?—I have a lease of an acre at present.

3306. You are a leaseholder?—Yes.

3307. Is it a lease or a feu—how many years?—Ninety-nine years.

3308. What rent do you pay?—£2.

3309. You are not under the Act of Parliament as a crofter?—No.

3310. We are only dealing with crofters and other small tenants. What is it you want to tell us?—I am anxious to get grazing for one cow, if possible, and I was put down to speak for the rest of the cottars at Idrigil.

3311. How many cottars are in Idrigil?—Seven.

3312. Are they leaseholders too?—No.

3313. Are you the only leaseholder?—There is one besides me.

3314. What is his name?—Angus Mackinnon.

3315. Is he holding on a 99 years' lease?—Yes.

3316. And he is paying a rent of £2?—Yes.

3317. How many other cottars are there?—Five, and we two.

3318. You are speaking for cottars who are not leaseholders also; do they want to get lands elsewhere?—Yes.

ig, Skye.
hn Graham.

3319. And they are willing to pay the rents?—Yes, they are willing to pay the rent.

3320. Do they want land in Glen-Uig?—Well, Scuddaburgh is more handy for them.

3321. *Mr Sutherland.*—Do you know anything about the Small Holdings Act?—No.

3322. You did not hear about that?—No.

3323. There is an Act, if I may be allowed to state it to you, that enables people situated as you are to apply for such a grazing as you want through the County Council. You have not thought of that?—No, I did not know of that; and in the present circumstances I am sorry to say that it is not easy for me to stand my ground. I got a house feu, and I was told to build it as well as I could, and I would get a valuation for it when I left it, but I had to get a lease for it.

3324. *The Chairman.*—We have no power under our remit to deal with leaseholders as a special class.

3325. *Mr Maccallum.*—You would be content with a small croft?—Yes, under present circumstances.

3326. With grazing for one cow?—With grazing for one cow.

3327. And you think it would be profitable for you to have such a holding?—It would be profitable for me.

3328. You would take it in the vicinity here, or are you particular about the place?—I would prefer it near my house—it would suit me better.

3329. You are very anxious to get such a holding?—Yes, because I only get grazing from the crofters.

3329*a*. *Mr Mackenzie*, Factor.—The estate is very anxious to do all they can; he is a very industrious man, but it is not easy to grant his request without treading upon other people's toes.

3330. *The Chairman.*—You are anxious to help him if you can?—*Mr Mackenzie.* Yes.

Roderick Dingwall.

RODERICK DINGWALL, Uig (49).
(Examined in Gaelic through an Interpreter.)

3331. *The Chairman.*—Do you pay any rent?—Yes, a little to the crofters.

3332. How much?—8s. I now pay.

3333. You are anxious to get a crofter's holding?—Yes.

3334. Would you be in a position to take a croft if you got it?—Yes.

3335. And you know where suitable land is to be got?—Yes, where the rest of the township want it.

Donald Nicolson.

DONALD NICOLSON, Crofter, Solitote, Kilmuir (85)
—*examined.*

3336. *The Chairman.*—Are you a cottar?—Yes; but I have paid rent to nine factors.

3337. Have you a statement you wish to hand in?—Yes.

3338. You say:—'I, Donald Nicolson, the undersigned (or "Brave old Crofter," as commonly styled) cottar in Solitote, Kilmaluag, wish to lay my eviction grievances before the Deer Forest Commission, and trust they will give me an opportunity of doing so. I was evicted from Totescore about sixteen years ago by Captain Fraser and his factor, Mr Alexander Macdonald, Portree. I got nothing for the houses I was evicted from, or for other improvements made, and all the rest got it but myself.—I am your obedt. servant,

(Signed) 'DONALD NICOLSON.'

Is that what you wish to say?—That is only as an introduction.

3339. We will take the rest of it?—We want a holding there badly.

3340. Where?—At Kilmaluag. I would like a bit of land on which I could keep a couple of cows and a horse. I was not paid for the houses I left, from which I was evicted. I was to have got £6 for the drains that I executed upon my croft, and that sum is still due me on the landlord's books; I cannot get it. Uig, Skye.

3341. *Mr Maclachlan*, the Interpreter.—He is repeating the evidence he gave before Lord Napier's Commission.—*Chairman.* Would you explain to him that all that evidence is down in print, and that we have a copy with us here.—*Witness.* And after all I have not told the one half of the injustice that was done to me. If I got a croft, a nice piece down at Duntulm, I would be well pleased. Donald Nicolson.

3341*a*. I see you were called late in the day on 10th May 1883, and that after hearing you they adjourned?—I had a very long story to tell them.

3342. We will see your place when we are out looking at the lands, and ascertain what like it is?—I shall be glad to meet you there.

[ADJOURNED.]

FIFTH SITTING.

STAFFIN, SKYE, SATURDAY, APRIL 29, 1893. Staffin, Skye

Present:—

DAVID BRAND, Esq., Advocate, Sheriff of Ayr, and Chairman of the Crofters Commission, *Chairman.*
ANGUS SUTHERLAND, Esq., M.P.
JAMES NOEL MULLER FORSYTH, Esq.
Rev. MALCOLM MACCALLUM.
JOHN MACLEOD, Esq.
HENRY MUNRO, Esq.
WILLIAM MACKENZIE, Esq., *Secretary.*

MALCOLM ROSS, Crofter and Catechist, Kendram (73). Malcolm Ros
(Examined in Gaelic through an Interpreter.)

3343. *The Chairman.*—You are a crofter and catechist?—Yes.

3344. What rent do you pay?—£8, 10s. I am paying just now.

3345. What was your old rent?—£13, 10s.

3346. Is there, in your opinion, land available for profitable cultivation by crofters near your township in this district?—Yes, there is land which is now in possession of the landlord.

3347. What land is that?—Duntulm.

3348. Does Duntulm farm march with your township?—No.

3349. What comes between?—Solitote and Connista.

3350. Do the lands of Solitote and Connista march with the farm of Duntulm?—Yes.

3351. What extent of available land is there, in your opinion, upon Duntulm on this side?—Floddigarry and Duntulm are the parts.

3352. I will come to Floddigarry immediately; I am speaking now of Duntulm. What extent of land, in your opinion, available for profitable cultivation by crofters, can be found on the farm of Duntulm on this side?—I have no idea.

3353. Well, how many crofters would you plant upon it?—I cannot be sure.

3353*a*. What is the general character of the soil in the land you are referring to?—All sorts of land.

3354. What size of a croft would you think it desirable to have upon the farm of Duntulm?—Five or six cows, twenty ewe sheep and their followers, and a horse.

3355. Is that all?—Yes, but they would take bigger crofts than that if they could be got reasonably. That is the sort of croft we have at present.

3356. Is your view to have a croft at Duntulm of

Staffin, Skye. — Malcolm Ross.

the same size that you have at present, or larger?—Doubtless they would be better larger.

3357. What size have you in view?—I cannot be sure.

3358. Have you considered in detail how you would carry out a transfer of your holding from where you are to a farm or croft in Duntulm?—Am I asked if I would be willing to leave my present croft to go to a new one?

3359. Have you entered into consideration of the details by which you would effect a transfer of your holding from where you are to where you wish to go, —the cost, &c.?—Yes, I thought it out; if I would get paid for my present houses.

3360. And have you made any estimate of the cost it would be to transfer yourself and your belongings to the new holding?—It would not be much expense: it is not far away from us.

3361. *Mr Forsyth.*—Do you wish merely to go to a similar croft of the same size because you think the land is better there at Duntulm?—Yes, if that was permissible, and in the order of things.

3362. And then you would give up your present croft?—Yes.

3363. But you would prefer a larger croft, would you?—Well, should it be larger than the one I have, it would be more desirable.

3363*a*. What stock have you on your present croft?—Five cows, 4 stirks, and a young beast 18 months old; a horse and about 20 sheep.

3364. Then a croft of the same size on better land is very much what you want, is it?—Yes.

3365. You think the expense of removing would not be great, but you would get to better land. But you don't see how you could leave without getting compensation for what you have done on this croft: is that the state of matters?—It would be easier for me to do it if I got valuation price for my present houses.

3366. *Mr Macleod.*—How many crofters are there in your township?—Eleven crofts; there are some of them broken.

3367. How many of them are divided?—Four.

3368. How many cottars are there?—There are three, besides women who are on the poors' roll. I think there are five cottars altogether.

3369. That is including the women?—Yes.

3370. I understand you are speaking for the township of Kendram?—Yes.

3371. And there is a number of both the crofters and the cottars that would take new holdings if they could get them?—There are some who are without crofts who are to speak here to-day.

3372. Then do you think that the size of a place that you have got just now, if it was in good land, would be a sufficiently large place for a man and his family?—The times have changed.

3373. But if times were good?—If we had the times that we had once, it would be big enough.

3374. *The Chairman.*—I see your holding extends to .7 acres arable, and 5 acres 1 rood 20 poles outrun; your arrears of rent were £15, 16s. 3d., and of these £12, 16s. 3d. were cancelled.

3375. *Mr Maccallum.*—Can you say, with regard to the other crofters, that they would be content with the same size of a holding that they have now, in better land?—I cannot say.

3376. You have not got the mind of the others upon it at all?—No.

3377. *Mr Munro.*—Have you had any experience in the reclamation of land?—Oh, yes; the land that we have was reclaimed.

3378. Would you be prepared to take in land on favourable conditions if you got it contiguous to the new croft?—Yes, doubtless one would make the best of it if he got it.

3379. *Mr Mackenzie*, Factor for Baird's Trustees.—You speak about your croft: do you consider it as good a croft as other crofts of the township, or do you consider it the worst of the township?—I consider that my croft is worse than the other crofts.

3380. *The Chairman.*—You wanted to say something about hill pasture: what was it?—The hill pasture was taken from us some years ago by Captain Fraser; only part of it was left to us. We are wanting it back, and they are keeping it from us, wanting to keep us impounded in the small portion of the hill pasture which Major Fraser left to us.

Staffin, Skye. — Malcolm Ross.

3381. I see that there are 467 acres of township pasture, and 753 acres common to Balmacquien, Kendram, and Connista. Is it the desire of the township to get new holdings, or is it only their desire to get back this pasture?—They are wanting the pasture back first.

3382. Is it their desire to get both?—I don't know what they want; they want the hill back for the sheep. There are 25 horses and 500 sheep on the pasture.

3382*a*. Would you be satisfied with getting back the old pasture that you have lost without a change of holding?—At the present time the sheep have to be sent to the hill, and would require grazing.

3383. *Mr Mackenzie*, Factor.—I may explain, in connection with the hill pasture, that the proprietor was willing to grant them 200 acres additional of hill pasture to those who had paid their rents; but there were very few of these.

3384. *The Chairman.*—When was that?—*Mr Mackenzie.*—Lately, my Lord.

3385. *The Chairman.*—This year?—*Mr Mackenzie.* Yes, but they have not come to any definite agreement yet. He offered it to them at a very moderate rent, 8s. an acre.

3386. *Mr Sutherland.*—Were you using the extension of the pasture for the purpose of collecting rents?—*Mr Mackenzie.* Not at all.—*Witness.* They were offering us the worst part of the hill.—*Mr Mackenzie.* The part contiguous to their holdings.

John Macdonald.

JOHN MACDONALD, Solitote (67).
(Examined in Gaelic through an Interpreter).

3387. *The Chairman.*—You are a crofter, are you?—I have a small lot, three quarters of an acre. I am not a cottar. I am a crofter.

3387*a*. What rent do you pay?—10s.

3388. Were you before the Crofters Commission?—Yes. I was not the last time, but I was before the Crofters Commission and had a fair rent fixed.

3389. What was your previous rent?—30s. 3d. Fourteen families were settled upon one croft in the township, the rent of which was £7 or £8.

3390. Are you John Macdonald, senior, or junior?—Senior.

3391. Do you know the lands of Duntulm very well?—Very well, and long since.

3392. Is there land available there for use as crofters holders?—Yes, plenty. I have seen eighty families on Duntulm tack, between Lachasay, Score, Erisco, Shulista, Duntulm, and Aird; these are the townships that were cleared.

3393. Were there eighty families on these six townships?—Between crofters and cottars there were eighty families on the townships I have mentioned.

3394. How many of these, roughly, would be crofters and how many cottars?—Most of them were cottars.

3395. In the employment of the tacksman?—Yes; they had as much land as they could till: they used to cultivate on half foot.

3396. How many families could settle on that land now with crofters holdings?—That is a question on me.

3397. What size of holding do you think would be required on the soil there to make a self-supporting holding?—Thirty acres of arable land, some less than that—from five to ten and up to thirty acres.

3398. Quite so; you would vary the size of the arable according to the quality of the land?—Yes, that is what the people want. The people have become impoverished.

3399. You think the district has suffered from these holdings having been done away with?—Yes, I will tell you a little thing about it. The spring before the tacksman of Duntulm, Mr Mackenzie of Letterewe, took it,

I saw thirteen boats leaving the farm laden with produce exported—corn, and barley, and oats.

3400. When was that?—I cannot remember the date—upwards of forty years ago.

3401. How old were you at the time?—I was twelve or thirteen years old.

3402. You mentioned the farm of Floddigarry, I think?—It was the previous delegate who spoke about it. I know about Duntulm and the tack of Duntulm.

3403. That is the only tack that has available land that you know about?—Yes, I don't take anything to do with this part.

3404. How many cottars are in Solitote?—There are fourteen that have land.

3405. Fourteen cottars?—Fourteen crofters, and two or three cottars without land.

3406. But are there any cottars with land?—Oh, we are all cottars for what we have.

3407. Well, do these two or three cottars without land pay any rent?—No rent.

3408. But they have a small stock?—They have nothing.

3409. Would it be a relief to the township of Solitote if these cottars were afforded holdings elsewhere?—No, it would not be felt.

3410. *Mr Sutherland.*—For how many of the remainder would there be land in Solitote if the others got holdings elsewhere?—It would be small enough for two, what the fourteen have; and they would require to get a share of the hill pasture in addition to the present Solitote.

3411. And if the remaining twelve were to go to another place, do you think there would be much difficulty in their beginning in their new holdings?—It would be hard enough on them.

3412. Could land be got where they could carry on the preliminary stage on the new holding without leaving their old homes?—The place that we have is not comfortable in any manner of way.

3413. But what distance is the place that is in your mind for the new holdings from Solitote?—It is no distance at all.

3414. Is it two miles?—No, not a quarter of a mile.

3415. So that if they made new holdings, they could remain in the old holdings till their houses were built in the new place?—Yes, that could be done.

3416. *Mr Macleod.*—Did you say there was only one tenant in Solitote at one time?—Only one, and he paid £7 or £8 of rent.

3417. Where did those come from that were put into it later?—Off the tack of Duntulm when it was being cleared.

3418. *The Chairman.*—Do you wish to add anything to what you have told us?—Perhaps I have said enough; but I saw a great deal of the injustice and iniquity of the world.

3419. The object of the present inquiry, however, is as to the question of available land rather than into historic details of the past?—I quite understand. The land is there visible that was inhabited by people in the past.

3420. We are going to look at it?—Yes.

3421. *Mr Mackenzie*, Factor.—I should like to ask the witness if he is aware that some of those who have applied for more land in the township have got the same?—Yes; but I myself was asking the factor for a cow's grass when the rest of the people got it, and he would not listen to me.

3422. He did not make application, my lord, at the time the others did, and I had no authority to give it. I had to get authority before I could give him land. (*To witness.*)—Are you aware also that Isle Flodday, Clachan, Solitote, Connista, Brunistot, and Scamnidale were occupied by one tacksman over a hundred years ago?—No; I don't believe there is such a thing.

3423. Would you be surprised to hear that they were occupied by one tenant (Mr William Macdonald) in 1733?—I know that Aird was occupied by a gentleman of the Macdonald family. There was also Floddigarry, which was occupied by a captain; Duntulm, by a captain; and Aird, by a captain; but neither Shulista nor Connista.

CHARLES MACDONALD, Crofter, Baile-mhic-Cuithein (67)—*examined.*

3424. *The Chairman.*—Do you represent the township of Baile-mhic-Cuithein?—Yes.

3425. Your fair rent is £5, 14s., and your old rent was £8, 10s.?—Yes.

3426. I see you hold 4 acres 1 rood 30 poles arable, 7 acres 3 roods 8 poles outrun, a share of 493 acres township, and 753 common pasture. Do you know the tack of Duntulm?—Yes.

3427. Is there land available there for cultivation to profit by crofters?—Yes; there is as good land as I know anywhere.

3428. Is it richer and better land than the land of your own holding?—Very much better.

3429. Is your own land wrought out?—Yes.

3430. Then it would be an advantage to you to transfer yourself to a holding on the tack of Duntulm?—Yes.

3431. Are you ready and willing to do that?—Yes.

3432. Could you undertake the cost?—Yes; we would rather be at the expense of doing it.

3433. Than remaining where you are?—Yes.

3434. And pay an increased rent, suitable to the new holding?—Yes; we would rather do that; we would go as far as we could with the rent.

3435. What size of holding do you think you would require in order to live by it?—A small family would need about 12 acres of arable land.

3436. And what outrun?—About 6 cows' grazing, and 2 horses and 50 sheep; but stronger families would take up more land than that.

3437. Stronger families might have twice that arable, might they?—Yes.

3438. What family have you?—I have not much of a family just now. I have two or three daughters there, back and fore.

3439. No sons?—Two sons; but they are not long with me, but they would help me.

3440. How many sons have you that could help you?—Two.

3441. Now, suppose your two sons were to help you, would they and you together be able, without hiring assistance, to work 12 acres arable, and look after 6 cows, 2 horses, and 50 sheep?—Yes; we would do it ourselves without hiring outside assistance.

3442. And would you stock the land and put up the buildings without requiring assistance from outside?—We would do our best to stock it. We could not do it right off, but we would do our best. We would put on what stock we could until it would increase naturally.

3443. And could you put up the buildings?—We would try and do that too.

3444. Would you be willing to attempt an undertaking of that kind without any assistance?—Yes; I would.

3445. Where are your sons at present?—One is in Kensaleyre and one is here.

3446. *Mr Macleod.*—How many crofters are in Baile-mhic-Cuithein?—Seven crofts; three of them whole.

3447. How may cottars?—Four.

3448. Are these all men?—They have always a man in the house, at any rate.

3449. And how many were on that township before there were any removals from surrounding tacks?—Seven crofts were there since I remember.

3450. Have they got hill pasture?—They have a share of that hill pasture that Malcolm Ross spoke of. Stewart, Duntulm, got the rest of the hill pasture, and what they have would not keep the half of their stock.

3451. Would you rather take a new holding than get an extension of your hill pasture?—Yes; the croft I have is no use. I have not this year or last year taken a handful of seed off it. I have been buying seed oats every year, sowing and getting nothing back.

Staffin, Skye.
Charles Macdonald.

3452. *Mr Maccallum.*—How many of the seven crofters would be willing to leave and go to new holdings?—Judging by what they were saying to me, I believe they would all go.

3453. And the present place would suffice for how many?—Five.

3454. But you think they would all prefer to go to Duntulm?—Yes, I believe so; but I think some of them would elect to remain where they are if the township was set to five families.

3455. There are four cottars: are they a burden on the crofters?—Yes, they are; they are getting pieces of land.

3456. And do they get grazing?—No.

3457. Can you speak for these cotters, whether they would be able to take new holdings?—They would, if they had strong families.

3458. *Mr Forsyth.*—How does the township of Baile-mhic-Cuithein stand in the matter of payment of rent or any arrears there may be, with the view of going to new land?—I believe they are in arrear.

3459. Do you know the amount?—I am not sure what they are due, but the years are so bad, and they cannot live but by buying, buying everything.

3460. *The Chairman.*—Are you in arrear just now yourself?—Yes, a little; but I believe I shall be able to pay it at Whitsunday.

3461. What are you in arrear just now?—One year's rent.

3462. Is that all?—That is all, since the Commission came in.

3463. There were arrears left upon you by the Commission, I suppose?—Yes.

3464. Have these been paid?—No.

3465. What was the amount of arrears ordered to be paid?—I don't remember.

3466. I see your arrears are stated to have been £29, 8s. 4d., of which £17, 8s. 4d. were cancelled, and you were left to pay £12 in six instalments of £2 each. Have you not paid any of that?—No, I have paid none of it.

Murdo Lamont.

MURDO LAMONT, Connista (40)—*examined.*

3467. *The Chairman.*—Are you a crofter or a cottar?—A crofter.

3468. What rent do you pay?—£4.

3469. What was your old rent?—£5, 10s.

3470. Are you representing the Connista tenants?—Yes.

3471. How many are there?—There are six crofts, one of them divided into two.

3472. Six crofts and seven crofters?—Yes.

3472*a*. How many cottars are in Connista?—All except a few paupers.

3473. How many paupers?—Two.

3474. You know the tack of Duntulm?—Very well.

3475. The whole of it?—The whole of it.

3476. Is there land there available for crofters' holdings?—Yes.

3477. Which could be cultivated to a profit?—Yes, crofters.

3478. And you are one of those that would be ready to take a holding if you got it?—Yes.

3479. Could you stock such a holding?—Yes, my lord, to-morrow.

3480. And put up the necessary buildings?—Yes.

3481. What size of holding have you in view?—About 16 acres arable.

3482. And what stock?—Keep for 6 cows and followers, 80 sheep, and 2 ponies.

3483. Have you in view both outrun grazing and common grazing, or is your view to have a croft to yourself that would sustain the whole of these?—I would rather to myself.

3484. A compact holding with exclusive right to the arable and grazing?—Yes.

3485. What size of grazing have you in view?—Just what would keep that.

3486. I need not say that a holding of that size would infer a considerable rent, even as a fair rent?—A fair rent. Staffin, Skye. Murdo Lamont.

3487. A much larger rent than you pay at present?—It could be valued.

3488. But your fixed rent is £4?—£4.

3489. The rent of the holding you have in view would be a great deal more than that?—Oh ay, ay; far more.

3490. Is your land worked out?—Yes.

3491. Exhausted?—Exhausted. It is one of the worst patches in the whole estate.

3492. And do you only get a crop by the constant use of sea-ware?—No; we have no road to Connista township.

3493. How do you manure your land?—Just by dung.

3494. Are there available lands on Duntulm much better protected from stormy winds than the lands of your holding?—Yes, the hill of Duntulm is suitable for crofters, the whole of it: the Commissioners can see that by examining it.

3495. You can show us the land you refer to?—Yes.

3496. What holding are you in?—Half of No. 1.

3497. John Lamont was in it before?—Yes, my father.

3498. The area is 4 acres 28 poles arable, 3 acres 1 rood 20 poles outrun; old rent £5, 10s., new rent £4, arrears £1, 15s. cancelled. You are not in arrears since the Commission?—No, none since. I am not a penny in arrear.

3499. Your rent was reduced from £5, 10s. to £4.—Yes.

3500. Do you follow any trade?—Not at present, I must be at the croft.

3501. But you have had something else than a croft?—I am a compulsory officer for the School Board just now.

3502. And what income have you from that?—4s. a week.

3503. Is that all?—That is all.

3504. Have you any other local appointments?—No I attend to my croft, but I am losing by it. If I had a larger croft I would do better.

3505. But what I am pointing at is, have you any other engagements?—Not just now.

3506. *Mr Macleod.*—Have you had any experience of the reclamation of land,—have you ever taken in land yourself?—Yes; I am well acquainted with that.

3507. You said you knew very intimately the farm of Duntulm?—Yes.

3508. Do you think there is any land there, besides the old land that was occupied by the people when they were there, that could be taken in or reclaimed?—Yes; there were small holdings besides that crofters had at Duntulm.

3509. But do you think there is any land there that might be reclaimed that was not under crop before?—The whole of Duntulm could be reclaimed, except the grazings of every township.

3510. But are there not pieces amongst the grazing that might be reclaimed?—Yes, but it would be useful for the grazing itself.

3511. Certainly; but your objection, as I take it, to a farm like Duntulm at the present moment, is that it is a grazing, and nothing but a grazing: would not it be more profitable if the land was in crop?—Yes, with crofters.

3512. I take it that if there were crofters,—small holdings planted in Duntulm,—they would be able to add considerably to the old area of arable by reclaiming land that is fit for reclamation amongst the pastures?—Yes.

3513. You think that?—Yes.

3514. As a practical man you think that?—Yes. You will see it yourself when you go through it.

3515. *Mr Sutherland.*—How long have you been compulsory officer for the School Board?—About three years.

3516. *Mr Forsyth.*—You say that you could stock and build for the holding you described at once.

Staffin, Skye. Murdo Lamont.

Have you calculated the cost of that in such a holding as you describe? I have no doubt you could do it yourself, but perhaps others could not do it so easily. Could you give us any idea of what you estimate the cost of stocking, building, and fencing for such a holding as you describe?—There is not much to be out on stocking to-day, as prices are low, but it would cost about £50.

3517. To get into such a holding as you describe?—Yes.

3518. Do you allow anything for fencing there?—No, but for building.

3519. And would that include stocking?—No, no.

3520. £50 for building alone?—Yes, for the house and square.

3521. And what would you say for fencing and stocking? Let us take fencing first. You see you rather want your 60 sheep to yourself if you could get them,—you would prefer that to a common grazing?—I want 80 sheep to myself.

3522. That means, of course, a still larger stretch of hill to fence if you have it to yourself?—I will do that. I will do it.

3523. You could fence it yourself?—Yes.

3524. That means money, you know, of course?—Yes.

3525. Could you estimate the cost of it, because others might not be able to do it?—The fencing was not very dear, but it is getting scarce now, so much goes out of the country. It would cost a sum of money, but we would manage to do that.

3526. We have got £50 for the building. Now we want, if possible, an estimate for the stock?—The stocking is not very dear.

3527. But say even at low present prices?—Some people have stock already.

3528. Yes, partly; but still you would need to put something for that?—Yes; but they are fit for it.

3529. £100 or £150?—No.

3530. £100?—No, not that either.

3531. Not for 80 sheep and all the cows?—Oh, well, some have perhaps 6 cows already.

3532. Quite. I admit that if you have stock already there will not be so much needed?—No.

3533. As to the hill fencing, that would cost something,—you could hardly estimate that?—No.

3534. But, of course, you will understand that there is a possibility of your having to expend a good bit of money if you do it properly?—Yes.

3535. You have calculated and thought over that?—Yes.

3536. *The Chairman.*—Suppose you found, on going carefully into the matter, that you could not hope to settle on the new holding under an expenditure of less, all over, than £150, would you face that?—I don't require that much at all.

3537. How much do you require altogether?—I have most of the stuff already.

3538. What about the building?—£50, I could spare that.

3539. You think that with an expenditure of £50 you could set up in the new holding?—Yes.

3540. And work it to a profit?—Yes.

3541. You were asked about arable, and you said, I think, that you would require 16 acres arable?—Yes.

3542. You mean on the tack of Duntulm?—Yes.

3543. Old arable that simply requires to be ploughed?—Yes.

3544. You don't mean land that requires to be taken in?—Some of it.

3545. I am speaking of your 16 acres: would you require that the 16 acres should all be old arable?—All old arable.

3546. *Mr Sutherland.*—About fencing: are sheep farms at present existing separated from each other by fences, do you know?—Yes, they are putting up fences lately between them.

3547. But only lately?—Only lately.

3548. You have known sheep farms bordering each other for years without any fences?—Yes.

3549. It is better with a fence, of course?—Yes.

3550. But sheep farms have been carried on for a number of years without any fences between them?—Yes.

3551. And perhaps it might not be necessary, to begin with, to have a fence separating you from your neighbours, any more than in the case of sheep farmers?—No.

3552. Of course, in cases of trespass by sheep, the trespass of one is neutralised by the trespass of the other?—Yes.

3553. So that if you chose to carry on for some years,—I don't say it is a good thing, but if it were necessary to do so,—you might perhaps delay the expense of erecting a fence, to begin with, until you were better able?—Yes, and my neighbour perhaps, if he were able, might pay the half.

John Lamont.

JOHN LAMONT, Connista (37).
(Examined in Gaelic through an Interpreter.)

3554. *The Chairman.*—You are the son of Duncan Lamont, a cottar in Connista?—Yes.

3555. How many cottars are in Connista, two?—Two.

3556. And two paupers, I think we were told?—Yes.

3557. Does your father pay any rent?—He was paying at one time, but not now.

3558. To whom did he pay rent?—The landlord evicted him, and his rent paid, when Holl and Greauline were cleared.

3559. Do you know the tack of Duntulm?—Yes, very well; I know it from the one end to the other.

3560. Is there land available there for new holdings?—Yes, plenty.

3561. And would you and your father desire to obtain a holding on that tack, if you could get it?—Yes, and very needy we are, and have long been, of getting such a holding.

3562. Could you stock the land and put up the buildings?—Yes.

3563. Without assistance?—Yes, without any help but ourselves. I have another brother.

3564. Where is he?—At home.

3565. You and he and your father together could manage it?—Yes.

3566. What size of holding have you in view?—I would need 10 acres of arable ground.

3567. And what stock?—Seven cows and their followers.

3568. How many horses?—One.

3569. How many sheep?—About 50 sheep.

3570. Do you follow any trade?—No; I have no particular trade, but I do anything that comes to my hand.

3571. You are a labourer?—Yes.

3572. What does your brother do; is he a labourer also, or has he a trade?—He has no trade.

3573. Do you go to the fishing, you and your brother?—Yes.

3574. Do you do a little in lobster fishing?—No.

3575. Have you any land at present?—We have a bit from the township people.

3576. For potatoes?—Yes, potato ground.

3577. *Mr Maccallum.*—You say that you have been long desirous of getting a croft?—Yes, and we have much need of it. We would make good use of it.

3578. Did you make any application to the landlord for a croft?—Yes, four years ago, and did not get it. It is not long since we asked the factor himself, and he would not listen to us.

3579. You and your brother who would be quite able to work a croft?—Yes.

Kenneth Macdonald.

KENNETH MACDONALD, Cottar, Brogaig (45)—*examined.*

3580. *The Chairman.*—Are you a crofter or the son of a crofter?—A crofter and the son of a crofter.

3581. Are you the tenant of the holding?—There is no holding.

Staffin, Skye. — Kenneth Macdonald.

3582. Are you a crofter or a cottar?—A cottar.

3583. Do you pay any rent?—No rent.

3584. How many cottars are there?—Eleven cottars.

3585. How many crofters?—Eleven. In my grandfather's time there were only four crofters and a cottar in Brogaig. My grandfather had the fourth part of it. He died when the family were very young, and my uncle was taken away in Lord Macdonald's Fencibles. The widow was left with a young family; likely she had fallen back in her means,—I don't know whether she was in arrear or not, but it was taken as an excuse to evict her, and two or three were put in her place who were taken from Balmeanach. This is a peculiar district, my lord: it had the misfortune of not being suitable for a sheep farm, and it was made a kind of asylum for evicted crofters, such as widows and old men and half lunatics that they could not send away to America. These got leave to multiply in Staffin.

3586. Do any of these eleven cottars pay rent?—Not one.

3587. And are they located on the crofters' lands?—Everyone of them.

3588. And are a considerable inconvenience, I suppose?—They are a great burden to the crofters, and a burden to themselves at the same time.

3589. And would it be a great relief if these eleven cottars could be accommodated with holdings elsewhere?—There is no doubt about that.

3590. Do you speak for the whole of them?—I am representing the whole of them.

3591. Are they all anxious to get away?—Everyone of them most anxious; and they are determined to get it—if not by legal means, they are determined to get it somehow.

3592. I would recommend you not to indulge in these answers. We will confine ourselves to what is legal and legitimate, and kindly adhere strictly to that kind of reply, otherwise we shall stop the examination.—Very well, my lord.

3593. Now, where is there land to be obtained?—There is land on the farm of Sartil.

3594. Does that march with Brogaig?—Yes.

3595. Who is in occupation of that farm just now?—Mr Ferguson, Monkstadt.

3596. Is it treated as part of the farm of Monkstadt?—Yes.

3597. Suppose you got a holding at Sartil, would you be prepared to stock it without assistance?—I would do my best.

3598. Could you do it without assistance?—Yes, I could do a little of it.

3599. But you would require assistance for the rest?—I don't say the majority of them.

3600. I am speaking of your own case?—Well, I could stock a good size of a croft.

3601. What stock could you put upon it without assistance?—Two or three cows and a few sheep.

3602. But could the rest of the cottars do that, or would they require assistance?—I cannot say about the majority of them, but a great number of them could.

3603. And some of them could not?—Some of them could not.

3604. Have you any stock just now?—I have two sheep.

3605. Have you any cattle?—No.

3606. Is there any other cottar from Brogaig here along with you?—No.

3607. You represent the whole of them?—The whole of them.

3608. *Mr Sutherland.*—Brogaig is in this neighbourhood, not very far from where we are?—Marching with Monkstadt.

3609. What distance from this point where we are sitting?—About 1½ miles.

3610. You say you march with the Monkstadt farm?—Yes.

3611. Have you any particular place on this farm in view where you say you would like a holding?—Yes, a place called Balmeanach. We approached the factor for it last year, when Mr Macleod's lease was out. We got a kind of a promise—a verbal promise.

3612. But you did not get it?—No.

Staffin, Skye. — Kenneth Macdonald.

3613. Well, then, what I wish to know is, whether Balmeanach is better than any other place, or do you simply wish to go back to it because your people were there before?—It is the most suitable place for us.

3614. It is most suitable for the place you are living in at present?—Yes.

3615. You would take a reasonably-sized holding if you could get it there?—Yes, and the rest would do the same.

3616. Do you believe it would be a greater difficulty for you to start a new holding than it is for you to live now in your present condition? Would you have less or more hardship?—Of course, I would have a little,—I could not be idle; at the same time I could live.

3617. And with the prospect of succeeding in the future?—Yes. In my present circumstances I have nothing to do while I am at home. I must go to the south to earn my living: while I am at home in wintertime I can do nothing for my family.

3618. And in Balmeanach you would be in reach of your own home, so that you could work at the new croft and then come home?—My hut is quite close to the march.

3619. You have already been asked whether you think others would be in the same position and would be willing to do the same?—Able and willing, the whole of them; and sore needing it.

3620. And you are quite prepared to show the Commissioners the land that you refer to?—Quite prepared.

3621. *Mr Macleod.*—Has this increase in the number of crofters and cottars in the township of Brogaig arisen from the natural increase of the population, or have people been put into these townships?—People put down, and natural increase also.

3622. Put from where?—From Balmeanach.

3623. From this place that you want to get back to?—Yes. Six families were evicted. I don't know whether they were put there all together or not.

3624. *Mr Maccallum.*—I think you say that there are eleven cottars in Brogaig?—Yes.

3625. And would the others be able to start a small croft as well as you without assistance?—There are some of them more able than I am, with strong families.

3626. You think the most of them would be able to begin with a small croft?—The most of them.

3627. And is it your idea that crofts should be of a varying size, some smaller and some getting much larger?—Well, generally speaking, according to the size of the family, from 3 acres to 25 acres.

3628. That would be better than having them all of a size, of a large size for instance?—Yes.

3629. *The Chairman.*—You go south to work. What is your main employment when you go south?—I tried many a thing just from land to sea, but my last occupation was a fireman.

3630. In Glasgow?—In Glasgow, the Clyde.

3631. How long were you engaged at that?—A good while now. I have been away for the last 18 months on the Manchester Canal.

2632. Working there?—Working there as a kind of dredger.

3633. How long were you employed as a firemen?—Five years. I used to be a few months off in the winter time.

3634. You have given your evidence very distinctly, but I think it my duty to recommend you very strongly and earnestly not to do anything that is illegal or improper, either now or in the future. Kindly remember that.—Thank you, my lord.

ARCHIBALD MACDONALD, Merchant, Garrafad, Kilmuir Estate (48)—*examined.* Archibald Macdonald.

3635. *The Chairman.*—Are you a crofter in Garrafad?—Yes.

3636. What rent do you pay at present?—£14, 6s.

3637. What was your former rent?—My rent is actually £18, 17s. 6d., but I get 20 per cent. off it.

3638. Was your rent fixed by the Crofters Commission?—No.

3639. The rent is £18, 17s. 6d. in the valuation roll?—Yes.

3640. But the rent you actually pay at present is £14, 6s., being 20 per cent. off?—Yes.

3641. Can you give us any idea of the size of your present holding?—Twelve acres arable land.

3642. What stock have you got?—I have 6 cows and 6 stirks, and 30 sheep, that is the stock allotted to the holding.

3643. And is that what you have, or less?—I have more than that, but I don't keep them on the holding during the whole year.

3644. You send them away?—Yes.

3645. What stock have you actually got at present?—Two horses, 6 cows, 3 queys, 2 two-year-olds, and 7 stirks.

3646. And how many sheep?—Sixty-five.

3647. Do you take grazing from other crofters?—Yes, during the summer.

3648. You hire grazing?—Yes. Some of these cattle I only got a few days ago.

3649. You live by dealing?—Yes, to a great extent.

3650. Now are you desirous of leaving this holding if you can get another in Sattil or Duntulm?—I have got one already.

3651. Where?—In Staffin Inn.

3652. You have taken Staffin Inn?—Yes. I am not speaking for myself.

3653. Have you Staffin Island as well as Staffin Inn?—Yes.

3654. Do you wish to give evidence regarding the requirements of the district?—Yes, that is what brought me here.

3655. Then kindly state the case from your point of view on behalf of these other tenants?—They should have new holdings of from 12 to 25 acres arable.

3656. What sort of stock?—Six cows and their followers, 30 ewes with their followers, and a pony, that is for the 12 acres.

3657. What stock would you say for a 25 acre holding?—Just in proportion to that.

3658. That would be something like double?—Yes, according to the quality of the land.

3659. Do you think that a holding of that sort could be carried on at a profit?—Yes.

3660. Now let us consider the matter in some detail. What average value do you put upon the stock, beginning with the cows?—£8 per cow.

3661. Then take the horses or ponies?—About £14 each.

3662. Next take the sheep?—The quality of sheep we keep here is not very good.

3663. Take the quality that you think would be most suitable for the district?—15s.

3664. Is that the ewe alone, or the ewe and the lamb?—The ewe alone.

3665. That would be, in your view, the probable cost, if a person required to purchase all that stock?—Yes.

3666. Take the buildings. What would the dwelling-house cost?—Between £30 and £50.

3667. What steading would be required?—Drystone wall and thatched roof.

3668. But I mean the outhouses for the cattle?—I include outhouses in the £30 or £50, with the man's own labour.

3669. What should the steading consist of in your opinion?—A barn, a byre, and a stable.

3670. And a cart shed?—And a cart shed?

3671. What expenditure would you require to put upon fencing, or do you allow for that?—I don't allow for that.

3672. That would be done by the man's own labour?—The man's own labour.

3673. Do you allow anything for implements?—No.

3674. Or for feeding stuffs?—Get the feeding stuffs out of the ground. You would require implements all the same.

3675. Now what would be the gross income derivable in an average year in this district from a holding of that size and so stocked?—The 12 acre holding should be something like £30 on an average, after it was a going concern for about three years.

3676. Suppose it has been a going concern for about three years, what would you sell?—I would sell the first year, out of the cows, two stot stirks.

3677. Expecting to realise what price?—£4 each.

3678. What else would you sell?—Nothing at all that year.

3678*a*. No sheep?—No.

3679. Would you propose to buy, say, blackfaced cast ewes, when you put them at 15s. a piece?—Yes.

3680. In the third year you would only sell two stot stirks hoping for a price of £4 each?—Yes, but I would have other two quey stirks on hand.

3681. For sale?—For sale next year when they arrived at a proper age. Next year I would sell other two stot stirks at the same price.

3682. And what else?—And these two quey stirks, and being two-year-olds they would make £6 each; and this year I would have a foal of the mare likely that would realise between £5 and £6.

3683. Yes, and what next?—That is two years: well, the thing would go on like that.

3684. And the third year?—The third year I would just sell two stot stirks and two two-year-olds, but I would have a foal only every second year, so that I would put it down at £2, 10s. per annum.

3685. What would you make the sheep return?—Twenty lambs off the sheep at least.

3686. You are giving us 30 ewes, would not you allow more than 20 lambs?—The ground is bad here.

3687. You would only allow 20 lambs?—Twenty lambs.

3688. What would that come to?—I would sell five of the ewe lambs the first year.

3689. How much would you hope to get?—5s.

3690. How many ewe lambs the second year?—The same, at the same price.

3691. And the third year?—Five again, and I would have some ten wedders and a three-year-old.

3692. And that would sell for what probably?—About £1 each.

3693. Cast ewe?—That would be required for the family.

3694. What about the wool, would that be required?—That would be required for the family as well.

3695. Any other thing you would sell?—No.

3696. On these figures then you have something to the good that way, and a means of livelihood?—I think so.

3697. Inside your holding?—Yes.

3698. Without fishing or labour or extraneous assistance?—Yes.

3699. Do you think the crofters generally would understand to work that system as well as you do yourself?—Oh yes, the whole of them.

3700. As well?—Just as well.

3701. But perhaps on a small scale?—Yes, and on a larger scale some of them.

3702. Is the land of the holdings in this quarter very much run out?—Yes.

3703. And is it only kept going by constant manuring?—Oh yes, but it would do much better if they would leave it out for a certain time.

3704. Do they leave it out because they are lazy, or because they can't help themselves?—That is not what I mean. It is that they continually crop it, and instead of manuring it, if they would allow the land to have a rest.

3705. Could they allow it to rest with the small amount of land they have?—Oh, yes.

3706. Why don't they?—Because they do not believe in it.

3707. But in your view they might allow it to rest, and if rested it would be very much more productive?—Much more.

3708. You are always in the habit of allowing your land to rest and taking it in certain rotations?—Yes.

Staffin, Skye. Archibald Macdonald.

3709. Is the system of sowing grass seeds understood here?—Oh yes, by some.

3710. And is it followed?—Yes, but to a very small extent, nothing to benefit the community.

3711. Speaking generally of crofters and cottars who wished new holdings, would you say that they could form these holdings and stock them, and build upon them without assistance, or would they, generally speaking, require assistance?—They would require assistance.

3712. The most of them?—The most of them.

3713. Could any of them except, perhaps, one or two do without assistance?—Most of them would require only partial assistance, because they have a lot of stock, and the implements, and a great deal of the concern.

3714. Then you would put them, perhaps, in three classes,—a very few who might do without assistance, a considerable number who would need partial assistance, and some who would require the entire assistance?—Oh none, because there is no one of them but has stock.

3715. The cottars?—Very few cottars but have stock in this part.

3716. One man here to-day has said he has only three sheep?—Yes, but there are others who have cattle and sheep.

3717. But is not the stock of the cottars generally very small?—Yes, but they have a cow, most of them.

3718. We have not had many of them giving evidence then. But you think that both cottars and crofters could do what is required with some assistance?—Yes.

3719. And some of them could do without any?—Yes, and most of the crofters have as much already as would be a sufficient guarantee for the assistance.

3720. *Mr Forsyth.*—Were you thinking that the sheep would be held separately or in common?—In common.

3721. You think that is the best plan?—Yes, in so small holdings.

3722. You don't allow anything for dipping or for tups?—No.

3723. There should be a little put for that?—Oh, well, perhaps they would get that out of the wool extra, besides keeping the family.

3724. *Mr Sutherland.*—I wish to ask this: In starting such a holding as you indicated, the first few years would, of course, be far more unfavourable than the succeeding ones?—Yes.

3725. The result of the labour would be cumulative?—It would always be remaining there.

3726. Gathering up; and the lands would be gradually getting better?—Yes.

3727. And what number of years do you think would be a proper number to take to estimate the average of success?—Between three and four.

3728. Do you think that by the end of the fourth year you would be in a position to say distinctly whether it was a success or not?—Yes, after the land was broken up and cut a bit, and good crops taken from it, I think I would have sufficient land taken in to prove that the thing would be a success or a failure.

3729. But you think it would be more favourable to the venture to take a period of, say, seven years?—Oh, yes; the longer it would be, the more favourable; but I think it ought to be tested in four years.

3730. And the stock would be continually increasing in that time, and the land would be improving, would it not?—Yes.

3731. The land at present—the pasture land especially—is degenerating on the large sheep farms, because there are no cattle on it?—The grazing would be continually getting better, unless it was overstocked.

3732. And would keep more stock than the average sheep farm does now?—Yes, owing to their own labour I think they would keep much more stock than the farm does.

3733. Then with regard to not following a rotation of crops in this neighbourhood, there is no reason to suppose but they would have a rotation in the new holding if they had a sufficiency of land?—Not the least if they thought they had a sufficiency of land. However small the holding, it could be taken up in rotation.

Staffin, Skye. Archibald Macdonald.

3734. But there is a good deal of inconvenience, is there not, in subdividing it into seven parts?—That is the cry they have.

3735. It would be a very minute subdivision, would it not? Does it not require seven subdivisions of two acres?—Yes.

3736. So that that might account in some degree for the present want of rotation?—Oh, yes.

3737. But you think, under more favourable circumstances, and with larger holdings, they would introduce an improved system of agriculture?—Yes, that is what they look to.

3738. *Mr Macleod.*—I presume you know the large farms in the neighbourhood of this district?—Yes.

3739. You know the ground?—Yes.

3740. And you have a knowledge of stock?—Yes.

3741. How does the land occupied by the crofters compare with the land occupied by the tacksmen?—The land of the tacksmen is much superior in grazing and arable.

3742. That is your view?—I am quite certain of it.

3743. There is a question which you probably heard put by me to-day, but which I might put again to you: it is about the amount of land that could be reclaimed in those large tacks?—Very considerable tracts of land.

3744. One of the difficulties that has to be contended with in making small holdings in a large tack is that there are very considerable areas of grazing, the stock on which would require to be wintered, and the danger would be that there would not be a sufficiency of arable for this purpose?—Oh, there is plenty.

3745. In your opinion there would be plenty of arable?—Yes.

3746. For wintering all the stock that could be summered?—For wintering all the stock that could be summered.

3747. You gave a number of figures here as to the produce of a croft of 12 acres arable with a sufficiency of pasture to graze 6 cows and their followers, 30 ewes and their followers, and a pony?—Yes.

3748. But I presume you don't mean to say that that is an exhaustive balance-sheet that you gave us,—that it exhausts everything that might be taken from the croft?—No, there are a great many odds and ends, but that is the most important part of it.

3749. You did not give us the value of the wool?—No, I said for the family.

3750. But if you are making a balance-sheet, it is only fair to credit the holding with all that it produces, even supposing the family does use it?—Yes, and the landlord on the other side.

3751. Certainly. Well, I make out that, with the figures you gave as to the stocking, it would take just £99, 10s., or say £100, to stock?—Yes, just about that.

3752. And about £50 for the buildings?—Yes.

3753. £150 would put a man fairly on his way to support himself?—Even supposing he had nothing, and they have a fair share already, £100 would do as a rule.

3754. Then there is the question of the rent,—do you think there would be any difficulty in meeting that?—Not in the least; none whatever.

3755. You think that any failure to pay a fair rent at the present time is due to the people's actual inability to do it owing to their circumstances?—Yes, that is it; and they have such small patches of land that they cannot make their living out of it. They lose more time about these small patches of land than it is worth; whereas, if they had a holding of the proper size, it would keep them employed, and they would both earn their living and be able to pay a fair rent.

3756. Then, taking the figures of the third year, you gave us two stirks at £4—£8, and two queys £12; and calculating, if you had a mare, you would make £2, 10s. a year of it. And the number of lambs with the lambs and wedders that you would sell, you would only make £2, 5s. off them?—Yes, but then there are 10 wedders at the end.

3757. In the third year?—Yes, 10 three-year-olds at £1.

3758. That is £10?—That is £10.

3759. And the ewes at 25s. make £11, 5s. You said the produce would be about £30?—Yes.

3760. Well, as a matter of fact, it comes to more than that,—it comes to £60. Then there are the 10 wedders: you allow nothing for deaths?—Yes, I calculate upon having 15. No, I am wrong there. There are 30 sheep.

3761. You said that you would take 20 lambs off the 30 sheep. Then you would sell 5, leaving 15?—Yes, but in the beginning I left out, so as to count for that, 10.

3762. Ten would be wedder lambs?—That is not what I mean. I counted upon having 30 ewes and 20 lambs, and 10 I left out for deaths during the time.

3763. Ten net?—Ten net.

3764. That represents all your mortality, that third?—Yes.

3765. Could you give us the value of the wool after the third year when you had got the thing into thorough working order?—Between £4 and £5.

3766. Put it at £5?—The quality is very low, as the ground is broken.

3766*a*. But I am not taking so much the holdings that the people have just now as the improved holdings?—They would likely be better, if the ground is better.

3767. There is nothing about the sheep. How many lambs would you expect to take off the 30 ewes?—Twenty.

3768. No more than that?—No, counting the loss during the time. I kept the half of them for three years, and very likely I would not have more.

3769. Are you allowing a larger or a greater proportion than say a tacksman allows?—I am not aware of what probably the tacksman allows.

3770. *Mr Forsyth.*—Do you expect to rear 10 three-year-old wedders from a stock of 30 ewes? Do you think that is a sufficient allowance for death, taking it from the lamb up to the three-year-old wedder?—If the lambs were only tended, I would not get 30, but I would say 25.

3770*a*. Well, supposing you have 25 even, that would give you about 12 or 13 wedder lambs?—Yes.

3771. Can you expect to have 10 three-year-old wedders to sell off that?—Yes.

3772. You think that is a moderate estimate?—It is rather bare, perhaps.

3773. It is very bare?—The mortality in the sheep here is when they are young.

3774. It is when they are hoggs?—And wedders, too.

3775. Would not 7 or 8 be more like the thing?—It might in some years.

3776. *Mr Macleod.*—But you would have twin lambs?—There might be.

3777. *Mr Maccallum.*—Then it is your opinion that the pasture on the large holding has very much deteriorated through want of cropping?—Yes, I know it.

3778. And that these large holdings are not able now to keep so large a stock as when they were formed?—No.

3779. And then, on the other hand, with regard to the crofters holdings, you think the land has deteriorated from overcropping?—Yes, from continual overcropping.

3780. And that overcropping, you think, is occasioned by the smallness of the holding?—To a very great extent.

3781. The holdings are small, and then there is the other factor that they have to give land to the cottars?—Yes.

3782. But you think that if holdings, such as you have described, were available, they would not overcrop?—I don't think they would.

3783. They would allow the land to rest?—To rest.

3784. You have some experience yourself with the cultivation of land?—Yes.

3785. Did you make any reclamation of land?—Yes.

3786. And how did that pay you?—Very well.

3787. How much land did you reclaim?—Almost all over.

3788. And you found it profitable to reclaim?—Yes, very profitable. The landlord did spend £30 over it.

3789. He helped you?—He helped me.

3790. And you think that the crofters would be quite as able as you were to reclaim land on these large holdings?—Oh yes, and on their present holdings.

3791. Then have they made any improvement since they got security of tenure?—Yes, a lot.

3792. A very great deal of improvements?—Yes.

3793. With regard to their houses, for instance?—Yes, and more about their holdings.

3794. They are better cultivated now?—Yes.

3795. And you think that for starting these holdings the most of them would require some assistance?—Most of them. There are some who could stock without it.

3796. *Mr Munro.*—I would like to come a little closer to this question of land reclamation. You have told us you have had some experience in that direction: have you ever laid out an entire croft from reclaimed ground?—No, but parts of it.

3797. Do you know accurately the result of your experience in that direction as to the taking in of land; did it pay you?—Yes.

3798. It paid you well?—Yes.

3799. You are in a position to say that if crofters got access to lands at present under sheep farms they would be in a position to reclaim these under a regular system of cropping?—Oh, yes.

3800. And with results favourable to themselves?—Yes. I believe they would get grand returns out of it.

3801. Would they pursue a regular system of rotation?—That is their idea.

3802. That they could do it?—Yes; but they consider their present holdings too small.

3803. You have told us a little ago that crofters would be the better of some assistance in taking possession of new lands. Now, in what way would you expect assistance to come to you,—by way of loan, or an absolute gift?—By loan.

3804. You disclaim the idea of the natives of Skye seeking charity in any form whatever?—Yes.

3805. What they want, I understand, is not charity but fairplay?—Fairplay. They think that if they were wronged by bad land laws, it would be only fair for just land laws now to come to their assistance.

3806. If they were assisted in that way by loans from Government or otherwise, do you think they would repay these over a series of years?—Yes.

3807. *The Chairman.*—Reverting to the holding that we have been having in view, twelve arable and so forth, I must ask you a question which we have asked before and not got answered, but probably you can answer it. What rent would you affix to this holding?—Between £6 and £7.

3808. Not more?—Not more.

3809. How many hands would be required to work it?—One man and a boy and a servant girl.

3810. Who might all be within the circle of his own family?—Quite so.

3811. Would you not require two men and a boy?—No, if they have a horse.

3812. Then you make no allowance for hiring servants?—No, none whatever; I mean the crofter and his family to work this croft, except they got a few days' assistance in autumn.

3813. And in spring?—Oh, well, only a day or two in spring. They would require not one single day in spring except while sowing the potatoes, and they generally gather together and help each other.

3814. But they would need a little assistance in autumn?—Yes.

3815. Do you make any allowance for that?—The man and the boy and the servant girl could work it.

3816. Without assistance?—Without assistance.

3817. What do you estimate the cost of keep, say of a man, his wife, and five children, the eldest not more than twenty, for a twelvemonth?—I cannot answ

Staffin, Skye. Archibald Macdonald

that, because the crofters get so much out of their croft.

3818. But there are a good many things which they have to buy that they cannot well do without?—Yes, I cannot get at that on the spur of the moment.

3819. Have you calculated that at any time?—No.

3820. You have given us a number of most useful details: have you set these down in black and white, on the debit and credit sides?—Yes, I have been considering that.

3821. Have you got that paper?—No; I have it in the house.

3822. Would you let us see it?—Yes.

3823. We would like very much to see it. What do you bring out?—Between £33 and £34 as the net return, after three years.

3824. After three years you bring out £33 or £34 of a yearly return?—Yes.

3825. Gross or net?—On the figures I gave you.

3826. Are these gross returns?—Oh, no. There are a great many things about the farm more than I have mentioned, such as fowls and pigs, and a lot of things of that kind.

3827. Would you sell any butter?—Yes; if they were such a small family, with four cows, they would sell butter.

3828. Do you allow anything for the crofters' own labour?—No, none whatever. I leave all the small things and the crop and other things as a return for his labour.

3829. There is one small item occurs to one,—for example, do you allow anything for smith-work?—No; but that would be required.

3830. In one croft you mentioned there is one pony, and in another two ponies. A good deal of smith-work would be required for them?—Yes.

3831. And repairs to carts and implements. We would like very much if you would show us that paper.

3832. *Mr John Mackenzie*, Factor.—In removing to new holdings, would not a crofter be under a great disadvantage in bringing new stock in on that land, and invariably have a very large mortality for several years?—I think the stock they have would get considerably better on, because the land would be better.

3833. I mean new holdings?—In new holdings.

3834. Would not that be a great disadvantage? Would not it be a great advantage to any person going to occupy that land to get the stock upon it?—Of course it would be an advantage, but the stock there is not suitable for crofters.

3835. Are you aware that there might be a great mortality in bringing a new stock that is not acclimatised in the place?—Yes, some stock; but I am perfectly convinced that the stock the crofters have at present would greatly improve if they were removed to new holdings on the big farms—considerably improved.

3836. How does the crofters' stock compare with the stock presently on the farms you mention?—Very much inferior.

3837. Would they be better to have a superior class of stock?—The stock that the crofters have would suit them better.

3838. If a crofter brought in, say, 20 sheep to this land from some other place, might there not be only 6 or 7 of them alive next year?—There might be none of them at all, but it is not quite probable.

3839. Do you know from your own recollection, or from experience, that there have been cases of that kind?—I don't know of them; but one thing I know, when stock of the best of the crofters stray on these big farms they are considerably better than those that are continually on their own.

3840. That is a different thing. I mean by getting new stock into a place where that stock has never been on before, is it not a great risk?—The thing is this ———

3841. *The Chairman.*—There is undoubtedly a risk in acclimatising a new stock to a new ground?—There is, but I will put it in this shape. The crofters bring their own stock from the worst grazing to better, and I contend that they will improve and thrive better than those that were on already. Staffin, Skye. Archibald Macdonald.

3842. They will take to the new land, which is better feeding?—Better feeding.

3843. *Mr Mackenzie*, Factor.—Another question I have is this: When estimating this croft, did you make any allowance for bad seasons or failure in the seasons?—Yes; I made an average price during bad and good years.

3844. Are you aware that, generally speaking, the crofts are worked profitably and to advantage at present in the way in which they are worked?—They are not.

3845. If the same system was continued in the new crofts?—That is quite right. The idea of the people is that they would take the arable land in rotation.

3846. And now supposing—you said that you had some experience of it—supposing that you had a garden (a small garden of half an acre) which had been sown with one kind of crop, and the ground sick, would not it be better to work even that by rotation, and more profitable?—I have no experience of the garden.

3847. Are you aware that that would be the case?—I don't remember the question.

3848. However small the holding might be, even suppose it was a garden, would not it be better?—I have said so already.

3849. *Mr Macleod.*—In the figures that you gave you were more concerned with what the crofter would sell off the croft than with the whole total produce?—Yes.

3850. It is not the whole total produce?—The whole total produce would return a great deal of money.

3851. *Mr Sutherland.*—Retaining his own living at the time?—Yes.

3852. We have heard a great deal from you about the produce of a croft. Are you the product of a croft yourself?—Yes.

3853. *The Chairman.*—Are you of opinion that any disadvantage which would attach to the transference of stock to a new holding, such as you have described, and consequent loss, would be more than countervailed by the advantages derived from the new holding otherwise?—I don't think any disadvantage would arise owing to the transference of the stock. It would be more to the advantage of the stock.

3854. Suppose there was a disadvantage, however, would that be more than met by the other advantages?—Oh, yes. But I cannot believe there would be any disadvantage, because they are under the same climate; it is only moving over a march to a better ground and more sheltered.

3855. At present the crofter does not cultivate his croft in this district to a profit?—No.

3856. But you are of opinion that if he had a large holding he would be able to cultivate it to a profit?—Yes.

3857. Just explain in a word? Why in the one case is it unprofitable and in the other case, in your opinion, profitable?—I don't know exactly.

3858. You admit that at present he does not cultivate his holding to a profit?—Yes.

3859. But you think that if he had a holding of the size you describe he would be able to cultivate it to a profit?—Yes.

3860. And would do so? Wherein lies the difference?—The difference lies in this: The land is completely exhausted, and this ground, the old arable land in the tacks, is in good condition for crops in the meantime; and the idea among the people is that when they get this good ground in heart they will keep it in heart by continual rotation.

3861. Then let me ask this further question. You think that getting a holding of the size you mentioned there would not be the risk of the land becoming exhausted and the profits falling, as is the case with the small holdings where the arable is too limited?—There is no fear of that.

3862. They would be able to work it by rotation and a better system of cultivation altogether?—Altogether.

Staffin, Skye. Archibald Macdonald.

(Later in the day the witness handed in the following statement):—

Statement by Archibald Macdonald, Garrafadd, showing estimated annual return from a small croft.

12 acres arable, 34 outrun, 100 hill pasture.
6 cows, 1 horse, 30 ewes.

CATTLE—			
First Year.			
2 stot stirks, ...	£8	0	0
2 quey stirks (unsold first year, sold second year), . .	12	0	0
Second Year.			
2 stot stirks (unsold second year, sold third year), . .	8	0	0
2 queys stirks, . . .	12	0	0
Third Year.			
2 stot stirks, ...	8	0	0
2 quey stirks (unsold third year),	...		
HORSES—			
Second Year.			
1 filly, ...	5	0	0
Third Year.			
½ filly, ...	2	10	0
SHEEP—			
First Year.			
20 lambs (15 unsold, 5 sold at 5s.), ...	1	5	0
Second Year.			
20 lambs (15 unsold, 5 sold at 5s.), ...	1	5	0
Third Year.			
20 lambs (15 unsold, 5 sold at 5s.), ...	1	5	0
10 wedders at 20s., . .	10	0	0
3)	£69	5	0
	£23	1	8

3863. *The Chairman.*—I understand you wish to make a correction on your previous evidence in reference to this statement?—Yes. I stated £33 as the return instead of £23, and on this calculation I based the rent.

3864. Now, does that show both a debit and a credit side?—Yes, as far as the rent is concerned.

3865. We cannot go into the details of your statement at this moment; but suppose, on entering into the matter, we think it desirable to examine you further, would you be willing to attend at some other place?—Yes.

Charles Macarthur.

CHARLES MACARTHUR, Crofter, Ellishadder (62).
(Examined in Gaelic through an Interpreter.)

3866. *The Chairman.* Are you a crofter in Ellishadder?—I am.

3867. What is your rent?—£6, 5s.

3868. What was your old rent?—£9. I have been sent here from Kilmuir: the crofters were removed from Holl and Greanline.

3869. Do you know of available land near your present holding?—Yes.

3870. Where is it?—On Sartil.

3871. How far is that from your present house?—About three miles.

3872. Are you anxious to leave your present holding, and acquire a holding on Sartil, if obtainable?—Yes. I was promised a better place, but did not get it.

3873. Would you be prepared, without assistance, to put on the necessary stock and erect the necessary buildings?—I would be the better of help.

3874. How much help?—About £100.

3875. And would you be prepared to repay that at low interest?—I would try.

Staffin, Skye. Charles Macarthur.

3876. *Mr Sutherland.*—How many tenants are there in Ellishadder?—Eight.

3877. Any cottars?—Two: five of the crofts are divided.

3878. Is the name Sartil the name of a township or of a farm?—Where the people were before.

3879. *The Chairman,* on the suggestion of Mr Myles Macinnes, Portree, Secretary of the Skye Land League.—How long has this farm of Sartil been in the occupation of the present holder?—From Whitsunday last.

3880. Did you make any application for this ground, or part of it?—Yes, and for other places; for Greauline and Holl, and Linicro and Feaull and Brae. It was out of that I was put myself.

3881. How many applications were given in altogether?—The applications that I referred to were applications at the time the clearances were being effected, but we particularly put in an application for Sartil, and were not successful.

3882. When was that?—Last summer.

3883. That was an application direct to the proprietor or to the factor?—Yes; they were asking it from the factor, and he would not give it.

3884. Was there any written reply sent?—Asking us to take over the sheep stock that was on the ground.

3885. What was the sheep stock?—I am not sure; there would be about a thousand.

3886. And you were not prepared to do that?—No.

3887. Well, but suppose the application had been entertained by the landlord, how would you propose that he should have dealt with the sheep stock if you could not take it?—There were markets where they could be disposed of.

3888. But that might have been at a loss?—The people themselves, the applicants, would take over the sheep stock if they would get terms of payment.

3889. Did you make any offer?—No, we had not the chance: it was set to the other man.

3890. What answer did you make to the proposal of the factor that you should take over the sheep stock if you got the land?—We answered him that we were not able to take over the sheep stock.

3891. Then what did you think would become of them?—We did not know what he was to do with the sheep stock that was on it, unless he would give it to us until we could pay it.

3892. So it is your position that you did not care what became of the sheep stock if you got the land?—No. We did not find the landlord or the present factor bad at all, but the previous landlord spoilt us entirely.

3893. Mr Ferguson has Sartil at present?—Yes.

3893*a*. Have you any questions, Mr Mackenzie?—*Mr Mackenzie.* No; I think the witness has given his evidence fairly well. The only thing I have to add is, that I asked them to send in the terms on which they would take the stock, but never received them.

Peter Macdonald.

PETER MACDONALD, Crofter, Garros (39).
(Examined in Gaelic through an Interpreter.)

3894. *The Chairman.*—Are you a crofter?—Yes.

3894*a*. Where do you come from?—From Garros.

3895. What is your rent?—£5, 15s.

3896. What was the old rent?—I don't quite remember what the big rent was.

3897. I find it was £9, 15s., the area being 3 acres 3 roods 36 poles arable, 5 acres 2 roods 36 poles outrun, 248 acres township pasture, and 3672 hill pasture. Do you wish to leave your present holding?—Long since, if I could get another.

3898. Why?—It is so small and so poor that I could not make my living on it.

3899. Have you ever been able to make your living on it?—No.

3900. Then how do you sustain yourself?—By my earnings, with the assistance of the croft.

3901. Where is there land that you think would be suitable in the neighbourhood?—I think that any one of the six tacks that are vacant of population on the estate is suitable enough.

Staffin, Skye. — Peter Macdonald.

3902. Just give me the names of the six tacks?—Cuidreach, Glennig, Scuddaburgh, Duntulm, Floddigarry and Sartil.

3903. You are ready to take a holding on any one of them?—Yes, I am desirous of getting such a holding.

3904. And putting on the necessary stock, and erecting the necessary buildings?—I think I would try to do that, but every one cannot do it.

3905. Could you do it yourself without assistance?—I believe I could.

3906. What expenditure would you look forward to in order to effect a transfer?—About £40 or £50.

3907. Are there any cottars in Garros?—No.

3908. How many crofters are there?—Four crofts, and one is in two.

3909. Then there are four crofts and five crofters?—Yes.

William Nicolson.

William Nicolson, Crofter, Marrishadder (53). (Examined in Gaelic through an Interpreter.)

3910. *The Chairman.*—You are a crofter from Marrishadder?—Yes.

3911. What is your rent?—£8.

3912. The old rent?—£11.

3913. I see your holding has 6 acres 1 rood 6 poles arable, 4 acres 4 poles outrun, 660 acres township grazing, and 3672 hill pasture. Did you hear the statements of the previous witnesses?—Yes.

3914. And do you concur in their evidence?—Yes.

3915. Do you wish to make any addition?—No, but that I am desirous of getting more land.

3916. The land of your holding is exhausted?—Yes.

3917. And do you know of land near at hand much more fertile?—Yes.

3918. And you would be prepared to undertake the task of transferring yourself to a new holding and working it to a profit?—Yes.

3919. Without assistance or with assistance?—Not without assistance.

3920. How much?—That would be according to the holding that I might get.

3921. Suppose you got 10 acres arable?—No, I could not take such a holding as that without assistance.

3922. What assistance would you require for a holding of that size?—Up to £100.

3923. Are there any cottars in Marrishadder?—No.

3924. How many crofters are there?—Eight.

3925. Are any of the crofts broken?—Four are broken.

3926. Then there are eight crofters and four whole crofts, is that the way of it?—Four whole crofts and four broken: twelve families.

3927. Do you remember when additional crofters came to the place?—No, it was themselves who were dividing the holding.

3928. Does that remark apply to the whole of you?—Yes, the increase of the township.

3929. Is it a common thing in this district for crofters to divide their holdings?—Yes, that was the habit.

3930. That is due to increase of numbers?—Yes.

3931. But is it not putting more people on the land than it will sustain?—Yes, quite so.

3932. Do you think that at present the township of Marrishadder is overcrowded?—Yes, very much.

3933. And the land is not kept under rotation?—It is too small.

3934. Would it be a great relief to you if you could get holdings elsewhere?—Yes, a great relief.

3935. Is it the fact that at present it is impossible for you to do well in your holdings?—No person can make his living out of them at present: they are so small and so run out.

3936. Did any of those whose holdings have been divided apply to the estate management for new holdings?—I am not aware.

3937. *Mr Sutherland.*—Is the land that they could take near them?—No.

Staffin, Skye. — William Nicolson.

3938. How many miles?—Between three and four miles. Floddigarry and Sartil are about six miles from us.

3939. *Mr Macleod.*—Were there any people put into your township before the period that you remember?—One man had our township first: then he kept a part of it for himself and let the rest to tenants.

3940. What man was that?—Martin Martin, Tote.

3941. Where did those people come from that he let the land to?—From different places.

3942. Were they put out of the places they came from?—Three from Borve, near Portree.

Alexander Macleod.

Alexander Macleod, Crofter, Cul-nan-cnoc, Kilmuir Estate (55)—(Examined in Gaelic through an Interpreter.)

3943. *The Chairman.*—Are you a crofter in Cul-nan-cnoc?—Yes.

3944. What is your rent?—£7, 5s.

3945. What was the old rent?—£11, 5s. The holding is 5 acres 2 roods 2 poles arable, 3 roods 2 poles outrun, 434 township grazing, and hill pasture 3672 acres.

3946. *Mr Sutherland.*—Do they want new holdings at Cul-nan-cnoc?—Yes, they would that, if they could get better. It is a very bad place.

3947. Is there a better place near them?—Yes, plenty on the big tack.

3948. How far away is that?—About a mile.

3949. How many besides yourself do you think it would take?—I cannot tell how many.

3950. Would you take land yourself?—Yes, if I could get a better place than I have.

3951. Can you show the land that you refer to to the Commissioners?—Yes.

3952. *Mr Macleod.*—What is the big tack that you refer to?—Scorrybreck.

3953. What is the nearest township?—Tote.

3954. How many crofters are in Cul-nan-cnoc?—Eight crofts and ten families; and there are six cottars.

3955. Are there men in all the cottars' houses?—Yes, except two.

3956. That is four cottars. Do those four cottars want land?—I cannot say, but they are working land at all events as they get it from the crofters around them.

William Mackenzie.

William Mackenzie, Teacher, Valtos (41)—*examined.*

3957. *The Chairman.*—You are a crofter in Valtos?—I am a teacher.

3958. Have you not a holding?—I have a small part.

3959. Are you here representing the township?—Yes, I was appointed.

3960. How many crofters are in Valtos?—There are six crofts divided among eleven crofters.

3961. And how many cottars?—Five.

3962. Do they pay rent, any of them?—No; they give a little labour for the patches they get from the crofters.

3963. They live upon the crofters to a great extent?—Practically.

3964. Are the crofts there very small?—The crofts are ordinarily fair sized, but they are all divided now.

3965. And in your judgment would it be a great advantage to them if they could get self-sustaining holdings elsewhere?—It would.

3966. Then about the cottars. It would be an advantage, I suppose, if they could be taken away from there, and get holdings elsewhere?—Certainly.

3967. An advantage to the cottars, and a relief to the crofters?—That is so.

3968. There is no doubt about that?—No. One of the crofters is here.

3969. Is that Archibald Graham?—Yes.

Staffin, Skye. — William Mackenzie.

3970. How long have you been in Valtos?—Fourteen years.

3971. During all that time do you know of any croft that has been worked to a profit?—By the subdivision the lands have become so small, and the people do not seem to believe in allowing the land to rest.

3972. They cultivate it every year?—Yes.

3973. And take the substance out of it?—Yes.

3974. The whole of the arable land there is in need of a rest?—Completely exhausted.

3975. Do they get sea-ware there?—Yes.

3976. And they use it every year?—Yes.

3977. Do you know the district well?—Fairly well.

3978. You know the surrounding tacks?—Yes.

3979. Do you know where there is available land on these tacks?—Land at Scorrybreck.

3980. What part of Scorrybreck?—Upper and Lower Tote.

3981. You know the land there?—Yes.

3982. Is it, in your opinion, suitable for cultivation?—Yes.

3983. To a profit?—To a profit.

3984. Is it not a little difficult to get at?—Yes it is, but not more so than the land they are in possession of.

3985. Not more inaccessible than where they are?—No.

3986. How would they do at Scorrybreck,—would they go mostly by boat?—By boat.

3987. Are they accustomed to use boats where they are?—Yes.

3988. And do they do a good deal of their traffic in Valtos by means of boats?—It is all done by means of boats.

3989. Is there any road from the present township of Valtos to it?—There is a road being constructed at present, which, when it is finished, will go up as far as Tote.

3990. Intended for horse traffic?—Yes.

3991. How far is Tote from Valtos?—About two miles,—hardly that.

3992. In your opinion the land at Tote is much better and has much more substance in it than the land they would be leaving?—Certainly.

3993. From what you know of the people of Valtos, would they all, crofters and cottars, be willing to leave Valtos if they could get better holdings?—Some of them would, but it would not be easy for some weak families; for instance, one family might be able to go, and another which could not, might take the croft thus vacated.

3994. You would occupy the vacated crofts by those who were unable to remove?—Certainly.

3995. But would the land be worth cultivating?—Yes, when they would get more of it, and be able to give it a rotation.

3996. Would the Valtos tenants be able to go to Tote without pecuniary assistance?—Not without partial assistance.

3997. Would that have to be of a material or only a trifling amount?—Probably from a third to a half of what would be required to stock and build.

3998. *Mr Munro.*—What do you estimate a third or a half to be?—That depends on the size of the croft. Take the croft mostly spoken of, 12 acres arable with outrun: on the whole, such a croft as that would require, I should say, roughly speaking, about £150.

3999. And would the crofters be able to repay such a large sum as £150 by easy instalments?—They would not require that; they have a certain amount of stock already. It would take £150 in all.

4000. What amount of assistance would they require?—A third of that.

4001. From £50 to £75?—Just so.

4002. How many crofters could you settle in Tote now?—I could not say, there are plenty more places besides Tote.

4003. *Mr Maccallum.*—There are a large number of families in your township, so that it is very badly congested?—Yes.

4004. How did the subdivision arise?—Families breaking up.

4005. Not by families coming there, but by sons of crofters settling there?—Yes.

4006. Do you think these would have taken holdings elsewhere at the time, if there had been holdings available?—Oh, yes.

4007. They would have preferred that to the subdivision of the croft?—Yes.

4008. How do the cottars' families do for milk: have they a cow, for instance?—None of them.

4009. And the children are brought up without milk?—No milk.

4010. Therefore you think it would be a great benefit to these cottars to have a holding so that they could have milk for their children?—Yes.

4011. You think the children suffer a great deal?—Certainly.

4012. How much land have you got yourself?—Two and a half acres.

4013. Do you cultivate that to a profit yourself?—Yes.

4014. You make a profit out of the land which you occupy?—Yes.

4015. And you do not find that the climate is such that crops could not be raised?—No.

4016. You get good crops of your own?—I have only 2½ acres, and I give it a complete five year rotation.

4017. And you find the cultivation of it profitable?—Yes.

4018. Do you think the land in Tote is superior to the land you have?—Yes.

4019. *Mr Sutherland.*—In regard to the cultivation that has been referred to, I presume you carry on a spade cultivation?—Plough.

4020. Do you plough too?—Yes.

4021. As to the road you spoke of from Valtos to Tote, is there any prospect of this being carried on to Portree?—The people of the district were looking for that and petitioning for it. I know that if such a road were made, it would make a different place of this country altogether.

4022. You think it would be very desirable in view of forming new holdings along that road to Portree?—My estimate of the benefit to the people of such a road is that, even with the crofts raised 20 per cent., it would benefit them.

4023. Even though they were taxed to that extent, it would be more than compensated for. Have you a road to the north from Valtos?—Yes.

4024. Is it a good road?—This road.

4025. This road is continued to Valtos?—It went beyond here two miles until last year when a new road was made.

4026. A carriage road?—Yes.

4027. Do you find the absence of roads militating against the attendance of children at school?—Yes.

4028. You are aware that money was given specially for the purpose of making roads to schools?—Yes.

4029. Has your case been taken into consideration in allocating that money, do you know?—I don't know, indeed. We brought our case under the notice of the County Council.

4030. *Mr Macleod.*—You say that you have been a teacher at Valtos for the last fourteen years. Might I ask you, as one that has had special charge of the education in the district, how the intelligence of the people stands to-day, as compared with when you began to teach,—do you think that education has improved them intellectually?—Oh, yes.

4031. You think so?—In the case of the younger people.

4032. And you think that, with the education you have been able to impart to them, they would be able to use better modes of culture if they had larger holdings?—I believe they would.

4033. *Mr H. V. Maccallum.*—I should like to ask a question.

4034. *The Chairman.*—Are you appearing on behalf of the landlords?—*Mr H. V. Maccallum.* I am appearing on behalf of the Highland Property Defence Association.

Staffin, Skye.
William Mackenzie.

4035. *The Chairman.*—And the late proprietor was a member of it?—*Mr H. V. Maccallum.* He was.

4036. *The Chairman.*—What is your question. —*Mr H. V. Maccallum.* Does the witness consider that if there was a good harbour at Staffin there would be a considerable number of the crofters who would avail themselves of the fishing industry?—*Witness.* Yes, I believe they would; the fishing banks are very convenient.

4037–38. *The Chairman.*—Now do you think that if such a harbour were established, a number of people would be induced to take small holdings by the shore without much land, and depend upon the fishing industry for their livelihood?—I don't doubt it.

4039. You think that would be a popular thing among them?—It would.

4040. Would you have both classes there,—a certain class who would desire to live by the sea, and another class who would like self-subsisting holdings farther in? —Yes.

4041. That is your view?—Yes.

4042. What is the distance by road at present from Valtos to Portree?—I should say about 14 or 15 miles.

4043. What would be the distance from Tote to Portree by the road suggested by Mr Sutherland?— There is no road, the distance is about 30 miles.

4044. Suppose a new road made from Tote to Portree, and crofters settled there, what would the distance be?—11 or 12 miles.

4045. A good deal less than half the distance?— Yes.

4046. *Mr Forsyth.*—What important fishing banks are there near here, if you had a pier at Staffin?— Away out between here and Lewis, and between here and the Gairloch coast.

4047. The Shiant bank?—Yes.

4048. Any others?—The whole channel.

4049. If you had a road through direct to Portree it might become a place of considerable fishing importance in the future, might it not?—Yes.

4050. And develop the whole industry all around; with a good pier at Staffin, and a good road to Portree, there might be good white fishing here?—Oh, yes.

4051. The place is particularly suitable?—Very suitable.

4052. *The Chairman.*—Would it be an easy matter to erect a breakwater between the mainland and Staffin island?—I cannot speak to that. I desire to add one thing about the rent. I heard the rent stated once or twice. I would have a rent put on that would free the holding in forty or fifty years.

4053. You mean a purchase system?—Purchase rent.

4054. *Mr Munro.*—Might I ask you if the theory of agriculture is being taught in schools here?—Lately it has.

Archibald Graham.

ARCHIBALD GRAHAM, Cottar, Valtos (30).
(Examined in Gaelic through an Interpreter).

4055. *The Chairman.*—Are you a crofter in Valtos? —A cottar.

4056. There are four cottars and ten families in Valtos?—Yes, that is so.

4057. How many crofters are there in Valtos?— Eleven, I think.

4058. You are anxious to get a new holding?— Yes.

4059. You heard the evidence given by the teacher with regard to Tote and Upper Tote?—Yes.

4060. Do you agree with it?—Yes.

4061. Have you any further information to give us? —No.

4062. If not, we will take you as concurring generally in the statements that have been made by the teacher and the other witnesses?—Nothing further to say.

Staffin, Skye.
Murdo Maclean.

MURDO MACLEAN, Crofter, Lealt.
(Examined in Gaelic through an Interpreter).

4063. *The Chairman.*—Are you a crofter or a cottar? —A crofter.

4064. What is your rent?—£3, 15s.

4065. What was your old rent?—£6, 10s. I have half a croft.

4066. You heard all the previous evidence to-day, I think?—Yes.

4067. And do you concur in it?—Yes, some of it.

4068. Are you anxious to get a new holding away from your present croft, with better and more fertile land?—Yes, very desirous.

4069. And do you concur with what has been told us by various persons upon the subject of transfer of holding?—Yes, but each man will have his own story to tell.

4070. I would like to hear yours?—I am in a very poor, confined place. The land was cribbed from us bit by bit until what was left was not worth much. The first bit was taken from us on the south side of the river and given to an Englishman. There was not a penny of arrears due by anybody in the township, which had six crofters in it paying £7 each, and they got threatened of a reduction when this piece was taken from them. Then this end of the estate was sold by Lord Macdonald to Major Fraser, who took a third part of our township from us and added it to the farm of Lonfearn. We were then paying £5 each croft. After the Major had so reduced our holdings, he raised the rent to £13. Then there were six tenants in it, now there are seven, and two cottars. It is so small that we cannot live on it. If we got back what was taken from us it would help us largely.

4071. What you mainly intend to convey is this that while the land has been exhausted, the number of people has been increasing?—Their families are getting poorer at all events.

4072. And the cure for that is to put them into other holdings in your opinion?—I know of no better mode of improving their condition than to give them the good land which is in possession of tacksmen at present.

4073. *Mr Macleod.*—Who has the farm of Lonfearn at present?—Murdoch Nicolson.

William Macleod.

WILLIAM MACLEOD, Crofter, Clachan (57)—*examined.*

4074. *The Chairman.*—Are you a crofter in Clachan? —Yes.

4075. What is your rent?—£3, 15s.

4076. Your holding extends, I see, to 3 acres 3 roods 30 poles arable, 4 acres 18 poles outrun, 299 acres township grazing, and 3672 hill pasture. Where is there land available nearest to you?—Sartil and Floddigarry.

4077. Do you know Floddigarry well?—Yes.

4078. Is there much good land there that could be cultivated to profit?—Yes, big stretches, good pieces, but it is mostly grazing.

4079. But is a great deal of that grazing old arable? —A great part of it.

4080. Would that land you refer to accommodate a considerable number of crofters properly?—Yes, that is evidenced by the fact that one man at Floddigarry had no less than 80 milch cows.

4081. Had that land at Floddigarry previously been in the occupation of crofters?—I don't know that Floddigarry was, but Balmeanach was.

4082. And in whose possession is Balmeanach now? —Mr Ferguson, Monkstadt.

4083. Is it a part of Monkstadt?—Yes, about a year ago it was added to Monkstadt.

4084. Are there any cottars in Clachan?—Two.

4085. How many crofters?—Twelve, and on eight of these there are two families: four are whole.

4086. There are twenty crofters?—Twenty families paying rent.

Staffin, Skye. William Macleod.

4087. Was that owing to subdivision by the crofters among themselves?—They had to subdivide when there was no other place for them to go to.

4088. Then there is a great crowding together of crofters and cottars at Clachan?—Yes.

4089. And are the whole of them anxious to get away?—The land is not good; I would say it would be sufficient for eight crofters.

4090. That is to say, that out of the twenty-two inhabitants, crofters and cottars, eight could remain and fourteen would take new holdings?—Yes.

4091. *Mr Macleod.*—How far from Clachan is this land that you say is available for new holdings?—It marches with our township. Sartil is 2 miles from us.

Roderick Macinnes.

RODERICK MACINNES, Cottar, Digg (55)—*examined.*

4092. *The Chairman.*—Are you a crofter in Digg?—A cottar.

4093. Do you pay any rent?—No rent.

4094. Have you any stock?—Yes, a little.

4095. Tell us what it is?—Three cows, three stirks, and ten sheep.

4096. Have you a pony?—No.

4097. Or a share of one?—No.

4098. How do you winter these animals?—Buying here and there from the crofters, and buying tillage here and there.

4099. Where do you feed them in summer?—Paying for grazing that is vacant.

4100. To whom?—Crofters.

4101. Do you always pay for the grazing?—Yes, every year.

4102. Are you better off than some of the crofters?—I don't confess that I am worse than some of them.

4103. You have a good holding?—Not at all.

4104. Is it the case that you have three cows, three stirks, and ten sheep, and pay no rent?—Oh, yes; after I get my account of what it will cost me, I will be paying quite as much as they are. Two or three times I have asked land of the factor, and was quite able to pay for it, and could not get it. Then I bought land and paid money for it, and after doing that I cannot get it, and the land is worse.

4105. Did you get the money back?—No. When the late tenant of the hotel died here, I bought the tillage and planted it.

4106. Are you anxious to leave your present subject of occupation if you can get a larger holding?—Yes. I am very desirous of doing so, and long since I have been so.

4107. And you would be ready to stock that holding and put up the buildings?—If I got the land. I would endeavour to do so, but I would need assistance for houses.

4108. *Mr Forsyth.*—Are you a fisherman?—Yes, a sort of a fisherman.

4109. Have you a boat?—A small boat.

4110. What size keel?—About 16 feet. I have been for the past fifteen years fishing lobsters.

4111. It is by that you have made your living?—Yes.

4112. Could there not be a good deal of fishing done here with a pier?—They would not do very well at it.

4113. You would rather go to the land than to the sea, would you?—Yes, I am tired of the sea.

4114. But you have lived by the sea always, have you not?—Not quite. I live mostly on my neighbours.

4115. You appear to have thriven under that process. Would you rather give that up and go to land of your own to work?—Yes, very pleased to take a holding of my own.

4116. But then you know you would have to work entirely for yourself; would you be able to do that?—Yes. I have been working for myself since I was born.

4117. *Mr Sutherland.*—It may be my mistake, but I thought you said you bought the land. What do you mean by that?—There are three crofts here which were in possession of crofters before they were added to the hotel lands; the crofters were cleared out of them, and then when Macleod died recently here his heirs had right to this land. Then from the person who came as successor to these lands I bought the tillage. I have only the crop that is on the croft, and there is no house on the land. When the big house was being built, the stones of our house were taken for use, and I am now desirous of taking that land from the landlord.

Staffin, Skye. Roderick Macinnes.

4118. You believe, I suppose, that if you have accumulated a stock of three cows, three stirks, and ten sheep without any land, you would prosper very much better with some land?—That is my opinion.

4119. Where is the land that you think suitable?—We are just nicely situated for two lands; we are wedged in between Sartil on the one hand and Floddigarry on the other. There are fourteen cottar families in the township, and there are only ten crofts altogether, the tenth being in possession of Mr Stewart, Scorrybreck. Twelve years since, I had the fourth part of that croft, paying a rent to Mr Stewart, Scorrybreck. On the other nine crofts there are sixteen families, and we cannot be otherwise than ill-off under such circumstances.

4120. *Mr Macleod.*—You said that you had a stock of three cows, three stirks, and ten sheep. Is it long since you have had a stock equal to that?—I have had them for the past twelve years.

4121. And how much would you say on the average you have been paying for the wintering and summering of them to crofters every year?—It would not be easy for me to tell. I had the fourth part of a croft myself, and I was getting tillage here and there throughout the township. Perhaps I might buy part of a stack of corn from a neighbour who might be anxious to sell.

4122. How much did you pay Mr Stewart for the fourth part?—£2.

4123. £2 a year as long as you had it?—Yes.

4124. How many pounds do you think you would be paying besides for the corn you would buy?—£7 or £8.

4125. So that altogether you were paying £10 a year, one way or another, between rent and fodder for your stock?—Yes.

4126. *Mr Maccallum.*—You made the rather peculiar acknowledgment that you lived on your neighbours. What do you mean by that exactly?—Getting pieces of ground from them gratuitously, and perhaps giving them a day's work.

4127. But for the most part you paid for all you got?—By giving days' work.

4128. And therefore you did not live on their charity, but simply they gave the use of their land to you on condition of your giving them work in some cases, and money in others?—I was not getting the ground for nothing, but we were spoiling them all the same, even though we were not paying for it.

4129. *The Chairman.*—How long is it since you had the fourth part of that township croft?—Eleven or twelve years.

4130. Did you ever apply for that tenth croft to Mr Stewart of Scorrybreck?—It was one of the crofters of the township who took that croft and set the fourth on me.

4131. But you remember of it passing into the possession of Mr Stewart, Scorrybreck?—Yes, I don't remember the exact transaction; I know that he had a croft there these eleven or twelve years.

4132. Did you apply to get back that croft or a part of it?—No, never.

4133. It fell into his farm, did it?—It is in the middle of our township.

4134. Is it fenced round by Scorrybreck?—No.

4135. What does he do?—Setting it on us.

4136. It is a separate portion of the farm, a discontiguous part of it?—He sublets it; it is in the middle of our township, and does not march with the farm at all. He is the principal tenant, and he sets it on us; there is no house upon it.

4137. What rent does he ask for the land he sets upon you?—I don't know what the others may be paying, who are on it, but I pay £2 for the fourth part of it.

Staffin, Skye.

Lachlan Macqueen.

LACHLAN MACQUEEN, Crofter, Stenscholl (70)—*examined.*

4138. *The Chairman.*—Where is your holding?—At Stenscholl.

4139. Are you a crofter or a cottar?—A crofter.

4140. What rent do you pay?—£7, 15s.

4141. What was your old rent?—£12, 10s.

4142. How many crofters are in Stenscholl?—Twelve.

4143. How many cottars?—Ten.

4144. How many families are there?—There are fifteen with lands, and five crofts broken.

4145. You heard the previous evidence given to-day?—Yes.

4146. And do you concur with it?—Yes.

4147. Do you desire to make any addition to it?—Not much; our township grazing is spoilt by the neighbouring township cutting their peats on us.

4148. That is not a subject that is before us. Do you desire to get a new holding?—I am getting too old for that now.

4149. Do you represent the township of Stenscholl?—Yes.

4150. Do they wish new holdings?—Many of them would need it.

4151. And are they anxious to get it?—Yes, if they would get assistance.

4152. But do you say that none of them could flit without assistance?—Very few.

4153. Where is the other land that would be suitable in your opinion?—All round, the best land in the country.

4154. What are the names of the farms?—Sartil, Floddigarry, Duntulm, and Monkstadt.

4155. *Mr Macleod.*—How far is Stenscholl from those lands?—It marches with Sartil.

Malcolm Mackenzie.

MALCOLM MACKENZIE, Crofter, Maligar (54)—*examined.*

4156. *The Chairman.*—You come from Maligar?—Yes.

4157. Are you a crofter?—Yes.

4158. What is your rent?—£7.

4159. And the old rent?—£11, 10s.

4160. How many crofters are in Maligar?—Eleven, with eight crofts. Eleven families pay rent.

4161. How many cottars?—Only one cottar on the hill march.

4162. He pays no rent?—No.

4163. What was your father's name?—Alexander Mackenzie.

4164. Was he alive when the Crofters Commission were round?—Yes.

4165. I see your present holding contains 5 acres 1 rood 16 poles arable, 4 acres 2 roods 24 poles outrun, 687 acres township grazing, and 3672 hill pasture. You want to get a new holding, do you?—Yes.

4166. Do you say that these farms we have heard so much about to-day, Monkstadt, Duntulm, Floddigarry and Sartil are suitable places?—Yes, there is old arable there.

4167. And do you concur with the evidence you have heard upon these matters?—I have no great faith in begging and asking money.

4168. You prefer, if you got a new holding, to stock it, and put up the buildings yourself?—Yes.

4169. And you would be able to do that?—Yes.

4170. What size of holding would you be prepared to take?—Twenty-five acres of the old arable.

4171. And what stock?—Eight cows, two horses, and eighty sheep, all told.

4172. If you had a farm of that size, would you undertake to stock it, and build upon it without any assistance?—Yes.

4173. You are a man of independent disposition?—Yes, I would have good courage in taking a croft of that sort. I would put up small buildings to begin with, and improve them as I go along.

Saffin, Skye.

4174. You don't like to owe anybody anything?—That is it.

Malcolm Mackenzie.

4175. You are not owing the landlord anything?—No. The cottar that is on our township is wanting more land. He is a cousin of mine, and he wants 15 acres arable. He would find security for the stocking.

4176. What is the name of the cottar?—Donald Mackenzie; he would give security at any time if he would get such a holding.

4177. Is he here to-day?—No, he is in the south country to-day.

Alexander Macleod.

ALEXANDER MACLEOD, Crofter, Greraline (69)—*examined.*

4178. *The Chairman.*—Are you a crofter?—Yes.

4179. What is your rent?—£7.

4180. What was it formerly?—I began in 1846 with £5, then it was increased until it reached £11.

4181. I see you have 6 acres 32 poles of arable, 1 acre 1 rood 35 poles of outrun, 357 acres of township grazing, and 3672 of hill pasture. You have heard all the evidence to-day?—Yes, or a part of it; I am somewhat deaf.

4182. Do you wish to make any addition to what has been said?—It is not the same opinion that every one has.

4183. But we would like to have your opinion?—My opinion is that the people should have a good share of land, though the sizes of the crofts should vary.

4184. Any more?—I am quite prepared to answer any question.

4185. But we are all, unless I am mistaken, very much of opinion that we have heard a full statement from the other witnesses already, and do not wish to ask you any more questions?—That is my opinion also, that very full evidence has been given.

4186. What is the number of crofts in Greraline?—Five crofts to-day, but there were six in it before.

4187. And how many crofters in the five crofts?—Six crofters' families paying rent.

4188. How many cottars?—Not one; but I have seen the township in the possession of three.

John Macdonald.

JOHN MACDONALD, Cottar, Baile-mhic-Cuithein (40)
(Examined in Gaelic through an Interpreter.)

4189. *The Chairman.*—Do you pay any rent?—No, I am paying rent to the township.

4190. What rent?—£1.

4191. What stock have you got?—Two cows, a two-year-old, and a stirk.

4192. Any pony?—No horse; 12 sheep.

4193. Have you a patch of potato ground?—No, I am getting a bit from others, about a quarter of a mile from my place.

4194. And you pay for that, I suppose?—Yes.

4195. Are you desirous of leaving your holding if you can get another one that you could cultivate to profit?—Yes.

4196. How many cottars are in Baile-mhic-Cuithein?—Four.

4197. And how many crofters?—Seven crofts.

4198. With how many families?—Eleven families.

4199. *Mr Maccallum.*—Have any of the other cottars stock like you?—Yes; another cottar has two cows.

4200. What is his name?—Alexander Stewart.

4201. Does he pay rent to the township?—Yes.

Malcolm Martin.

MALCOLM MARTIN, Crofter, Digg (40)—*examined.*

4202. *The Chairman.*—You are a crofter from Digg?—Yes.

4203. What rent do you pay?—£6, 4s.

4204. What was your old rent?—£10, 5s, but it was £12, 15s. before that. The tacksman charged us that.

Staffin, Skye. Malcolm Martin.

4205. Your acreage is given as 4 acres 1 rood 26 poles arable, 2 acres 4 poles outrun, and 546 township grazing. You have come a long way, Mr Martin; what is it you wish particularly to tell us?—There are ten crofts in the township, and eighteen families on these crofts; and they are all broken, except two. There are eight cottars besides.

4206. The place is overcrowded, you mean?—Yes, quite; they are packed like herrings, and they must be shifted from there.

4207. Is the land exhausted?—Quite. I have not got a pound of meal for the past three years, except half a stone of meal.

4208. Is there a universal desire in the township to get relief by new holdings in suitable ground?—Yes. The township is small enough for five. We very much require to be shifted from that place at any rate.

4209. *The Chairman.*—We will come and see the ground.

John Mackenzie.

JOHN MACKENZIE, Factor, Kilmuir (42)—*examined.*

4210. *The Chairman.*—We said we would hear you to-day, Mr Mackenzie?—The statement that I am to offer is for the whole estate of Kilmuir, comprising a portion in the parish of Snizort, and the whole parish of Kilmuir. I beg to offer to the Commission a few observations regarding the Kilmuir estate, for which I am factor now for the last six years. 'The population 'of the estate is 3074, and the total area, comprising 'the whole of the parish of Kilmuir and that portion of 'Snizort parish north of Glen Hinisdale river, is about '45,000 acres. With reference to the division of this 'land there are 311 full crofts occupied by 331 individual 'names appearing in the rent roll. There are also 49 'divided crofts, occupied by 100 individuals, who are 'liable for rent to the proprietor. The increase in the 'number of names in the full crofts above the number of 'crofts is owing to a number of these being joint-tenants. 'The same remark applies to the divided crofts. The 'area of the estate at present under crofters is 24,332 'acres, of which there are about 2000 acres under 'cultivation. All the crofters, with very few exceptions, 'were dealt with by the Crofters Commission, about six 'years ago, and got fair rents fixed. The whole arrears 'dealt with then and since amounted to £7011, of 'which amount £2411 were ordered to be paid, 'cancelling £4600. I have a detailed statement show-'ing the fair rents, and the arrears (both commission 'and fair rent) due in each crofting township at 15th 'inst. There are thirty-five townships, and if you think 'the statement is too long to read now I will hand it in'

4211. If you please, just hand it in, and it will suffice:— Staffin, Skye. John Mackenzie.

'The following is the statement referred to:—

KILMUIR ESTATE, SKYE—LIST OF FARMS ON THE ESTATE RENTED FROM £50 TO £430.

Name of Farm.	Acreage.	Rent.
Duntulm,	3,657	£380
Floddigarry,	1,919	220
Sartle,	3,558	210
Monkstadt,	3,746	430
Uig Glenconnon,	3,519	250
Cuidrach,	2,433	160
Scuddaburgh,	474	90
Longfearn,	409	50
Total,	19,715	£1,790

Average Rent per Acre for the above, 1s. 10d.

OTHER HOLDINGS NOT IN THE OCCUPATION OF CROFTERS.

Name of Holding.	Acreage.	Rent.
Staffin Inn Lands,	133	£50 0
Staffin Mill Lands,	52	24 0
Rha Farm,	62	17 0
Uig Mill Lands,	22	12 10
Uig Hotel and Peinsoraig,	310	146 19
Kilmuir Mill Lands,	21	26 0
Osmigarry,	41	16 0
Rashburgh and Bu,.	240	25 0
Total,	881	£317 9

(Signed) JOHN MACKENZIE, Factor.

KILMUIR ESTATE OFFICE,
UIG, SKYE, N.B., 15*th April* 1893.

[Table

KILMUIR ESTATE:—ABSTRACT SHOWING RENTS, ARREARS, ACREAGES, &c. OF CROFTER HOLDINGS.

Township.	Fair Rent Year to Mart. 1892.	Rent for Voluntary Enlargement Half-Year to Mart. 1892, pending the decision of the Crofters Commission as to Fair Rents.	Arrears of Rent up to Mart. 1892, as at 15th April 1893.	Commission Arrears as at 15th April 1893.	Acreage. Arable in Crofts.	Acreage. Pasture in Crofts.	Township Common Grazing.	Hill Grazing.	Souming. Cattle in Classes.	Souming. Sheep.	Souming. Horses.	Remarks.
Snizort Parish.					Ac. Ro. Po.	Ac. Ro. Po.	Ac. Ro. Po.	Acres.				
1. Balmeanach	£31 7 0	£.....	£22 3 0	£31 0 0	28 1 6	15 0 22	163 0 0	2059	30	250	5	
2. Peinlich	18 11 0	.....	6 5 0	17 10 0	19 3 14	20 1 28	100 0 0		18	150	3	
3. Peinaha	38 2 0	.....	8 5 4	40 5 6	34 3 9	35 3 16	218 0 0		30	250	5	
4. Glenuachdrach	24 2 0	.....	4 0 0	10 0 0	23 2 8	65 3 27	118 0 0		20	160	4	
5. Earlish	92 2 0	.....	77 9 3	74 0 0	156 2 36	227 3 30	264 0 0	1829	80	200	20	
6. South Cuil	26 15 0	.....	17 8 0	35 0 0	20 3 0	9 0 30	105 2 28		24	24	...	
7. Sheadder	44 12 0	.....	35 4 3	50 6 6	58 1 29	49 2 23	236 3 14		48	160	8	
8. Balnacnock	28 13 0	.....	.....	2 10 0	30 3 29	20 3 21	241 0 19		32	80	4	
9. Idrigil	109 8 0	.....	62 18 6	142 3 8	80 1 8	13 1 21	271 0 0	...	74	...	...	
	£413 12 0	.....	£233 13 4	£402 15 8	453 2 19	458 1 18	1717 2 21	3888	356	1274	49	
Kilmuir Parish.												
10. Totescore	£78 12 0	£.....	£55 10 3	£92 5 0	149 1 26	130 3 38	505 2 18	.....	72	120	12	
11. Balgown	30 10 0	2 10 0	39 17 0	23 10 0	33 3 9	94 3 37	.....		32		4	
12. Kilvaxter	76 14 0	6 11 3	93 4 9	76 8 0	134 0 0	137 2 17	.....		84		12	
13. Bornaskitaig	135 0 0	15 18 9	116 13 0	184 6 6	180 0 25	87 0 33	270 pasture, 3 arable	about 1000	150	560	...	560 sheep is the souming of the enlargement.
14. Hungladder	42 15 0	3 15 0	24 8 0	53 0 0	50 2 21	24 2 36	161 pasture, 8 arable		42		...	
15. Herbusta	40 6 0	5 0 0	44 3 8	54 10 0	58 0 9	41 0 31	201 0 0		40		4	
16. Peingown	31 14 0	1 11 3	21 7 0	37 0 0	33 1 20	19 0 24	162 0 0		30		3	
17. Connista	47 4 0	.....	81 6 11	76 0 0	43 2 24	44 2 12	203 0 0		42	120	6	
18. Solitote	9 15 0	2 10 0	2 17 6	10 10 0	28 1 34	25 2 32	52 0 0	42	8	...	...	
19. Kendram	101 13 0	.....	54 4 0	145 13 0	98 2 27	51 2 4	460 pasture, 7 arable	753	99	220	11	The 753 acres is common to Nos. 17, 19, and 20.
20. Balvicquien	75 9 0	.....	23 19 0	70 15 0	68 1 34	50 2 14	479 pasture, 14 arable		63	140	7	
21. Digg	66 2 0	5 5 0	56 19 0	106 0 0	55 3 12	31 3 11	546 2 22		60		10	
22. Glasphein	23 16 0	3 4 0	16 2 2	29 0 0	28 2 8	22 2 34	81 2 20	700	32	250	4	250 sheep is the souming of the enlargement.
23. Brogaig	36 12 0	4 4 0	14 19 3	53 0 0	47 2 8	17 1 39	195 pasture, 5 arable		48		8	
24. Stenscholl	81 0 0	.....	55 19 9	90 9 0	85 0 15	77 3 33	702 pasture, 5 arable		80	100	10	
25. Garrafadd	72 10 6	.....	48 15 6	79 16 0	72 0 36	35 3 6	213 0 0		88	220	...	
26. Clachan	81 0 0	.....	58 12 6	97 0 0	76 2 22	106 0 39	299 0 0		72	120	12	
27. Ellishadder	47 3 0	.....	69 4 0	120 13 1	53 0 4	110 2 30	354 0 0		48	80	8	
28. Maligar	57 9 0	.....	21 0 0	43 0 0	46 2 17	29 3 30	687 0 0		72	80	8	
29. Marrishadder	64 9 0	.....	38 9 6	65 0 0	38 3 13	15 0 31	650 pasture, 10 arable	3938	72	80	8	
30. Valtos	51 7 0	.....	98 12 4	73 0 0	45 1 37	9 0 33	550 pasture, 14 arable		72	60	6	
31. Garros	21 17 0	.....	13 13 6	27 0 0	14 0 0	17 1 12	248 0 0		84	40	4	
32. Culnacnock	56 7 0	.....	51 3 6	66 0 0	46 0 22	13 2 2	434 0 0		56	80	8	
33. Breckry	33 9 0	.....	21 5 0	38 0 0	30 0 29	11 2 25	183 3 27		30	50	5	
34. Grealine	33 0 0	.....	25 5 0	45 0 0	24 1 12	19 2 12	357 2 2		35	50	5	
35. Lealt	30 4 0	.....	21 16 0	29 0 0	22 1 31	21 0 20	481 pasture, 10 arable		48	40	4	
Kilmaluag Croft	6 10 0	.....	.....	.....	4 0 0	11 0 36	.....		...	...	...	
	£1,432 7 6	£50 9 3	£1,169 10 1	£1,785 15 7	1569 2 15	1259 2 31	8552 1 9	6433	1499	2410	159	

Total Crofters' Rent,	£1896 8 9	
Total Crofters' Arrears on Fair Rent up to date,		£1403 3 5
Total Commission Arrears ordered to be paid,	2411 10 6	
Less paid up to date,	222 19 3	
		2188 11 3
Total		£3591 14 8

Total Acreage held by Crofters (including arable and pasture) 24,332 acres, which, according to the Fair Rent, is at 1s. 7d. per acre, as near as possible.

(Signed) JOHN MACKENZIE, Factor.

KILMUIR ESTATE OFFICE, UIG, SKYE, N.B., 15*th April* 1893.

affin, Skye. — — ın ckenzie.

'As I stated before, there are 431 individuals on the 'rent roll, and of these only fifty-six are clear of arrears. 'There are eight large farms on the estate, occupied by 'seven tenants, with a total area of 19,715 acres, rented 'at £1790. There are eight other smaller holdings, 'such as inn, mills, &c., with an area of 881 acres, rented 'at £317, 9s. I have a Report by Mr Taylor on 'farms of £100 and upwards of rent, shall I be allowed 'to read it.'

4212. If you think it is necessary. But if you desire it to be evidence you will require to examine Mr Taylor himself. Any statement of that sort must come from the individual who prepared it.—It is signed by him.

4213. No doubt; but there may be questions put, and I think you had better retain the statement in the meantime?—Very good, I shall resume my own statement. 'There are not what may 'be called large farms on the Kilmuir estate, seeing the 'area of the largest is not above 4000 acres. In 'pointing out objections why any of these farms should 'not be cut down, I propose to ask Mr Taylor, land 'surveyor, Ebost, to appear before your Commission, 'and produce a statement prepared by him in which 'some of these objections are brought out. I may 'further state that while the crofters are in possession 'of 24,332 acres, they only pay on an average for same, 'rent of about 1s. 7d. per acre, while the large farmers 'pay about 1s. 10d. per acre. The crofters have under 'cultivation about 2000 acres, and the large farmers 'somewhat less than 400 acres. This is a clear indica-'tion that the latter are able to pay a higher rent for 'land which is under grass. I have had repeated con-'versations with the large farmers on this point, and 'they invariably stated that cultivation on their part 'was a necessity. The most of the land I know is 'fertile, and will compare favourably with any part of 'Skye, but the climate is so very unfavourable to 'cultivation in the West Highlands that even when 'there is a prospect of securing a fine crop of oats 'at the beginning of harvest that prospect is often 'blighted by soaking rains and wind storms. Some-'times the grain is thrashed off before being cut, or 'otherwise soaked with rain in the stooks until half 'rotten, and rarely is a crop secured without being 'more or less damaged in this manner. I am also of 'opinion that the withdrawal of the old arable land 'from the sheep farms would result in the upper 'portions not being of much value. In point of fact 'even as at present, the large farmers have to send 'their hoggs to the low country for wintering, for the 'purpose of allowing sufficient wintering for the stock 'at home. I would also point out the large values of 'stocks of sheep farms, and that stock is always taken 'over by the proprietor or the incoming tenant, at a 'figure much higher than that stock would fetch in the 'open market. If sheep farms are handed over to 'crofters, provision should be made for taking stocks 'also off the proprietor's hands, otherwise the proprietors 'would lose heavily, not only on stocks, but also on 'lands given over to crofters, who could not properly 'stock them at the time, and would consequently have 'to fall into arrears of rent. There is no stock so suit-'able for the land as that which is reared on it, and 'managed by a practical sheep farmer, and if that 'stock was once removed from the ground it is a question whether the same class of stock could ever be 'got up again by crofters. My point of argument is, 'that the existing superior class of sheep stock should 'be retained on the ground. Mr Baird, the late pro-'prietor, last year conceded large portions of the farm 'of Monkstadt and Sartil to the crofters. The crofters 'were willing to take the land, but not the sheep stock 'thereon, but the proprietor, wishing to meet the views 'of the Kilmuir tenants as far as possible, agreed to 'clear the stock of the ground. He had to pay to Mr 'Ferguson, the out-going tenant, who was then tenant 'of Monkstadt, for a restricted number of the sheep 'stock the sum of £770, as per valuation. It was 'found, however, that over sixty of those who took 'shares in the hill had not a hoof to put on the ground, 'and on this state of matters being represented to Mr 'Baird he agreed to give each of the latter three sheep 'with lambs, so as to give them a start. The sheep were 'to be paid in three yearly instalments, and to this 'arrangement the crofters agreed, no interest to be 'paid. But when the first instalment became due, 'they intimated that they could not meet the demand, 'and on this being brought under Mr Baird's notice he 'agreed to make a gift of the sheep to the crofters at 'a cost of over £400. If the sheep cleared off this 'ground had been sent to the market, the loss would 'probably have been between £200 and £300 of the '£770. The same result would, I have no doubt, apply 'to all other lands in Skye similarly granted. This 'and many other instances which might be cited proves 'that without money advances the crofters, as a whole, 'are unable to stock new holdings. I may further 'state regarding the number of changes that have taken 'place on this estate during the last 150 years, the 'townships shifting back and forwards, that in 1733 'and 1751 there were thirteen farms held by tacksmen 'which are now occupied by crofters. I have a copy 'of the records of Lord Macdonald's estate on the 'subject, and I may mention the names:—Bornaskitaig, 'Solitote, Connista, Upper Kendrom, Lower Kendrom, 'Balvicquien, Glenigle, Sourby, Garros, Stenscholl, 'Lealt, Garrafad, and Culnacnock.'

Staffin, Skye. — John Mackenzie.

4214. Does that conclude your statement?—Yes.

4215. That statement was prepared by yourself?—By myself solely.

4216. Are you of opinion that a number of the townships located in the vicinity of where we are sitting are congested?—Yes, in some cases they are; it is not altogether the fault of the landlord.

4217. I am not suggesting that; but, from whatever cause, a number of the townships round where we are sitting are congested?—To a certain extent.

4218. And the land is exhausted?—The land is exhausted in this manner, that it is not worked as we think it ought to be.

4219. Again, whatever the cause, *de facto*, the land is exhausted?—The land is practically ruined; the mode of cultivation has ruined the land entirely, in my opinion.

4220. It is impossible for the occupants of these subjects, the cottars and crofters, to obtain a living from the croft alone?—They could not obtain a living with this mode of cultivation, and I am not aware that there is a croft on the estate that would uphold a family without outside earnings.

4221. Are you of opinion, speaking of this locality, that crofts could be worked so as to support a man with his wife and family if the land was properly worked; or are you of opinion that even although the land were better worked than it is, and as well as it could be, it would fail to support them without extraneous assistance?—Even although it was well worked.

4222. What is your remedy for this undesirable state of matters?—The remedy is not very easy. Even supposing there were new holdings, there would require to be a selected class of tenants to work them on an improved system, and perhaps there would be a difficulty,—you might go to a township and select perhaps two or three that were practical men, and find that they would not go. I am only making the assertion that perhaps they would not be willing to do it.

4223. But what is your remedy for this state of matters?—I think in any case, whatever holdings they have, they should follow a system of rotation.

4224. But you admit that that would not cure the disease, it would only palliate it. What is your remedy?—The croft would require to be a very large one to support a tenant's family.

4225. What size of a croft would you indicate?—I would indicate, even with a croft of the size I am going to speak of, that they would even have to make some efforts in getting outside aid in one shape or another.

4226. What size of croft?—From £20 to £30 of rent.

4227. What area of arable do you give for, say, a rent of £20?—I would expect that out of a £20 croft the holder would be about £40 to the good, after paying

Staffin, Skye. — John Mackenzie.

the rent, for his own work to clothe and feed his family.

4228. What is your area arable for such a croft?—I would require at least 30 acres arable.

4229. And what grazing?—About 150 sheep.

4230. And cattle?—Yes, about eight or nine and their followers.

4231. One horse or two?—One and a pony.

4232. What strength would you require to work that?—There would require to be a family of three or four to work it.

4233. Father and two sons?—Yes; but they would do other work as well, because, for some months of the year, the croft would not require their assistance.

4234. But I am assuming they are able to live by the holding; would you expect that a man with the aid of two sons could work that holding without hired aid?—I think he would.

4235. I suppose you concede that such holdings as you are describing could be got in the lands we have been hearing so much about?—Yes, but not many of them; there might be a few.

4236. Would not there be as many as would operate a considerable relief to the congested district?—I am not aware that it would remedy a congested district at all, not the one half of them.

4237. Then what is your cure for the disease, or do you say there is no cure?—I have been thinking over that very often, and I have come to the conclusion that I have just to keep silent upon the point.

4238. Because you have no suggestion to offer?—When making schemes on paper, and going over them days afterwards, I found they came far short of what I expected when I was making them.

4239. But you see we are appointed to inquire into this matter with a view to find a remedy, if remedy there be, and you are a practical man from whom we are delighted to receive assistance.—I should be very glad to give you all the assistance in my power.

4240. You say there are 311 full crofts?—Yes.

4241. Don't you think, taking all these farms, and leaving out of view for a moment the question of material damage, adequate room could be found for at least 100 of these crofters?—Yes, perhaps it could.

4242. Would that not operate a considerable relief to the congested district?—It would; but perhaps in a year or two the same district might become congested again.

4243. But perhaps not?—It has occurred in the past, and from the past we can judge what the future will be.

4244. You have dealt a good deal with the question of material damage, the effect that would be brought about upon the farms we have heard mentioned?—In a general way I did.

4245. You are aware of the terms of the remit to us?—I am.

4246. The terms of the remit are 'to inquire whether 'any, and if any, what land in the counties mentioned, 'now occupied for grazing, not in the occupation of 'crofters or other small tenants, is capable of being 'cultivated to profit or otherwise advantageously 'occupied by them?'—Yes.

4247. You see the question of material damage to holdings, which was so prominently before us in the Crofters Commission, is not made part of the terms of the remit?—I know.

4248. You are quite well aware of that?—I am quite well aware of it.

4249. You made reference, and quite fairly, to the arrears which have arisen. The present arrears amount to £3591, 14s. 8d., including Commission arrears and subsequent arrears?—Yes.

4250. Does it accord with your feeling that the failure of the crofters to pay the Commission arrears, and the growth of subsequent arrears, tend to prove the utter inadequacy of the holdings to enable the crofters to get along and pay even a fair rent? or do you take a different view?—I don't quite follow the question.

4251. You have before you £3591 of arrears, made up of Commission and subsequent arrears. Would these arrears tend, in your opinion, to show that the holdings the crofters have are utterly inadequate to enable them to get along and pay even a fair rent?—No, I take a different view of it.

Staffin, Skye. — John Mackenzie.

4252. What is your view?—My view is that a croft, say, of £5, might be rented fair enough, according to the holding; and yet, even supposing the crofter had his holding for nothing, it would not support his family. The proprietor expects to get a fair rent for the holding, but that does not imply that the holding is able to support a family.

4253. I see. If you had the power now, you would not plant crofters at all upon such holdings as are met here?—No, I would not with such small holdings.

4254. Now you were drawing a comparison a little while ago in your statement between the large farmer and the crofter tenant. You are aware that the landlord makes all improvements on the large farms?—Yes, he does, to a certain extent.

4255. To a material extent?—It does not require very much improvement; open drains and the like of that do not come to very much.

4256. So far as material improvement is needed for the large farm, is it not the fact that it is done by the landlord?—That is a matter of agreement between the tenant and the landlord.

4257. But is not it the general agreement that the landlord does it?—No; sometimes if the farmer makes improvements, at his out-going he gets the value of them.

4258. No doubt; but the original outlay for improvement is in the main made by the landlord?—According to the present leases, for the improvements that may be agreed upon, and done by the tenant, he gets compensation at his out-going.

4259. That is quite true; but are there not a number of material improvement, generally speaking, made by the landlord?—What kind of improvements?

4260. I would say all improvements.—It is a matter of agreement between the tenant and the landlord, very often under the Agricultural Holdings Act, where the tenant gets compensation for his improvements.

4261. Is it not a matter of notoriety to all those acquainted with agricultural affairs that the crofter makes his own improvements, and builds his own houses; whereas the large farmer in the general case makes no improvements, these being made by the landlord?—The large farmers do make improvements.

4262. Is not this the fact that the houses in large farms belong to the landlord?—Yes, it is.

4263. And the houses upon Skye crofts are built by the tenants?—Yes.

4264. Have you allowed for that distinction in the comparison you drew between the two subjects?—No, there is no comparison but that of rent.

4265. I think you are quite right to make the candid admission.—When a tenant enters upon a farm he is supposed to get the farm buildings in good tenantable condition.

4266. He gets it as a going concern?—Certainly.

4267. With arable land, and buildings and fences and everything?—Yes.

4268. And he proceeds to work it?—Yes.

4269. The crofter gets or does not get according to circumstances a very small piece of arable, and he proceeds to take in land and build his house?—That has been the case formerly.

4270. And especially in Skye; and is it not the case that in Skye there is not such a thing as a crofter's lease?—Not that I know of.

4271. Well, I must refer for a moment, to the matter already dealt with; have you no practical suggestion to offer to us as a remedy for what is admittedly on your own part an undesirable state of matters?—There is something that I have in my mind, though I am not sure if it would work; if the place were to be bought up by Government.

4272. Well?—And managed.

4273. As a Government farm?—Yes.

4274. The whole island?—Yes, the whole island;

that is the only practical way I can see out of the difficulty. I only give that suggestion with reticence.

4275. But I suppose you agree, whether it would be adequate or not, that the opening up by a proper tribunal of considerable portions of the better arable and grazing lands of these farms to the crofters here would produce an enormous relief?—It would, but I am afraid that it would not work, unless there was Government intervention in the matter; my experience is that it would not work without strict rules and Government intervention in the manner in which it would be worked.

4276. Why not?—I am afraid it is too much for the estate officials to work the estate.

4277. Why? they are still crofters; they would be still under the Act of Parliament?—I know; but I think I have known the matters.

4278. But explain yourself a little more thoroughly?—I will explain the matter in this sort of way. I find, when an estate official tries to make an agreement about more land or something of that kind, it is a very difficult matter, and it is difficult for the factor to do it satisfactorily; and I found it invariably happened that when the Crofters Commission came they came in as a middleman, and they settled the matter; whether we were pleased or not, the matter had to end there. It is always thought that an estate factor can do more than he has the power to do, or that he is doing less than he ought to do; your lordship may know before now the difficulties an official has to contend with.

4279. Your view is that the intervention of legislation has the effect of crippling the action and authority of the estate management?—That is so.

4280. You are quite entitled to make that observation.

4281. *Mr Sutherland.*—You made the remark, I think, that the difficulty in giving land arose from the fact that the landlord had to take over the sheep stock already on the holding, or that the crofters would have to do it?—I indicated the heavy loss.

4282. And in the statement you have just read to us you said that the stock is taken over frequently at a higher rate than could be obtained in the open market?—Yes.

4283. How does that come about?—The stock is considerably more valuable than any stock that you could bring in to the land. If you brought in other stock in place of perhaps 2000 sheep, you would have a considerable loss; therefore the stock on the ground is worth a good deal more to the incoming tenant, and practically he could not get on without it.

4284. But I take it that valuations are made by experts in stock?—Yes.

4285. And is not that a circumstance that the expert would be likely to know?—Yes, that is taken into account. I do not consider that it is always fair; I have always contended that it was not fair, the way in which the valuations are taken, but still it is the custom of the country.

4286. *The Chairman.*—It is often unfair to the landlord?—Yes, and to the incoming tenant also, but it is a necessity; we cannot get out of it.

4287. *Mr Sutherland.*—You have got no deer forests on your estate, I understand?—No.

4288. But it sometimes happens that a sheep farm has been made into a deer forest?—Yes.

4289. The landlord takes over the stock in that case?—Well, I will tell you; whatever loss he may have on that, the landlord expects to regain by the increase of rents he gets. It is sometimes a tremendous gain that he gets.

4290. That is a great inducement to convert farms into forests?—Certainly. I know a place at Badenoch where a sheep farm was paying only £800, and it is now paying £5000 as a forest.

4291. *Mr Sutherland.*—The Chairman asked you a question in regard to congestion on population, and you admitted that it was an evil?—So it is.

4292. This congestion, you say, might occur again?—Yes.

4293. If the same conditions existed that existed in the past?—Yes, even now I believe that the places are getting congested.

4294. Congestion arises, as you are no doubt aware, from two agencies, the one, circumscribing the land available; and the other, the natural increase of mankind?—Certainly.

4295. Which of these could be removed?—It is a very difficult question, but I may perhaps explain it more fully to the Commission. I know that some here are pretty well acquainted with the explanation, but others perhaps are not. When there is a family on a holding, very often the sons go south, and the daughter may make up with some one and marry. Very often the mother has a great deal of influence with her daughter and her son-in-law, and he will have to get a place in the holding. When the eldest son comes back he is very much disappointed, he cannot be put out of his holding, and the result is, that instead of one tenant on the holding, you have three or four or five.

4296. Is there any tendency to subdivide upon the large holdings?—Yes.

4297. Has anyone ever subdivided Scorrybreck farm, or Monkstadt?—I don't know, indeed. If you put the same population on, I have no doubt there would be subdivision again.

4298. Just so, that is my point exactly. But the fact that there is only one of a population on an area of a thousand acres is not the operation of a natural law but the operation of an artificial law?—Oh, it would never amount with one tenant in such a large place as either of these farms.

4299. But you would expect that in any legislation, if legislation ever takes place upon this in future, that stringent rules should be made against subdivision?—Unless that was done, it would be of no use, in my opinion.

4300. Now I have seen — and I don't know whether you have — estates in which it was prevented?—Well, it is prohibited on all estates, I don't know anywhere it is not. But who will prevent it?

4301. Eviction would prevent it?—Eviction? Yes, and then there would be a great cry in the country.

4302. What I mean to point out is that eviction has been resorted to in order to collect rents which were afterwards proved to be wrong rents, and yet it was not resorted to in order to prevent subdivision. Could an estate or an official have a larger power in his hands than the evicting of a man and turning him out of his house?—That is rather an abstruse question which I don't see the use of going into. There is a strong feeling between a family and the married daughter, and it would require a very inhuman factor to interfere with family relations.

4303. I sympathise with you in that feeling, but I wish to point out that other arrangements which were not so beneficial to the people were carried out?—It would be an extreme point if the factor were to do that.

4304. I grant you that, but it has happened?—I am not aware that it has ever happened.

4305. I mean for rent?—Oh, for rent. There have been no evictions since I came to this estate.

4306. But you are aware of such?—From hearsay.

4307. As to the arrears, may I ask you if there are any arrears of rent due by large farmers?—Very little.

4308. Have they got reductions, in your estimation, equal to those of the crofters?—Well, I think they have, according to the way they were rented. I know, as a fact, that some of the farm rents were put up to a very high figure.

4309. In the same proportion as the crofters?—Much higher. Although they did get in some cases more reductions perhaps than the Crofters Commission gave, that would not suffice for the previous increase of rent.

4310. What, may I ask, was the percentage of reduction given by the Crofters Commission on the Kilmuir estate?—About 37½ per cent., but some crofters got over 60 per cent.

4311. *Mr Macleod.*—You gave us your authority for the area of the large farms on the estate: I did not catch your authority for the areas of the crofter holdings?—The Crofters Commission surveyor. That is according to the areas supplied to the Crofters Commission.

4312. Who did that work?—The same man.

4313. Mr Taylor?—Yes.

4314. You agreed with the most of the witnesses we have heard to-day that if it was thought expedient to form new holdings it would be necessary that the people should get assistance to stock them?—I am sure it would. There is nothing that cripples a man going into a new holding like restricted capital. I think between £200 and £300 would be little enough for them to start a new holding with.

4315. Of a loan?—Of a loan. They would have a better chance of repaying it, because the produce would come in at once.

4316. But your grand solution of this very difficult question is the nationalisation of the land?—To buy the land.

4317. That the Government should buy the land?—I am only giving that as my general opinion.

4318. One of the witnesses here to-day, a teacher from Valtos, expressed himself in favour of a system by which the rent should terminate in a period of years. Would you agree with him in that?—The Government might formulate a scheme of that kind.

4319. But you would not agree with it it the land were to remain in the landlord's hands?—I could not agree with it in that sort of way.

4320. If the Government owned the land you would not object to it?—I assume that the landlord who has paid for the land is entitled to work it in the same way in which he got it, unless there were to be an intervention of legislation.

4321. Then about the crofters' rents: the total crofter rental, I think you said, was £1896, 8s. 9d.?—The crofter rental.

4322. And they are due at the present moment £1403, 3s. 5d. of arrears on the fair rent, leaving out of view the arrears ordered to be paid by the Crofters Commission?—Yes.

4323. That is to say that, up to the present moment, they are not due a year's rent?—On the average.

4324. *Mr Munro.*—You have favoured the Commission with an exceedingly clear statement, but I understood you to say a little ago, in answer to Mr Sutherland, that the average of arrears cancelled was about 37 per cent?—Not of arrears, but of reduction given on the rent.

4325. Now, don't you think that an attempt to exact such an excessive rent for a long period of years must have told on the position of the crofters, even up to the present time?—Yes, it might for a few years, but the last eight or nine years have been very unfavourable to crofters. The price of corn and oats and straw and of stock is not so favourable as when I came to the estate.

4326. I think you will allow that the long succession of oppression on the crofters, as represented by the attempt to exact more than the fair rent, must tell upon them to the present time—it is not easy getting over that?—Well, perhaps it is not a direct answer, but I know for a fact that crofts that were twelve years ago paying perhaps double the present rent were paying the crofter better than they are now.

4327. In answer to the Chairman I understood you to say that you deprecated the continued interference of the State between the landlord and the tenant?—Yes.

4328. I have not finished my question. You led us to understand that it would rather interfere with the influence that the factor would have over the tenants in subsequent dealings with them; is not that so?—I say it is much easier to work by the intervention of the Crofters Commission between the landlord and the tenants.

4329. To what do you attribute the strong feeling of discontent among the crofters?—When a thing does not pay a man it always makes him discontented.

4330. *Mr Maccallum.*—I think, Mr Mackenzie, there is a good deal of agreement between you and the witnesses that came before us to-day; you agree that the crofts just now are too small?—I do.

4331. And that was really the evidence that they all gave. But they pointed to this as a remedy, that it would be a relief if medium-sized holdings were available; do you not agree with them there too?—I quite understand it would be a relief, but I am afraid they might become congested again in a very short time, and there would be no remedy to prevent that.

4332. But as a matter of fact, are not the crofters themselves against subdivision?—Yes, I know they are very much against it, but, somehow, it does happen that one or two or three in the township must needs go on with it.

4333. But as a matter of fact they are very much against subdivision, and would they not be quite willing to agree to any restriction against it?—I think they should.

4334. And they would?—Well, I think the evil is very much seen now, and I think perhaps it would open their eyes to look to that matter in future. But I am afraid it would require some stringent law.

4335. Has the Crofters Act not provided against subdividing a croft?—It has.

4336. So that now the subdivision is not going on?—Well, in some cases, I am afraid it has gone on.

4337. There is a restriction there, however, against subdivision?—There is a restriction.

4338. That operates pretty successfully against subdivision?—It does operate to a certain extent, for if the proprietor proceeds against them they may lose their fixity of tenure; but to bring people into court is not always an agreeable task, not to speak of the heavy expense it would be.

4339. But if small holdings were available, don't you think there would be no danger of subdividing?—I am afraid there would always be the danger.

4340. Although there is such a strong feeling against it?—Yes, that is my experience.

4341. You have had no trouble in the management of middle-sized holdings, but I daresay you have not had much experience in regard to them?—Oh yes, middle-sized holdings are much more easily worked.

4342. The tenants are no trouble to the proprietor or factor?—Not much at all.

4343. And when any of them falls vacant there is a good demand for them?—A good demand.

4344. But then the large holdings have given a good deal of trouble?—A good deal of trouble: there is great difficulty in arranging for very large holdings.

4345. And a great loss arising to the proprietor by having to take the stock?—A great loss.

4346. Don't you think then it would be a profit to the proprietor if these medium-sized holdings were provided?—Yes, if they were of the value of £20, £30, £40, or £50; I think an estate would be much better to have holdings of that description. I am quite of that opinion, and I think the evidence will bear it out.

4347. And you think that large farmers just now are not profitably occupying their holdings?—Not at present, but two or three years ago they were.

4348. Was the price of wool pretty low even two years ago?—Yes, it was, but the price of stock was much higher.

4349. But don't the farmers depend more upon wool than upon stock?—Yes, that was the cause of lowering the rents so much.

4350. That the wool came down?—Yes.

4351. And has it been low for several years?—Yes.

4352. Then with regard to the arrears on the crofts just now, you are aware that they have experienced several bad seasons?—Yes, the last season was a very bad one, but they have been improving I know since the Commission was here fixing rents. I know that twenty or thirty new houses of good substantial character have been built, and the improvement was considerable up to last year.

4353. But last year was not an average year?—No, it was not.

4354. And you think that that has a good deal to do with their having fallen into arrear?—Yes.

4355. *The Chairman.*—Are you of opinion, Mr Mackenzie, that if a sufficiently stringent law were enacted to prevent the subdivision of those larger holdings, one of your principal difficulties in the way of the creation of these holdings would be removed?—It would.

[ADJOURNED.]

SIXTH SITTING.

Dunvegan, Skye.

DUNVEGAN, SKYE, MAY 5, 1893.

Present:—

DAVID BRAND, Esq., Advocate, Sheriff of Ayrshire, and Chairman of the Crofters Commission, *Chairman.*
ANGUS SUTHERLAND, Esq., M.P.
JAMES NOEL MULLER FORSYTH, Esq.
GEORGE GORDON, Esq.
Rev. MALCOLM MACCALLUM.
JOHN MACLEOD, Esq.
HENRY MUNRO, Esq.
WILLIAM MACKENZIE, Esq., *Secretary.*

John Macpherson.

JOHN MACPHERSON, Glendale (58).
(Examined partly in English and partly through a Gaelic Interpreter.)

4356. *The Chairman.*—What is the fair rent of your holding?—£3.

4357. And what was your rent before the Crofters Commission visited Glendale?—£4, 4s.

4358. I see that your acreage is 4 acres 1 rood 35 poles arable, 2 acres 2 roods 37 poles outrun, 689 acres common pasture, including 116 taken from the farm of Waterstein in 1884, divided into 17 full shares, all of which were dealt with by the Crofters Commission in 1889. Before proceeding further, I think it right to narrate, for the benefit of those in this quarter of the island, the precise terms of the remit made to us. We are instructed to inquire whether any, and if any, what land—in the present case in the county of Inverness and the island of Skye—now occupied for the purposes of a deer forest, grouse moor, or other sporting purposes, or for grazing, not in the occupation of crofters or other small tenants, is capable of being cultivated to profit or otherwise advantageously occupied by crofters or other small tenants. Now, you see exactly what the point is we have to deal with in listening to the evidence that may be adduced. You have a statement, I think, to make. Is it in Gaelic?—In English. It is from the people in the district.

4359. And you represent Glendale?—Yes, as one.

4360. Do you represent the whole of Glendale?—No, there are other representatives as well as myself.

4361. Which part of Glendale do you particularly represent?—Upper and Lower Milivaigs.

4362. How many crofters are there there?—There are thirty-three crofters altogether.

4363. And how many cottars?—There are only two or three cottars altogether. I think there may be four.

4364. Now, would you kindly read your statement.

Unto the Honourable the Royal Commission, 1892.

The statement of the people of the crofting townships of Upper and Lower Milivaig, Borrodale, Hamaravirein, Lephin, Holmisdale, Fasach, Glasvein, Colbost, Skinidin, and Ramsaig, on the estate of the Rev. Hugh A. Macpherson; and of Ferrinviquire, Galtrigil, Borreraig, and Husabost, on the estate of Mr Nicol Martin, both in the parish of Duirinish.

Present Position of Townships.

All the above-mentioned townships suffer from congestion of population. The holdings are all nearly of the same size, and to put each township into anything like a comfortable position, two-thirds of the tenants would be required to be removed.

Rev. Hugh A. Macpherson's Estate.

Dunvegan, Skye.

John Macpherson.

	Name of Crofters' Townships.	No. of Crofters.	No. of Cottars.	No. of Crofters Township would keep comfortable.
1	Lower Milivaig, .	17	—	6
2	Upper Milivaig, .	16	5	6
3	Borrodale, . .	3	—	2
4	Hamaravirein, .	4	1	2
5	Lephin, . .	8	1	3
6	Holmisdale, .	20	3	6
7	Fasach, . .	31	3	10
8	Glasvein, . .	12	1	4
9	Colbost, . .	26	8	8
10	Skinidin, . .	18	4	5
11	Ramsaig, . .	2	—	6
	Estate of Mr Nicol Martin.			
	Ferrinvicquire, .	24	1	8

There are thus 181 crofters in the above townships, where only 66 would be able to live in tolerable comfort. The number of cottar families is not larger than a prudent people should be prepared to bear the burden of, so long as Providence leaves helpless widows and people labouring under infirmities on the mercy of their more fortunate neighbours, and we do not complain of this burden. At the same time, any cottar that is willing to take land has as much right to get it as any crofter.

This overcrowding of a small peasant tenantry on the poorest portions of the estate is a policy for which only the landlords are responsible, who, by clearing the native population from the fertile portions of the island, have created some of the largest sheep-runs in Scotland which are to be found to-day, huge wildernesses alongside of overcrowded crofting townships. As one illustration of this evil policy out of the mass, it may be mentioned that within the memory of some of us the two Milivaigs in Glendale were in possession of eight tenants each, who were very comfortable with their stock of horses, cattle, and sheep. To-day there are thirty-three tenants. This increase of tenants in the two Milivaigs, as well as in other townships in Glendale, was caused when the Bracadale evictions were carried out by Macleod of Macleod, to provide large farms for his factor, Mr Gibbon, and other southern capitalists. Those evictions by Macleod of his old own native tenants have made his estate in Bracadale practically a desert, and are responsible for the overcrowding of the estate of his neighbouring proprietors. As soon as Macleod overcrowded Glendale, he parted with the Glen, and his successors, as proprietors of Glendale, have to bear the odium of his cruel mismanagement.

AVAILABLE LANDS IN OUR DISTRICT.

Rev. Hugh A. Macpherson's Estate.

The following farms are on this estate, and in each of them there is suitable and available land, both arable and grazing, for the creation of new holdings, and the extension of existing crofting townships.

(1) Ramsaig, where there were twelve families when Macleod sold this estate, all of whom, with the exception of two, were subsequently evicted by Sir John Macpherson-Macleod, the new proprietor.

(2) Lowergill, where there were twelve tenants, all of whom were cleared.

(3) Dibidale and Ollisdale, where four tenants could live comfortably.

(4) Waterstein, which joins with the two Milivaigs, and where six tenants could live comfortably, all these are in the hands of the proprietor, besides the farm of Hamara, which is attached to the shooting lodge, and where there were three tenants, and which would be

Dunvegan, Skye.

John Macpherson.

suitable for the enlargement of the neighbouring crofts.

As showing the disposition of the landlord, it may be mentioned that the two Milivaigs duly applied to the Crofters Commission for Waterstein as an extension of their townships; and when the case came before the Commission, the proprietor, instead of meeting the people in whole or in part, put every conceivable objection and difficulty in the way.

Mr Nicol Martin's Estate.

The following farm is on this estate, and available for the enlargement of existing crofting holdings.

Scorr, where there were six tenants fifty-five years ago.

Besides this, Mr Nicol Martin is tenant of the large farm of Claigean, which he rents at £600 from Macleod of Macleod. In this farm over 20 acres are cultivated, but there are over 200 acres of old arable land in it, and a considerable amount of land that crofters would reclaim, besides excellent pasture. These farms, if given to the people, would settle the land question on Mr Nicol Martin's estate.

As an illustration of Macleod of Macleod's policy of consolidation by eviction, we may mention that there are more crofters in Glendale alone—an area of about 15 square miles—than on the whole of Macleod of Macleod's property from Claigean to Soay, a distance of about 50 miles long, embracing sheep farms containing, some of them, between 50 and 100 square miles.

Our prayer and purpose is that these waste lands should, in the public interest, be opened up by Parliament, and restored to the people on fair and equitable terms.

Signed on behalf of the Crofters in the above-mentioned townships.

John Macpherson, Crofter, Lower Milivaig.
Neil Macpherson, Crofter, Upper Milivaig.
Roderick Campbell, Crofter, Borrodale.
John Campbell, Crofter, Hamara.
John Maclean, Crofter, Fasach.
Neil Mackay, Fisherman, Colbost.
Allan Stewart, Fisherman, Colbost.
Peter Macdonald, Crofter, Holmisdale.
Norman Ross, Crofter, Glasphein.

4365. Is your signature adhibited to that?—Yes.

4366. I take it you have mentioned all the old townships to which you invited our attention at present?—Yes; I mentioned the townships which are suitable for giving new holdings to crofters.

4367. And you have mentioned all the land of the kind that you are anxious we should inspect?—Yes.

4368. Have you any addition to make verbally to the written statement?—Yes, on other points.

4369. We shall be glad to hear what you have to say; but you know the terms of reference, and you quite understand the matter which brings us here, and to which, as far as possible, we must confine ourselves?—I know very well that there are too many people in Glendale.

4370. I think you have brought that out quite distinctly in the written statement?—Yes; and those few townships in Glendale would not serve them all. There are only four altogether—Waterstein, Ramasaig, Lowergill, Dibidale, and Hamara. These are all the townships in Glendale that could be given to crofters. But I think the people of Glendale should be migrated to Bracadale, where they were sent from forty-five years ago or more.

4371. Migrated to Bracadale?—Yes; even in the two Milivaigs; where I am there are only ten tenants who were brought up in Glendale; the other twenty-three were migrated from other parts of the Macleod estate to Glendale in 1845.

4372. Is it within your knowledge that there is land available in Bracadale for the purpose in view?—Yes; I have been through most of Bracadale.

Dunvegan, Skye.

John Macpherson.

4373. Do you know Bracadale very well?—Yes.

4374. And when you say that certain persons should be migrated to Bracadale, do you mean that there is land there which would be suitable for them?—I am quite sure of it.

4375. And an adequate extent of land—a sufficient amount of it?—I think more than what they would ask for.

4376. Both old arable and grazing?—Yes. But I believe there is more pasture in Bracadale and in the whole of Skye than there is of arable land, because the land of Skye never was cultivated right, for the people never got a chance to cultivate the land. The people were only machines in the hands of a proprietor, making a green spot here and there for grazing, and they never got time or hold of the land to cultivate it right; and even in Glendale—it is very queer how we are treated in the Highlands. I will challenge any landlord that was in Glendale if he has ever spent a shilling or a day of labour to improve the crofts or anything in the possession of crofters in Glendale. Therefore any substance or any good in the land of Glendale was put into the land by the people and not by the landlords. They have never spent a shilling on the land except on their own improvements,—such as lodges or the like of that.

4377. A point I am anxious to come to is this—Does it consist with your knowledge that there is suitable land in Bracadale for migrating a large number of families?—Yes, I think so.

4378. *Mr Sutherland.*—One question I should like to ask with regard to the desire of the people to take new holdings or enlarge their present holdings. You are perfectly satisfied, from your knowledge of the people, that they are very anxious to have enlargement of their holdings?—I have found them that from the beginning. A few, from want of power or want of means, may not be willing, as they do not see their way to do it; but the most of the people are willing.

4379. And what is your knowledge with regard to their ability to take such holdings?—I know that they are very poor, and that it is not by any fault of their own they have been made poor.

4380. But is there a large proportion, or a considerable proportion, that would be in a position to take a new holding?—Well, I believe there are some of them, and some would do part of it. But the Highlanders are very willing and able to work; the children are very kind to their parents; and if they will get hold of the land, I am not afraid that they would stock it in time.

4381. Generally speaking, that is your opinion?—That is my opinion, and I am sure of it. Of course, there are hard times among all classes. The chief complaint among the Highlanders is the want of land and the smallness of their holdings.

4382. I have no desire to go into some of the other matters that you refer to, except in order to clear up a point with regard to how they succeeded in the new holdings when they were transferred from Bracadale to Glendale. Did they get any assistance of any kind?—Never, that I heard of.

4383. And you think that if they were transferred to better land, under better arrangements, there would be still less need for helping them?—Yes. Once they got into that place, because Bracadale is a better place than Glendale.

4384. Another point. You state that the capabilities of Skye are not to be judged by the amount of old arable land we see. You say that there was no encouragement given to cultivate land in the olden times. And you think that the proportion of arable land could be increased?—To double what it is.

4385. As a rule, the smaller tenants, or crofters, as they are now called, were they always improving tenants in the Highlands?—I do not understand the question.

4386. Was it the crofters that made all the improvements in the land in the old times?—I think nearly the most, if not the whole of it; what is in Glendale at all events.

4387. I may refer to what was said by a gentleman who may be taken to be an authority, that when sheep farming was introduced into the Highlands, the area under agriculture went down. Do you agree with that view? He said that the introduction of sheep farming into the Highlands resulted in less land being cultivated than before. Do you agree with that?—Yes, because the sheep were put on all the arable land, and the people have not that land to cultivate. All the good land was taken from the poor people and put under sheep and under fog and heather.

4388. *Mr Gordon.*—What is the state of your crops here? Can you grow oats to make meal of in this country?—When we went to Milivaig (we were five years out of it), twenty-five years ago, I was making about 6 bolls of meal a year on the croft, and now I can do none, because the croft is too little, and it has been turned every year since, mostly. But now since I began to put it in rotation, it is better.

4389. I do not refer so much to your holding as to the nature of the country. Are the oats grown here of such quality as to make meal of, as a rule?—Yes, they are.

4390. Suppose now you were to give us some opinion about the size of a croft you would suggest?—That is a thing not easy going into. There are different kinds of land, and the size should be according to the place where the croft is made. There are some parts of Skye where I would rather have 2 acres than 3 in another place.

4391. But what I want to get at from you is whether you would prefer a croft of 2 acres with hill grazing, or a croft of 10 acres, or even a little larger, with hill grazing,—which would you think best for the country?—I know small holdings will never do. I think, to get the country into right order, that there should be two or three different sizes. There should be a size of £12 to £15, and as low as £5 or so, and that would give a chance to those who are poor. It would give courage to a man to be trying to get to the top of the pole—to the highest place.

4392. I do not want to tie you to any opinion, but when you speak of a 15-acre croft I should like to get from you what your idea is—whether it should be mainly agricultural—that is arable land, or mainly pastoral. £15 appears to me to be a big rent for a crofter to pay?—Yes.

4393. Would you expect to pay that rent from your arable land or from sheep?—It would be paid from all—between cattle, sheep, and the cultivation of the croft.

4394. How many cows would you suppose a man with £15 of rent to have?—I do not go as high as that, although I mentioned that it was in a mistake I said so. I only meant that there might be different sizes of crofts.

4395. That is to say, from a small croft up to a small farm?—But I think six or seven cows, and in a place where there was no other help than the land, a croft would require from 80 to 100 sheep and a horse.

4396. You tell us you have over a hundred crofters in your part of the country?—Yes.

4397. And you have room for sixty-six, I think you say?—Yes.

4398. Suppose you move the other forty crofters to Bracadale, would you not encroach upon the Bracadale people? Are there not more people there already that would require the land?—All the people in any country do not want to have land.

4399. But I am afraid if you go up to the extent of a hundred sheep, you would not find anything in Skye sufficient for the families?—There will be quite as much as the people will ask for; because all the people will not ask for land. There are different methods of living in Skye as well as in other places, and old people may not want the same as young people.

4400. Well, you have a beautiful country here for fishing, with good natural harbours. Is there a number of your countrymen who would take naturally to fishing on the new crofts?—I believe there is; but they never got the advantage of that, because we never got a harbour.

4401. But you have a beautiful harbour here made by Providence?—Yes. But it is very far from the fishing ground. In other places they have got harbours handy to the fishing grounds, and there is not a place here to hold the boats either.

4402. But there is no doubt that if you were to get a part of the population to adopt fishing that would be a great relief?—What I would like to be done is this: that the law of Great Britain should open a way to people to live in every way, and not in any one way; that they should not be forced or kept down in poverty all their life-time, and that they should be allowed to get on in every way as they are in other places. I have not the least doubt, if Skye was rightly served in land and in sea, the people of Skye would be as well off and as content as any people in Scotland.

4403. *Mr Macleod.*—You spoke about the proportion of those who would require to be taken out of Glendale to leave you comfortable as two-thirds of the present people?—Yes, if they were all going to live upon the land.

4404. Yes, if the holdings were to be self-supporting. Now, have you any idea of the proportion of them that would be able to stock new holdings?—Well, I believe that there is not many of them.

4405. Not many?—No.

4406. But you think there is a good proportion, who, if they got some assistance, would be able to help themselves to a certain degree?—Yes, and I do not see why they should not get it here as well as in other parts of the kingdom. The people of Skye were trying to improve the power and the wealth of Great Britain, as well as any other part, and why should they not get £150 for home as well as for going abroad.

4406*a*. Then you think they would have no difficulty, if they got enlarged holdings, in repaying any advances that might be made to them?—No. I have not the least wish that we should keep his own from any body; and this is what I want, I would keep the people from being beggars, so that they would be able to support themselves.

4407. Now the Glendale people, since you have known them, have had their condition improved in some degree. You spoke of your own rent having been reduced from £4, 4s. to £3?—Yes.

4408. Could you tell us whether there has been any improvement in the mode in which land has been cultivated, or any improvement in the people's houses since the passing of the Crofters Act?—Yes, there are nine or ten white houses now in Glendale since the Crofters Act passed, and they are improving their lands, but the most of them are waiting. Their holdings are so small that they are waiting to see if they are to get better ones.

4409. So that you think there would have been even a larger number of houses built, if it was not that the holdings are not worth putting a good house on?—Double. That is the only cause, and the houses were built by their children in the south and abroad, helping their fathers to do it.

4410. Now, about the cultivation of the land, I have no doubt you have had a considerable amount of experience. With regard to that, you have told us already that you believe that the cultivable area in Skye could be greatly enlarged?—Yes, I am sure of it.

4411. Then as to the cultivation in Glendale itself, are the most of the tenants there beginning to put some of their land under grass?—Most of them are.

4412. And you believe that that would go on to a larger extent if their holdings were larger?—Yes, it would. If I was getting a new holding just now, I would keep it as good as it is for ever by keeping it in rotation. There is land in Glendale that was cultivated for fifty and sixty years, never being a year under grass.

4413. Do they grow any turnips?—Yes.

4414. *Mr Munro.*—From the interesting statement which you have read, I understand that the burden of your complaint is, that at present you are too congested at Glendale, and would like to remove to some less

Dunvegan, Skye.

John Macpherson.

thickly peopled place, such as Bracadale?—Yes, and even Waterstein and these places. If we do not get land added to our holdings, we want to be removed.

4415. You have also told us that in doing so you would expect some assistance?—Yes.

4416. From whom, might I ask, would you expect assistance to come?—If we could get it from the Government it would be the best way to get it.

4417. Now, speaking roughly, to what extent would you expect assistance for such size of crofts as you have named, on the average?—If we had crofts stocked, we would not require very good houses until we should be able to build better ones, and then we would improve the houses ourselves. I do not want the people to go too deep in debt, but I am sure whatever amount they got, they would pay it back if they would unite together in doing so.

4418. I quite appreciate your desire to avoid debt, and I think it is very commendable; but have you ever considered how such a loan can be repaid if made to you, and in what form?—I believe, if I was going to a township, I would appoint a Committee of my neighbours, and I would guarantee all that I would take to the township, and then we would go and change stock, and I would have stock in security for all the money until it was paid.

4419. But when your forefathers were migrated to Glendale, they got no assistance to build their houses?—Nothing, and they have not got land either, they were machines making a green patch here and there, and then put to a new place.

4420. I suppose I am right in saying that you would prefer that they should be sent elsewhere in the island, rather than emigrating the people to other countries?—Much better, and much more honourable to our legislation.

4421. Mr Gordon put a question regarding the quality of the oats you produce, and regarding the produce of meal. Now, supposing you had an enlarged croft, do you think you could produce a better quality of grain?—Yes, but I believe that Skye will never make much profit by grain.

4422. But still you must grow some for the sake of the straw?—Yes, and then for cattle, for sheep, and horses also.

4423. *The Chairman.*—You mentioned a rent of £6 or £7. Would you tell me in a word what size of holding you would expect in return for a rent of that amount. In the first place, how much arable?—According to where the croft was. There is land up here of such a quality that I would rather have an acre of it than 3 acres elsewhere.

4424. But take the average case, the average rent within the area you have been pointing to?—Yes, but I do not like to interfere with rents at all.

4425. But you mentioned a rent. I am not asking you to interfere with the rents. My question is, giving the rent, what holding would you expect in return for it, how much arable, and how much grazing, or how much stock?—I think I mentioned the stock already.

4426. No, you did not mention the stock in answer to that specific question. You mentioned Ramasaig, Lowergill, Dibidale, and Waterstein. Suppose you had such a croft as you would like to have in one or other of these places for £7, what kind of holding would you expect to obtain?—I cannot answer that question right.

4427. You do not decline to answer it. But we know that you are a man of great experience and ability, and we should like to have the benefit of your experience in this evidence?—Any crofter that was going to make his living upon his croft would require to have from 15 to 20 acres of arable land, that is to say, to be kept in rotation

4428. Now, what stock?—Six cows and followers, and 60 or 70 sheep, and a horse, because there is always more hill pasture on these townships than arable land.

4429. But you think that with a rent of £6 or £7, and a holding of that size in arable and stock, it ought to be self-sustaining; you would expect it to be self-sustaining if you did justice to the holding?—Yes.

4430. And this is the kind of holding which you would like to see multiplied?—Yes.

Dunvegan, Skye.

John Macpherson.

4431. And you are of opinion that there is land suitable for a large number of such holdings?—I am sure of it.

4432. In the districts you have mentioned?—Well, there is not much land in Glendale.

4433. But in the districts you have mentioned?—Yes.

4434. Now, suppose an opportunity were afforded to all the crofters whom you represent to-day to transfer their holdings to such crofts as you have been describing, could they do so without assistance?—No sir, no.

4435. None of them?—Well, I do not know; but one or two might.

4436. But the great majority would require assistance?—Yes, mostly the whole of them.

4437. Could you do it yourself?—Hardly, not without help.

4438. The next question I am going to put has no reference to yourself, but to the general case. What extent of assistance, in your judgment, would your neighbours require?—Some £20, some £30, some £40 or £50, up to £100 I believe.

4439. Would £100 be the maximum?—I believe that there are a few that would ask a little more than that if they had none themselves. £100, I believe, would not do the whole.

4440. They might need £150?—I believe they would; and, as I have said already, I think it would be only right.

4441. That is the meaning you attach to words, which you used before, that you think that Government should open a way for people to live?—Yes.

4442. That is what you mean by that?—Yes.

4443. *Mr John Robertson,* Factor for Glendale.—I should like to ask where is the capital to come from?—From Government, Mr Robertson, and from friends too; any parties that it would come from in kindness. I know I would get it from friends without going to the Government at all.

4444. Do you know if the tenants in your district are in a position to take more land than they have at present?—I know that they never will get out of the difficulty they are in without more land, and it is the smallness of their holdings that has put them on the rock they are on at present.

4445. Then you depend solely on getting this money from the Government to enable you to take larger holdings?—Yes.

4446. *Mr Reginald Macleod.*—I should like to be allowed to ask one or two questions on behalf of my father, Macleod of Macleod. Do you know, Mr Macpherson, whether your father was a cottar in Holmisdale, and whether Macleod did not give you a croft at Milivaig?—I don't think my father was a cottar at Holmisdale.

4447–48. *The Chairman.*—How old were you when your father died?—I was fifteen years of age, but I mind well of being in Holmisdale, and I mind well of being removed from Milivaig to Holmisdale by the tacksman of Orbost; but Glendale was the property of Macleod of Macleod for all that, and they put the people of Orbost to Holmisdale where there was no cultivated land at all. In 1845 Macleod of Orbost owned the farm, and my father got possession of a croft there. There were only eight or nine of the people of Glendale put to Milivaig, but twenty-three were put on from other parts of the Macleod estate.

4449. *Mr Reginald Macleod.*—My question is, did Macleod or did not Macleod give you a croft in Milivaig?—Yes, he did.

4450. You have said that the rent you think a crofter could afford to pay, living comfortably and fairly, would be from £5 to £7; and you have stated that a croft, such as you desire, should contain from 60 to 70 sheep, 6 cows and their followers, and cover from 15 to 20 acres arable land?—Yes.

4451. Have you any idea what that amount of land is worth in the country if in the hands of an ordinary farmer?—My father and grandfather and great-grandfather were in Milivaig paying rent all their life-time.

Dunvegan, Skye. John Macpherson.

4452–53. I did not ask that question?—Yes; but I am going to add this, they have been paying rents for hundreds of years, and I pray the Commission that if the crofters would get more land, the rent should cease afterwards.

4454. *The Chairman.*—But there has been a direct question put, which you must endeavour to answer, adding whatever explanation you may think necessary. —Would you please repeat the question.

4455. *Mr Reginald Macleod.*—You have stated that the croft you deem sufficient for a crofter to occupy should be able to carry from 60 to 70 sheep, 6 cows and followers, and cover from 15 to 20 acres arable land; and you say that a crofter might be able to afford to pay from £5 to £7 for such a croft. I want to know what, in your opinion, is the current value in the country to a competent tacksman of that amount of land?—I want to go to the other side.

4456. *The Chairman.*—You must try to answer the question?—I don't understand him very well. (Question repeated in Gaelic.) I never considered that, because I am not so well up to large farms as I am to others; but I am sure of this, a landlord in Skye is not like a landlord in the south, who spends so much money upon the drains, dykes, and fences; the Skye landlords never spent a penny upon the land.

4457. *Mr Reginald Macleod.*—I do not want to interrupt, but I am not getting in the very least from you an answer to a plain question; if you cannot answer it, simply say so.

4458. *The Chairman.*—I understand this to be his answer that he cannot answer it, as he has never considered the matter.—*The Witness.* I have not considered it.

4459. *Mr Reginald Macleod.*—We shall produce evidence, Mr Chairman, to show that the proper rent in this country of the amount of land that Mr Macpherson says is necessary for a crofter to occupy would be at least three times what he says the crofter would be able to pay. I should like to ask another question. Mr Macpherson has said that the crofters—and I am very sorry to hear it—are, as a rule, not able to produce much capital towards building their houses, and he said that the amount of help required for each croft would be from £20 to £100, or even in some cases £150. Now, do you consider, Mr Macpherson, that you or any other crofter would be able to buy 70 sheep, 6 cows and followers, and to build a house and get the implements necessary to work 15 to 20 acres of land for the highest sum you have named?—We could add to that, the most of us. We are hard working men, and we are not going to stop at a point of that kind. Give us the land and we shall succeed.

4460. The question is, can you buy the stock that is said by yourself to be necessary to work a croft of the proper size?—I will buy the whole of it; if I cannot do it myself, I will get those that will help me.

4461. You told the Commission a short time ago that you could not buy stock?—I could do it by help of friends.

4462. *The Chairman.*—He did not say that he could not buy it. That was scarcely the meaning of his answer.

4463. *Mr Reginald Macleod.*—What amount of money, may I ask, is the amount that could not be found, irrespective of any advances by Government, by the generality of crofters that you are acquainted with? —It is very little money that they can give; but in the township that I belong to there are none who have not sheep or cattle, though no horse. We never had horses in the township.

4464. What would be the number of sheep and cattle that you yourself possess?—I have about 20 sheep.

4465. And how many cattle?—Three or four cows. I could not keep all that on the township.

4466. That seems a good stock for £3 of rent. But that apart. In addition to what you have, you would require to buy the balance. Have you calculated what it would really cost to purchase the balance of sheep and cattle that you would require, and to build a house?—No sir, I have not.

Dunvegan, Skye. John Macpherson,

4467. *The Chairman.*—I take it that all the crofters of whom you have been speaking have stock up to a certain extent?—Well, they have.

4468. Have they cattle and sheep stock?—Yes.

4469. And no horses?—No horses.

4470. So that if these crofters were transferred to other holdings, they would not require to purchase new stock from the beginning, but could add to the stock they already possess?—Yes.

4471. Some more and some less?—Yes. I should like to mention that the crofters have to sell their stirks when they are a year old. If they had grazing, and could keep that stock for three or four years, they would, instead of getting £3 for each, get £7. The stirks would not cost them as much for the other years as for the first year.

4472. Is there any holding in your district which consists of 20 acres arable or more?—Not one.

4473. And 60 to 70 sheep?—I do not think there are any in Glendale.

4474. Now, after you go above the size of the croft, —such a croft as you occupy yourself,—what is the next larger size of holding in the district? Is it a large farm or a small farm?—No; there are a few who are paying £7. Two or three in Glendale pay above £6 or £7.

4475. So that there is no grade between the small crofter and the large farmer? No intermediate size of holding?—Not one.

4476. Now, in your opinion, would it be a benefit to the country if intermediate holdings were introduced between the larger farms on the one hand and the crofts on the other?—Yes.

4477. *Mr. Sutherland.*—Have you ever calculated Mr. Macpherson, the rent that is paid by the large sheep farmer per acre, and the rent that is paid by the crofter per acre?—I never did, but I know there is a great difference.

4478. In what way is the difference?—We are paying much more.

4479. Not less but more?—Double in the most of cases.

4480. With regard to your purchasing power, or your power to pay interest on a loan, your present position is no standpoint to judge of what you would be able to do in an improved position with a larger holding?—No.

4481. You would be far better able to meet your obligations than you are at present on your small holdings?—Yes.

4482. *Mr. Robertson,* Factor.—Might I ask you what you are paying per acre at Milivaig?—I think it is 1s. 7d. or 1s. 8d., or something between—but I am not certain.

4483. Are you aware that you are only paying 1s. per acre for all the lands in Milivaig?—(No answer).

4484. *The Chairman.*—Are you aware what average rate per acre of arable and pasture—the land of Upper and Lower Milivaig is at present paying, or are you not aware?—I am not aware.

4485. And have not calculated?—No.

4486. *Mr. Macleod.*—You do not profess to be an authority on the value of land?—No.

NEIL MACPHERSON, Upper Milivaig, Glendale (46). Neil Macpherson
(Examined in Gaelic through an Interpreter.)

4487. *The Chairman.*—Where do you live?—At Upper Milivaig.

4488. I see that you hold 4 acres 1 rood arable, 13 acres 3 roods 5 poles grazing, and the same pasture as the last witness. Your fair rent is £3, 4s., the former rent having been £4?—Yes.

4489. You have heard the whole of John Macpherson's evidence?—Yes.

4490. And do you concur in it?—Yes, but I know there are classes of us who would take more land than others.

Dunvegan, Skye. Neil Macpherson.

4491. Now, just explain your answer a little more fully?—There are some of us who would take more land than others.

4492. You mean larger crofts?—Yes.

4493. Up to what rent?—I am not going to take anything to do with the rent.

4494. Up to what extent of arable, then, and what stock?—12 to 20 acres arable, 6 cows, 50 or 60 ewes, and 1 horse.

4495. That is the largest size of holding you have in view?—Yes.

4496. Now give us the arable and the stock of the smaller size of holding you have in view?—From 10 to 12 acres arable, 4 cows, 40 or 50 sheep, and a horse.

4497. That is still a size of holding that might be self-sustaining?—We would require to help ourselves otherwise than from the croft.

4498. In what way, by labour or fishing?—By fishing and anything else that would come in the way.

4499. Then you are of opinion that a croft of 10 to 12 acres arable, and 4 cows pasture, would not be enough to keep a man without outside assistance?—No.

4500. Are you of opinion that a croft of 12 to 20 acres arable, and 6 cows and 50 to 60 sheep, would be sufficient to keep a man without assistance?—Yes, with very little other assistance.

4501. Would he require some assistance in that latter case?—They would be comfortable, indeed; it is they that would be comfortable.

4502. Without assistance by labour or fishing?—Yes.

4503. Are these holdings you have described larger than any of the present holdings in Glendale?—Yes; there is one croft of the size of the smaller croft that I mentioned.

4504. But only one?—To my knowledge.

4505. Whose is that?—Roderick Campbell, Borodal.

4506. What rent does he pay?—£8 or £9, I think. —*Mr Robertson.* £9, 15s., but that man has 6 or 7 cows and a horse.

4507. *The Chairman.*—I find his area is 12 acres 1 rood 12 poles arable, 12 acres 3 roods 8 poles outrun, 4 acres common arable, and 262 acres common pasture; former rent £16, 5s. 3½d., fair rent £9, 15s. Now, do you know what stock Roderick Campbell had?—Six or 7 cows, a horse, and 24 sheep, but very bad hill pasture.

4508. Has he anything else?—That is all I know of.

4509. Has he no stirks?—I don't know.

4510. That, I think you said, is the only case of the kind?—That is the only case of the kind.

4511. *Mr Robertson,* Factor.—Can you tell me whether Roderick Campbell's management of his croft has been a success?—No, it is not easy for me to do that; the place is not worth the money, or anything like it.

Donald Campbell.

DONALD CAMPBELL, Farm Labourer, Hamara, Glendale (40)—*examined.*

4512. *The Chairman.*—Are you a crofter?—No, I am a crofter's son. My father has the croft.

4513. What is his name?—John Campbell.

4514. Is it in Hamaraviren?—Yes.

4515. I see the area of the holding is 10 acres 3 roods 21 poles arable, 29 acres 2 roods 4 poles outrun, 148 acres of common grazing, former rent £11, fair rent £7. Do you reside with your father?—Yes.

4516. Do you carry on any trade of your own?—No.

4517. Do you and your father live by the holding?—Partly.

4518. And how otherwise?—My father has been a shoemaker till of late years, but he has stopped it for some years now.

4519. How many years?—Three or four.

4520. Do you help him at his trade?—I gave it up too.

4521. Did you help him at his trade?—Yes, sometimes.

4522. During these latter years have you lived by the holding?—Well, partly; the family had help to keep on the holding. Dunvegan, Skye.

4523. Do you mean from the south?—Yes. Donald Campbell.

4524. From brothers and sisters?—From brothers.

4525. How many brothers?—Three.

4526. All working in the south?—Until very recently. There is one of them abroad, and he sends a great deal of assistance to my father.

4527. And it is in that way he gets along?—Yes.

4528. What is it you wish to say to us in regard to new land?—That additional land should be given to the crofters; new holdings created.

4529. Where?—Where the land is available.

4530. Did you hear John Macpherson's evidence?—Yes.

4531. And do you concur with that evidence?—Most of it.

4532. Wherein do you differ from him?—*The Interpreter.* That is his way of saying he agrees with the whole.

4533. Some townships were mentioned by him, especially Ramasaig, Lorgill, Dibidale, and Waterstein. Do you know these townships?—Yes.

4534. Is there land on the sites of these townships suitable for the objects you have in view?—Well, it is suitable for the creation of a very few holdings only.

4535. Very few?—Very few.

4536. How many?—I would say from 16 to 20 crofters. No more.

4537. Then, where else would you go to extend the accommodation?—Just as Mr Macpherson said, migrate them to other parts of Skye, where the most land is.

4538. What other parts of Skye?—Bracadale and Minginish.

4539. Anywhere else?—Claigean and Feorlig.

4540. Where are these places?—All on Macleod's estate.

4541. Is there land on all these places?—Plenty of it.

4542. Suitable for the purpose?—Yes.

4543. Both arable and grazing?—Both arable and grazing, and the very best in Skye.

4544. Can you mention any other townships or sites?—Yes, all places in Skye, but I can hardly remember the names of the places.

4545. But I am speaking of this district?—There is Uignish, Orbost, Balmeanach, Glenmacaskill, Glen-Ose, Drynoch, Ebost, Glenbrittle, Rhuanduna, and all these places.

4546. Every one of them?—Every one of them on the Macleod estate.

4547. Are you personally anxious to get a new holding?—Very.

4548. And is your father?—Yes.

4549. Is he here to-day?—No.

4550. Not able to attend?—He is an old man, and unable to travel.

4551. *Mr Forsyth.*—Your father has ten acres of arable. Is it worked by rotation?—Yes.

4552. Do you sow grass seeds?—Yes.

4553. And leave the land down for some time—for more than one year?—For three years regularly.

4554. Is the land in good heart, and does it bear good crops?—The best I see thereabout.

4555. Does it yield a satisfactory return of oats?—It did not this last year, because it was a very bad harvest and a very bad year.

4556. But, on the whole, you are satisfied with the condition of the arable land?—Well, upon the whole, it was pretty fair.

4557. Are you sure that you would do better if you went to a new holding?—Yes.

4558. Is it because you require a larger one?—There is that in it; and, besides, the land would be more easily kept in good order when it is already in fair heart, some of it. It is strong, and could be easily kept in that condition, I think.

4559. You think you could keep new land in good

heart by good rotation?—I think it is easier than in the case of land that has been excessively cultivated.

4560. Then you think your land is, after all, more or less worn out?—Too much.

4561. Can you give us any idea, in a fair year, of the return of oats from the seed—how many returns you will get?—I have seen us getting fully six or seven returns from one boll of oats, out of a piece of the best of our land.

4562. In a fair year?—In a good year.

4563. And when do you generally get your harvest in, taking one year with another?—Generally in the month of September, between that and the beginning of October. I have seen the harvest commencing in August.

4564. *Mr Maccallum.*—Are you afraid that if these large crofts were available the people would not be able to pay such a rent as is at present paid by the large tacksmen?—No, I am not.

4565. You think they would be able to cultivate these crofts to a profit?—I think they would.

4566. And be able to pay their rent?—According to what the farmers pay for it at present, I think the crofters would be able to cultivate it to a profit.

4567. We have had evidence that the crofters have fallen into arrears at present, and that some of them are cultivating to a loss. How do you account for that?—There is slackness in everything; there is slackness in the price of stock, and the seasons have been bad for crops for the last two or three years.

4568. And do you connect these arrears with the smallness of the holdings, which does not give the crofters work all the year round?—Yes, I do.

4569. And you think that, with intermediate holdings giving work all the year round, the crofters would not fall into arrears?—I don't think they would.

4570. *The Chairman.*—Have you worked as a ploughman on the mainland?—No, never.

4571. Have you worked as a ploughman anywhere?—Never.

4572. How did you come to learn about rotation?—I have been in the east country for several years as a shepherd.

4573. And you saw that rotation was a beneficial thing there?—Yes.

4574. And have you tried to introduce it here?—I have tried it on my own part.

4575. Has your example been followed to any extent?—Not my example; some of them began it before I tried it.

4576. But you find in your own case it has been very beneficial?—Yes, very.

4577. And you would not like to return to the old system?—No.

4578. Now, suppose you had a holding double the size of your present holding, viz., 11 or 12 acres arable and 50 to 60 acres of outrun, do you think you could work a holding of that size to profit?—Our present holding is not 12 acres.

4579. It is 10 acres 3 roods 21 poles, that is almost 11 acres?—You mean double that size?

4580. Yes.—Well, hardly, because the hill pasture is very bad, and we could not keep the necessary stock on it; although we had double the size of hill pasture we could only keep about 40 sheep.

4581. Your pasture is indifferent?—Indifferent.

4582. But suppose you had double the size of holding, and pasture of a much higher quality?—It would be enough.

4583. And would you expect in average years to work it to a profit?—Yes, if the land was in a good locality. I don't mean to say that Glendale is not a good locality; but if the holding as a whole was of good quality, the same as bits of it are, it would do.

4584. And you anticipate being able to live upon your holding?—Yes.

4585. Without outside assistance?—Without anything in the least.

4586. Could you give us any idea of the extent to which you have benefited by adopting the system of rotation; how much richer have you found yourself at the end of the season by adopting the system of rotation?—In the first instance, the labour is not spent upon it.

4587. Yes; that is saved?—The expenditure of labour is saved; and then the yield of crops is increased.

4588. Now, just give us an idea, if you can, to what extent. Is it a third better, or a half?—Well, compared with the time when the croft was wholly cultivated, the crops to-day are as profitable by having two-thirds, I should say, of the croft in cultivation.

4589. By adopting the system of rotation you get as much out of two-thirds of the holding as you used to get from the entire holding?—Yes, it is as profitable.

4590. Now is there any other benefit you can mention besides?—Well, I believe there are others; if I were to study the matter I believe I would recollect more.

4591. *Mr Gordon.*—You have better grass for your cows?—Yes, better grass for feeding, even out of the ground.

4592. More substance in it?—Yes.

4593. And therefore better stock?—Yes, and the produce of the cattle is better.

4594. You mean of the cows?—Yes, there is more milk and butter.

4595. I hope those who hear this evidence are attending to it, for it is of great importance.

4596. *Mr Macleod.*—You said that you had been a shepherd for some years?—Yes.

4597. And you therefore have a fair knowledge of sheep stock. What is your opinion with regard to the manner in which small tenants should hold their sheep stock; do you favour the system of having them in one common or club-stock, or in individual flocks; which is the better system?—For townships consisting of say half-a-dozen or eight, or even as high as ten crofters, I would approve of the club farm system; but where there are twenty or twenty-five or thirty crofters together, I think the separate system is the best.

4598. Why?—I will give you the only reason I see in it; the pasture is generally poor where there are so many crofters, and the stock could not be wintered on the pasture outside, and therefore everyone has to house his own up in the winter time to get them fed. That is the only reason.

4599. But don't you think that an arrangement could be made, even where there are twenty-five crofters, that the place should not be overstocked, and that, furthermore, the sheep should get the run of the arable ground in the winter-time?—Under the present system there are no fences nor dykes, nor anything; and, as soon as the sheep are in, the ground is eaten up at once. There would be nothing for young sheep to live on during the winter.

4600. The only reason you have against the club farm system, where there is a large number of crofters, is that the hill would be more eaten over?—Not the club farm, but having them separately. If there were fewer crofters, I would prefer the club farm system.

4601. Supposing there were twenty-five crofters in the locality, would not it do if they divided the pasture into two club farms?—Well, if they agreed; but when there are too many people in company together, I don't think they agree so well as a few.

4602. So that your ideal club farm would be one in which from ten to twelve crofters would be interested?—That would do.

4603. Now about the number of cows that are kept by crofters. You heard the evidence about four to six cows. Don't you think, if the quality of the animals were improved, a smaller number of cows would be more profitable and more prolific?—That would depend on the size of the holding.

4604. But suppose you had a holding that could, with the present class of stock, keep six cows, don't you think it would be better for the small tenant if he were to reduce the number and improve the quality of the stock?—That would depend on the rent. I heard the question asked what would be the rent and what would be the stock. Now, if the stock was reduced, the rent would have to be reduced.

Dunvegan, Skye.
Donald Campbell.

4605. I am not speaking on the question of rent at all, but as to the quality of the stock?—There is no doubt the stock would be better if it was reduced on a holding; there is no doubt of that.

4606. *Mr Gordon.*—Supposing you had ample winter pasture along with the crofts, would you not prefer the club stock to the individual holdings? Would it not be fairer to the poor man?—Yes, it would.

4607. And would you not expect that even twenty crofters might be agreeable to form an executive of, say, three or four of their number, to buy and sell, and transact all business in connection with the management of the sheep. Would not that be possible?—Oh yes.

4608. And, under these circumstances, would a club stock not do?—It might. Shall I be allowed to make a remark in connection with the rental mentioned by Mr John Macpherson and Mr Reginald Macleod?

4609. *The Chairman.*—What is it you have to say?—It is in regard to the fixing of Mr Macpherson's rent. Mr Macpherson stated the amount of souming upon a croft at a rent of £6 or £7. Mr Macleod stated that that rental was a third of the proper rent, or of the rent that the croft was worth. Now, Mr Macleod has been speaking from the landlord point of view, and it is an evident thing to the Crofters Commission, since ever they made their inquiry throughout the Highlands, that the landlord system is to exact, if possible, three rents out of a croft.

4610. *Mr Reginald Macleod.*—I should like to put a question in this way. I have not spoken from the landlord's point of view, because, as I am allowed by the courtesy of the Commission to address one or two questions to-day, I really wish to get merely the bare and actual state of the facts. I understand that you, and those who appear as crofter delegates, took the position that they want to pay a fair rent to the landlord—that they don't want to deprive the landlord of his property in any way, but wish to pay such a fair rent as the land can properly afford?—Exactly.

4611. Now, I should like to know this: If you were offered accommodation for extra cows and their followers, what would you yourself consider, speaking fairly, as you have done throughout your evidence, to be a fair and proper rent for any one to pay?—For how much?

4612. For each cow with her followers?—That would be according to the grazing and the place the cow was grazed upon; according to the quality of the soil she grazed upon.

4613. Give us the best idea you can; state it between two figures?—There are some grazings that I would consider dear at only 5s. for the cow and calf for the summer grazing.

4614. What would be the price in good land?—I know of cases where £2 is paid for the cow's keep.

4615. And you think that is fair, in certain circumstances?—I don't know whether it is fair or not, but I know it is paid.

4616. But I suppose if you were a landlord, and were getting £2 for a cow's grass, you would say that if that was the market value it would be quite fair that a crofter, or anybody else obtaining that accommodation, should pay the same?—Well, if it was the market value; but in the cases that I referred to of £2 being paid, it is not the market value, but the landlord value, I may say.

4617. You only wish to get the accommodation in return for what it is fairly worth in the country to whoever might be willing to take it?—I can hardly grip that, Mr Macleod.

4618. I will put it in this way. You desire to obtain ground to carry more cattle and sheep. The ground bearing that amount of cattle and sheep, in the hands of a tacksman, is fairly worth a given number of pounds. If that land is given to you, you do not desire to get it for less than it is actually worth?—It is fair rental that we ask. We don't wish to get the land for nothing. We never expected and never asked that.

4619. You are accustomed to dealing with sheep stock, having had experience in the east country. Do you consider that the sheep stock carried by the crofts in Glendale is equal to the sheep stock in the hands of tacksmen?—There are instances where the crofters' sheep are nearly as valuable, but in other cases they are not a third of the value.

Dunvegan, Skye.
Donald Campbell.

4620. So that if the sheep stocks now in the hands of tacksmen were placed in the hands of crofters the total value of the sheep stock would materially decrease?—No, I do not think so, because the crofters would get on to the good pasture where the tacksmen are to-day, and then the stock could be kept on the very same as they are at present.

4621. You have just now said it was impossible to manage a club farm when there were more than 8 or 10 crofters associated together. Is it possible to manage a multitude of crofts with 60, or 80, or 100 sheep in each, with the same advantage to the sheep stock, as if there were 1000 under each man?—Yes, if they were put under proper management, as Mr Gordon suggested.

4622. However, it is your opinion that at present the stock in the hands of crofters is often not worth more than a third of the tacksman's?—In very rare cases, where the pasture is nothing but what will keep the life in them during winter.

4623. *The Chairman.*—You used the words 'fair 'rental'; do you mean a rent fixed by an independent tribunal?—Yes.

4624. You don't mean a competitive rent?—No, by no means.

4625. Or what could be got in the district by private contract?—I don't mean that.

4626. Now, suppose holdings enlarged to the extent of enabling crofters to get a sheep stock of 50, 60, or 70 sheep, would the quality of the sheep be almost certain to improve?—To keep as well as it is to-day, fully.

4627. You think holdings of that size could have a sheep stock as valuable as the sheep stock of a large grazier?—I think they could be more so, because each crofter then could have his holding cultivated in a way that he would be able to winter and summer them better than the tacksmen do to-day; he would have his fields of turnips and so forth for the winter keep.

JOHN MACLEAN, Crofter, Fasach, Glendale (39)—*examined.*

John Maclean.

4628. *The Chairman.*—What is your present rent?—£6.

4629. And your old rent?—£8, 9s.

4630. I see you hold 7 acres 2 roods 27 poles arable, 7 acres 24 poles outrun, and a twentieth share of 2354 acres of common pasture. You have heard all the evidence given here to-day, I think?—Yes.

4631. Do you wish to make any addition to it?—Very little. I have been well pleased with the evidence I heard.

4632. It fully states your view?—There are some points, according to the acreage of land, arable and pasture, that I was thinking of. Take the place that we are in: it is a souming we have.

4633. What is your souming?—We keep 20 sheep.

4634. How many cows?—Four and a horse.

4635. You want to make some statement about the land; what is it?—A croft of double the size that I now possess, of the same kind of land, would hardly just keep the souming that we have got in a proper condition.

4636. But is your land worked out, or is it in good heart?—It has been worked out to the utmost; but I have given it a little chance three years back.

4637. In what way?—By rotation.

4638. Do you find that an advantage?—I have not reaped the advantage yet, but I will be beginning to do so next year or so.

4639. Suppose you had a new holding of the same size as your present holding, but with the land in good condition, would you expect to be able to keep the stock you have properly?—I think I would.

Dunvegan, Skye. John Maclean.

4640. Is there anything else you would like to bring under our notice?—No, nothing else.

4641. *Mr Macleod*—You say that the souming of your present croft is just double what could be properly kept on it?—Yes.

4642. Is that a common experience throughout Skye or throughout your district?—It is in the district and in the township that I am in.

4643. The souming there is very high?—Above the upkeep of the place.

4644. How do you account for that?—The whole pasture is very soft and cut through like moss, and broken up with cutting peats, and so on; and there are so many of them put together into one place—31 crofters in one place. The place is continually delved over, and the hill pasture is the worst about the place altogether. Supposing a man was to get double the size that he has of the same kind of land, it would benefit him just nothing.

4645. When you first went to your holding, was it capable, with its share of the hill pasture, of carrying the souming?—It is only ten years since I got a croft, but my father or my uncle was in it before, and that was the souming that was put on. I think it was made by the landlord when they took the place, not by the men themselves. They were continually trying to keep this on, but of course the half of it is not on.

4646. As a matter of fact, you have only got half the souming the place is said to carry?—Yes.

4647. Is that a common experience?—Yes.

4648. And it is your opinion that the souming was fixed too high from the very beginning?—Yes.

4649. Which, combined with the fact that there are so many tenants on a small area, makes the subject worse than ever?—Yes.

4650. You heard what was said by the previous witnesses with regard to the reclamation of land, and with regard to the question of club stock. Do you agree with what was said?—Yes, I would agree with the club stock.

4651. You are in favour of a club stock?—Yes.

4652. And do you think with Mr Macpherson that there are considerable areas of land that might be reclaimed that were never under crop?—Yes.

4653. You believe that?—Yes.

4654. I understand that you yourself desire a new and better holding?—Yes.

4655. And would you be prepared, in the event of your getting a fair sized holding, with reclaimable land, to reclaim it?—Yes.

4656. Now, with regard to the question of the assistance that would be required, what is your opinion about that?—Oh well, I believe some would need less and others would need more.

4657. *Mr Robertson*, Factor.—Would you tell me how many sheep you have in the souming?—I have just 13.

4658. What number of cows?—Four.

4659. You say that you agree as to the club farm?—Yes.

4660. Are you aware that at present many of the tenants have more than their souming?—I believe there are two exceptional cases in the township; but there are some who have none at all.

4661. Those who have more than their number get the benefit of those that have none?—Yes.

4662. Do you not think that is a good reason for putting the whole under a club stock?—Yes, I would advocate that myself.

4663. Then the sheep, when put into a joint stock, would have the run of the whole of the arable land in winter, would they not?—Yes, if it was not fenced; they have it in its present state.

4664. Is it not advisable that they should have it? Is it not an advantage to the sheep to have the run of the arable land during the winter?—Yes; but when a body is sowing grass seed, and when it is not fenced, it would be useless after the sheep had run through it all the winter.

4665. But if all sowed their arable land in rotation, would not that be an advantage to the stock?—Yes, but there are some who could not work their land in rotation.

Dunvegan, Skye. John Maclean.

4666. Why not?—They have so little of it. If they were to put seed in for two years, they would have nothing the third year to put potatoes in.

4667. One of the witnesses stated that since he commenced the rotation of cropping, he was enabled to produce as much crop from two-thirds of his land as he used to do from the whole croft before. Would you not follow the same system?—He has a larger croft.

4668. Still you could carry it out on the same principle?—Yes, I could do it, but there are different people in the township that could not do it.

4669. Have you been a successful farmer yourself?—Not very.

4670. *The Chairman.*—You say there are a number of crofters in your district whose holdings are too small to allow of the rotation system being followed?—Yes.

4671. How many will there be of that kind, roughly?—Well, as far as I can recollect, there are 20 half crofts.

4672. And in none of these would it be possible to follow rotation?—That is my opinion.

4673. Your area is 7 acres 2 roods 27 poles, what is the smallest size of arable that would allow of rotation?—Considering the way the crofters are working their land, they are sowing a heap of potatoes and turnips. A crofter in Fasach would just sow about 2 bushels of rye grass seed in his land every year, and giving it a fair turn, say for three years, it would run his croft almost out altogether without having any thing to return to potatoes and turnips in the fourth year.

4674. What is the size of holding you are thinking of?—Four or 3½ acres arable, that is a common holding in Fasach.

4675. A holding would need to be larger than that to allow of rotation?—Yes.

4676. Do you wish to add anything to what you have told me already?—I would just add this. I think after a crofter going into a new holding, and paying a rent for thirty years to the landlord, the rent ought to stop then. He has paid dear enough for the land.

4677. You mean thirty years on the old holding?—Yes, and on the new holding.

4678. You have been paying rent for thirty years in the holding you are in, you and your father?—Yes, for thirty-nine years.

4679. Is it your view that, if you had a new holding of the size you have indicated to us, 10 or 15 acres arable, or 20 as the case may be, with corresponding pasture, you should have it without any rent?—Yes, at the end of thirty years' paying rent for it.

4680. Thirty years in the new holding?—Yes.

4681. So that you are willing to pay rent for the next thirty years in the new holding?—Yes.

4682. And then the rent should cease?—Yes, the rent should cease, and the rates be paid.

4683. And do you mean that in such a case you would have an advance—a loan to carry on the new holding with?—Yes, for a start; but I would mean to pay up that with interest.

4684. In course of time?—Yes.

4685. Interest and capital?—Interest and capital.

4686. *Mr Sutherland.*—And in order to have such a prospect before you, you would be willing to pay an increased rent?—No.

4687. A higher rent than if you were only paying it as rent?—No.

4688. You think that with the rent that is at present taken from land you should, after thirty years, buy it?—Yes, buy it after thirty years; for land is almost selling to-day for twenty years' purchase.

4689. Have you heard of any case in which such a system has been carried out?—I think it is in Ireland.

4690. Is that view, may I ask, pretty generally entertained among people in your neighbourhood?—Among the most intelligent of them.

4691. One question with regard to what was asked of you. You were asked if you were a successful farmer, and I suppose it was your modesty that led you to admit that you were not?—He knew the ques-

Dunvegan, Skye.
John Maclean.

tion before I answered it. He was getting all the outlay of my croft, and that was not much.

4692. Do you believe that any want of success that attended your farming was due to the size of your holding?—Well, it was, to the size of my holding. If I had a bigger holding, I would be far more successful in it. After spring was over, I had to leave home and earn my livelihood elsewhere; and after working spring and autumn, I had no return, buying seed and meal every year to put in. I have not made a boll of meal two years back.

4693. *The Chairman.*—Is it your view that after paying rent for thirty years the rent should cease, and the land should become your own without any payment to the landlord?—Yes, but paying rates.

4694. Rates to the public authorities?—Yes.

4695. *Mr Macleod.*—Where did your people come from? were you born in Fasach?—I was just nine weeks going to it. I came from Minginish or Bracadale.

4696. Are there many in the township of Fasach that came in the same way?—None but myself.

4697. *Mr Maccallum.*—In reference to your scheme of paying rent for thirty years, do you mean that Government should advance money to buy out the landlord at present, and that your future payments should be made to the Government?—Well, I believe that would fit us better.

4698. To buy out the landlord immediately, and pay the Government advance in thirty yearly instalments with interest?—Yes.

4699. *Mr Munro.*—Supposing that Government bought your croft and paid a fair value for it, would you be willing to repay the Government that money, principal and interest, extending over a period of thirty years?—Yes, on fair rent.

4700. But would you be willing to repay the sum paid for the croft, with interest, terminating after thirty payments?—I might not be able to do it in thirty years; but I would just pay it in thirty, forty, or thereabouts, a longer time according to the sum.

4701. What you aim at is that the Government should acquire your croft, and you would repay them, extending over a period of years, by instalments?—Yes.

4702. And then you become the absolute proprietor of your own croft?—Yes.

4703. *The Chairman.*—You would pay that interest for the Government loan in addition to the fair rent, making two payments in each year—(1) fair rent, and (2) interest for Government advance for thirty years?—Yes; but I would need five or six or seven years before beginning to pay the double instalment, to give me a fair start.

4704. But giving you that start, you would be willing to pay the two sums, fair rent and Government interest?—Yes.

4705. I see you have a curious name for your township, Fasach; what does that mean?—It means a place of no value, I think.

Neil Mackay.

NEIL MACKAY, Fisherman, Colbost, Glendale Estate (40)—*examined.*

4706. *The Chairman.*—Are you a crofter?—I am a crofter's son.

4707. What age is your father?—Close upon eighty years of age.

4708. What is his first name?—John.

4709. I see the holding contains 5 acres 1 rood 18 poles arable, 3 acres 2 roods 14 poles outrun, and one-twentieth share of 2354 common pasture; the old rent was £5, 0s. 6d., and the new rent is £3, 8s. You have heard all the evidence given here to-day?—Yes.

4710. And do you concur generally with that evidence?—Fully.

4711. It expresses your views pretty fully?—Pretty fully.

4712. I see you are described in the note given me as a fisherman. Do you carry on the fishing industry?—I devote half of my time to the crofting, and the other half to the fishing.

Dunvegan, Skye.
Neil Mackay.

4713. In what way do you carry on fishing? Do you go as a hired hand?—I go to the east country as a hired hand, and I have a small craft of my own—a share of it—at home.

4714. What keel?—Twenty-one feet or so.

4715. How many years have you been going to the East Coast as a hired hand?—About twenty years; but I have been seasons in.

4716. Off and on?—Off and on.

4717. You know the kind of holdings that many of the men on the East Coast have?—Yes.

4718. Small patches, and depending upon the sea for their livelihood?—I did not come across many of that kind.

4719. There are some, are there not, there?—Very few that I have seen.

4720. Would you be favourable to the formation of small holdings, patches of potato land and garden ground, near the sea-shore, where there was good fishing, the crofter being dependent for his livelihood upon the fishing and not upon the croft?—Certainly I would; but I would not to any great extent, because I have tried both myself, and I fully believe that I could not work more than 2 acres of land or thereabout and attend to the fishing.

4721. You could do that?—Of course it would be with great difficulty, because the fishing requires regular attendance, so to speak. But, during rough weather and so forth, when the boat could not go to sea, he would have spare time to attend to his small patch.

4722. A point I want to elucidate, if possible, is this. You would be in favour of a man who had to depend upon the sea for his livelihood rather than the case of a man who had to depend half upon the sea and half upon his croft; in other words, is it a good system, the system of a man who depends partly upon the sea and partly upon his holding?—No mistake he would be all the better of having a small patch of land, but it would not do for him to have much land.

4723. You would be in favour of a little land that would not take him away from the sea, but depending on the sea for his living?—Certainly I would.

4724. Would you also be in favour of other larger holdings which would take up the entire time of the crofter, and constitute his living?—Certainly.

4725. Both kinds of holdings?—Both kinds of holdings; but I think I would prefer the larger size.

4726. But are you of opinion that there are some who would prefer the other?—Yes, I am of opinion there are.

4727. And both kinds would be beneficial to the country-side?—I suppose so, as far as I can see.

4728. Do you desire to make any addition to what has passed already to-day?—I don't see very much to speak about; most of it has been taken up already. I shall be glad to give all the information I possess to the Commission.

Peter Macdonald.

PETER MACDONALD, Holmisdale, Glendale (65). (Examined in Gaelic through an Interpreter.)

4729. *The Chairman.*—I see your holding has 5 acres 3 roods 9 poles arable, 1 acre 1 rood 37 poles outrun, a share of 1018 acres common pasture, divided in 14⅔ shares. The old rent was £3, 18s. 2d., and the fair rent is £3?—Yes.

4730. You have heard the evidence about rotation?—Yes.

4731. Have you tried to follow it to any extent?—I was not understanding all that was said on that subject. My croft is so small that I could not work it in rotation.

4732. Do you desire to obtain, if it can be got, a new holding on better land?—Yes.

4733. And is there land available in the places mentioned by previous witnesses?—Not near me. In the places that have been mentioned there is land available for a few crofts.

Dunvegan, Skye. Peter Macdonald.

4734. Such a croft as you would wish to obtain?—Yes.

4735. Do you wish to make any further statement?—No, but there is plenty to say. The township in which I am is overcrowded.

4736. How many are there in your township?—Twenty-one families paying rent.

4737. Does that include cottars?—Inclusive of cottars.

4738. Are there cottars in your township?—Two old wives.

4739. They pay no rent?—No.

4740. *Mr Macleod.*—Were you born in the township?—No.

4741. Where did you come from?—From Upper Milivaig.

Norman Ross.

NORMAN ROSS, Crofter, Glasvein, Glendale (49). (Examined in Gaelic through an Interpreter.)

4742. *The Chairman.*—Your holding has 3 acres 10 poles arable, 1 acre 3 roods 36 poles outrun, and one-twelfth of 165 acres common pasture. The old rent was £4, the fair rent is £2, 6s.?—Yes.

4743. How many crofters are in your township?—Twelve.

4744. Any cottars?—None.

4745. I suppose you have heard all the evidence that has been given here to-day?—Yes.

4746. And do you concur in it?—Yes.

4747. Have you any additional statement to offer to us?—No.

4748. Does your township march with the township of Fasach?—Yes.

4749. But you have different grazing?—Yes.

4750. *Mr Gordon.*—What stock have you?—Five cows and a two-year-old.

4751. Any sheep?—None.

4752. How do you make a living?—In the south.

4753. You go south to work?—Yes.

4754. Have you been able to make any meal out of the oats grown in your township the last few years?—No, no meal; and I have to buy the seed every year wherewith to sow the land.

4755. Is that on account of the bad crop, or is it on account of eating it with horses and cattle?—No, there is no soil; it is bad land. There is no soil to yield a crop.

4756. You want a bigger holding?—Yes.

4757. Would you like a holding that would enable you to stay at home rather than go south?—Yes.

4758. *The Chairman.*—Is fishing carried on to any considerable extent in Glendale?—Not much. I myself have been at it 14 winters, and did not make much by it.

4759. Did you go to the east coast?—Yes, for upwards of 20 years.

4760. And during all that time you were not able to live by your holding?—No, not for a month of the year.

4761. So that your holding was only a home?—Just a home on which I could rear my family.

4762. And you drew your subsistence from the south or the east?—Yes.

4763. Is that common in Glendale?—Yes, the most of them live that way.

4764. And pay their rents from other sources?—Yes.

4765. *Mr Macleod.*—There is nothing to prevent the Glendale men taking to the sea at the present time if they so choose, and if the fishing was good enough?—No, there is nothing to prevent them, but there is not good fishing at all.

4766. You think they would be much better off if they had fair-sized holdings?—Yes.

Donald Macdonald.

DONALD MACDONALD, Crofter, Skinidin, Glendale Estate (55)—*examined.*

4767. *The Chairman.*—You hold a croft of 4 acres 32 poles arable, 12 acres 1 rood 32 poles outrun, and one-tenth of 1183 acres common pasture. Your former rent was £5, 1s. 6d., your present rent is £2, 12s.?—Yes. Dunvegan, Skye.

4768. You heard what was said about rotation?—Yes. Donald Macdonald.

4769. Are you able to follow any rotation on your own croft, or have you tried it?—It is too small; I could not try it.

4770. Are you anxious to obtain a new holding if you could get it?—Yes.

4771. With better land?—I would agree with Campbell and Maclean.

4772. You attended to their evidence?—Yes.

4773. Is it your view that there is land easily obtainable at no great distance from your present croft?—Yes.

4774. In some places that have been mentioned by previous witnesses?—Yes.

4775. Suppose you got such a holding, would you enter upon it without assistance?—If I would get satisfaction I would try.

4776. You see your way to try that?—Yes.

4777. Stocking it and putting up the necessary buildings?—I would try.

4778. You would, at all events, begin without asking for assistance?—If I could get my property sold where I am, I would do.

4779. If you had the value of your present holding, you think you could enter upon a new holding without further aid?—Yes.

4780. You don't want assistance, I suppose, if you can get on without it?—I would rather do without it, if I was able.

4781. Have you a family?—Yes.

4782. How many sons?—Three.

4783. All living at home?—They are young; the eldest is 16 years old.

4784. *Mr Macleod.*—How many crofters are in your own township?—Eighteen.

4785. How many cottars?—Four.

4786. Are the cottars men or old women?—Two men.

4787. Have those cottars got a representative here to-day?—I would speak for them.

4788. What is their view about things?—They would like to follow the rest.

4789. They would like to get holdings?—Yes.

4790. And I daresay it would be some relief to the crofters, who are presently in Skinidin, if those cottars were taken away?—Yes, a great relief; it is a burden on them.

4791. *Mr Gordon.*—Are you a tradesman of any kind?—I was working some trade, as a merchant, for a while.

4792. What do you do now for your living—your croft does not keep you?—Yes, I have a croft all the time.

4793. You don't make a living on your croft?—No, there is nobody in the township would do that.

4794. Do you know anybody who would?—Not one.

4795. Are you acquainted with working a croft?—Yes; I was working a croft all my days. I was in the south working, and at the fishing too—three seasons at the fishing.

4796. But you have never worked a bigger croft than you have?—No; my father did, I believe.

4797. Where was your father?—Minginish, in Bracadale.

4798. Had you a larger croft there?—He was grieve to the tacksman that was there.

4799. There was something said by several of the witnesses to-day about their ability to pay as big rents as the farmers pay for the land. Do you believe the crofters would pay as big rents?—I believe they are paying rents.

4800. But they are not paying rents now off their crofts: they pay them off work. Do you think that if you put a new township on a farm, and divide it for say 20 people, they could be able to pay as big rents as the tacksman is paying?—That is according to where the places would be.

Dunvegan, Skye.

Donald Macdonald.

4801. But I am afraid there are some of them have been making statements which would bear against you in future?—I would not wish that at all.

4802. I don't think you would, but I am afraid if you put in 20 people on a farm and gave them the extent of land they were speaking about, you rather over-estimate your ability to pay rent. You have your families to keep: is most of the meal used in your township bought?—Bought nearly every week of the year.

4803. And do you think you would be able to keep yourself in meal if you got a new township?—We would try it.

4804. But do you think the climate would enable you to overcome that difficulty?—We don't go about with climate: that might be shifted; it is not in our hands at all.

4805. You have never made up your mind as to what rent you would be able to pay, in fact?—No.

4806. *Mr Sutherland.*—Would it be very vital to your holding that you should grow upon it the oats to make your meal?—Certainly.

4807. Would it be necessary?—Yes, far better for us.

4808. And do you believe it could grow and ripen in this country?—Yes, it used to.

4809. Is it within your knowledge that the returns of oats that a former witness has stated, can be given in this district,—5 to 6 bolls in a good year?—He went very high; too high for our township, at any rate.

4810. What is the common return, then, do you think?—May be three times.

4811. If you sowed one boll you would get three?—I sowed four and bought two last year, and two this year, and did not sell anything.

4812. But it would be no disadvantage to you though you had to import the meal if you had to export the stock?—It would be without stock at all; that would not do either.

4813. I am supposing that you had stock in the new holding?—Stock would not pay in these days.

4814. It would not be a real necessity, in any case, that the oats should grow in Skye; if you had stock to sell, you could easily buy your oatmeal?—Yes, if prices could stand.

4815. *Mr Robertson.*—In addition to having a croft, I understand you are a merchant. You deal in meal and other things, don't you?—Yes.

4816. What number of sheep stock have you?—Two cows and one horse.

4817. How many sheep?—Ten, with lambs, last year.

4818. What is the souming of the township?—Fifteen sheep.

4819. Then you are not depending entirely on your croft?—No, I am not.

4820. You put up a very fine house this last year; might I ask how much it cost you?—I did not make up my mind about it yet.

4821. *The Chairman.*—But you can give us an idea?—Not in the meantime.

4822. It would cost £100?—Yes.

4823. Would you think that house a suitable house for a crofter with 20 acres of arable land and outrun in proportion?—Yes, it would be.

4824. And you think a house such as you have could be put up for about £100?—It would require more than £100.

4825. Have you been putting up that house at your own expense?—Yes, and my own labour too.

4826. Has it an upstairs and a downstairs?—Yes.

4827. How many apartments upstairs?—Three.

4828. Large enough to sleep in?—Yes.

4829. And how many downstairs?—Three.

4830. Six altogether?—Yes.

4831. Are there any outbuildings?—No.

4832. Is it a slated house with stone and lime and windows and so forth?—Yes.

4833. Has that house been put up out of the profits of your trade?—Well, I was in a very bad house before, and a very small house for a large family.

Dunvegan, Skye.

Donald Macdonald.

4834. And you had to build?—I asked Mr Robertson there, and he gave me leave to build it, and showed me the place.

4835. Has that house been erected since the passing of the Crofters Act in 1886?—Yes; it was built the year before last.

4836. Is there a lobster fishing industry about Glendale?—They are trying it.

4837. Do you take the lobsters from the fishermen?—Not in the meantime: they are sending them away themselves.

4838. Did you formerly take them?—I did at one time, but I lost by them.

4839. Did you never make anything by lobsters?—No, I lost on them.

4840. And now they are sent direct?—Yes, and they themselves lose sometimes by them too.

4841. Is there a decrease in the use of oatmeal in the township in favour of Indian meal and food of that kind?—They don't use except oatmeal and flour.

4842. Is there less oatmeal used than there used to be?—They use more now.

4843. Are you the only merchant in the township?—No, there is another one in the township.

4844. What is his name?—John Campbell.

Donald Macpherson.

DONALD MACPHERSON, Crofter, Lephin, Glendale (60). (Examined in Gaelic through an Interpreter.)

4845. *The Chairman.*—Are you a crofter?—Yes.

4846. What rent do you pay?—10s.

4847. What was your former rent?—22s. 8d.

4848. Were you before the Crofters Commission?—Yes.

4849. I see from the books that your holding contains only 3 roods 29 poles arable, and 11 poles outrun with no pasture. Have you any stock?—I have 17 sheep altogether; 9 of these are hoggs.

4850. Have you a cow?—No.

4851. Where do you feed your sheep?—I feed them through the world.

4852. Do you pay anything for the feed of them?—No.

4853. Are your neighbours quite willing that you should feed your sheep on these terms?—Oh yes, it's themselves that are. I gave up the number to the Commission before.

4854. Is there anything special you wish to bring under our notice?—I was promised that I would get the first land that would be vacant, at the time of the former Commission, and I did not get it: a cottar was put in on that vacant land. The estate is complaining of arrears being on the crofters, and those who are clear of arrears won't get justice. I produce receipts to show that I am quite clear, and I can't get justice after all.

4855. *Mr Macleod.*—What is the name of your township?—Lephin.

4856. How many cottars are in Lephin?—Seven crofters and one cottar.

John Robertson.

JOHN ROBERTSON, Orbost, Factor for Glendale (70)—*examined.*

4857. *The Chairman.*—Do you wish to tender any information, Mr Robertson, with regard to these townships?—If you please.

4858. We shall be glad to hear it. Have you a statement to read?—Yes.

4859. You had better read it.—I just wish to refer to the statements made in reference to Lowergill, Ramasaig, Dibidal, and Ollisdal. I am not aware, in my time, of any crofters being in Ollisdal or Dibidal, but I knew of crofters being in Lowergill and Ramasaig. I understood the reason of their being removed from that, was, that they wished to be nearer the fishing industries, and some of them had removed at their own request. Others again that were left seem to have been in the centre of the farms, and, of course, the occupying of crofts in the centre of a township must be very injurious to the rest of the township, to the stock on the place.

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But I don't wish to dwell on these points, because I had nothing to do with the removal of any of the tenants from these townships. John Macpherson, one of the witnesses, referred to a croft of £6 or £7 as being a suitable croft for new holdings. Now, my experience is that a croft of that rent, and the extent of grazing that would follow, has not been so successful as a smaller croft along with fishing. I find that they have greater difficulty in meeting their demands. It takes up the crofter's time wholly, and his returns are not equal to keeping his family as they ought to be; whereas in a croft of £3 they don't depend on the croft, it is simply a home and a convenience to the family. From a small croft they have certain advantages, along with fishing and other industries, and the rent is much easier to pay than a croft of £6 or £7 rent. The extent of a croft that I would recommend is a much larger croft than that, one by which they could live without going to the fishing. The extent of such a croft I would suggest to be 20 acres of arable and from 200 to 250 acres of hill pasture. The difficulty about that is the capital; I estimate the capital required for such a croft at about £450, made up in this way. A dwelling-house suitable for a crofter would cost about £100 0 0
A suitable byre and barn would cost another 100 0 0

£200 0 0

That probably could be given on loan by the Government on the security of these houses. Then I estimate the probable stock that would be required for carrying on such a croft; the crofter would want at least two ponies to plough and cart, these would cost at least 36 0 0
He would also require 8 cows and calves, say 64 0 0
And about 80 sheep of all ages; these I estimate at 100 0 0
The carts and plough would cost, say . . 30 0 0
The harness and other little things . . 10 0 0
Seeds for croft 10 0 0

Total . . £450 0 0

Now the result would be as follows:—
The keep of two ponies for one year I estimate at £25 0 0
I estimate the rent of the croft at about . 20 0 0
Taxes—blacksmith's and carpenter's account 5 10 0
Seeds, for oats, potatoes, turnips, and grasses 10 0 0
Servant girl's wages and board wages to assist the crofter 20 0 0
Interest on £200 advanced on the house, and £250 on the stock, £450 at 5 per cent. 22 10 0

Annual Expenditure £103 0 0

The returns would be as follows:—
8 acres of oats, the value of the seed I estimate giving three returns . £24 0 0
I estimate the half of the potatoes to be sold 10 10 0
The remainder being used by the family.
The produce from the 8 cows, including stirks, I estimate thus:—
Milk and butter, and probably a cow or two to sell at the end of the year 64 0 0
Sheep, lambs, and wool . . 25 0 0
Poultry 5 0 0

128 10 0

Leaving £25 10 0
in favour of the crofter; but in addition to the above, the crofter will have fuel for his house, potatoes and vegetables for his family, worth, I estimate . . . 15 0 0

Showing a total balance of £40 0 0

in favour of the crofter, after paying all expenses. My experience among the crofters is, that in working for themselves they never estimate the value of the day's work. They simply go on, and if they have got a good return at the end of the year, they will be satisfied. But I think, in taking a croft of that extent, it is but right that these different items should be put down, with the view of knowing whether there was a likely chance of such a croft paying, and I have not the least doubt that if a croft were managed in the way described by one of the witnesses (I think Donald Campbell), it would pay. But giving such an extent of croft to any one crofter would not go far to reduce the congested state of the country, and I don't see why, in the present times, a great number of them should not be encouraged to migrate to the beautiful lands in the low lands of England at present lying waste. These lands are far better suited for cultivation; the returns they would give would be far better, and I have not the least doubt that Sir George Trevelyan would be very happy to give an immense quantity of his tracts all lying under grazing at present. The lands on the west coast of Skye will not produce the returns of the lands on the east coast, and the people suffer from that cause, not having sufficiently large returns to pay them for their labour. Dunvegan, Skye. John Robertson.

4860. There has been some reference made about the farm of Waterstein as a suitable place for crofters.—I don't think it is a suitable farm at all for being cut up into crofters' holdings.

4861. There was an assignment of land made from there already?—Yes, there was 300 acres given to the crofters from that farm, and the rest of the farm is at present under very valuable blackfaced sheep stock. That sheep stock would cost at least £1000. Now that would be a very large sum of money for the crofters to pay for stock; and for the proprietor to clear them off would mean a very great loss. It has been said that the usual valuations in the country for sheep stock are not fair to the proprietor. I differ from that view altogether. I know it is often said that the usual valuations of sheep are above the market value and unfair. This view I don't agree with, as I maintain that sheep bred on the farm should be above and very considerably above market value, and that the valuations are not unfair in this respect. To clear off sheep from a farm would be a very serious loss to the owner, and to restock it with strange sheep by the incoming tenant would also be a very serious loss. The valuations of sheep stock should be carefully and anxiously considered by the valuators, on behalf of those interested, and fairly adjusted; and for those reasons I don't think Waterstein would be a suitable place at all for taking over; it would be a very serious thing indeed.

4862. You are aware, I suppose, that there is an application for enlargement from Waterstein before the Crofters Commission at present?—Yes, I am aware of that.

4863. You are also aware, I suppose, Mr Robertson, of the terms of the remit under which we sit here?—I am quite aware of it.

4864. Are you of opinion, apart altogether from the number who could be accommodated, that there are lands in the districts specified by some of the previous witnesses which would be suitable for the purpose we have in view?—I think there are lands that would be suitable, if capital was advanced to the crofters to assist them in taking them.

4865. But leaving out of view the capital just now, you are of opinion that there are available lands for the object in view?—Well, there are lands that would be quite suitable for crofters, if they could take the whole of the township.

4866. If you could migrate the township?—If the township referred to could be taken wholly by the crofters.

4867. Quite so. That is land which could be cultivated to profit, or otherwise advantageously occupied?—Well, there is sufficient land for cultivation in connection with the township to give wintering for the stock; but I doubt if it could be profitably occupied otherwise.

4868. On what ground does your doubt mainly

Dunvegan, Skye.

John Robertson.

rest?—Well, the extent of the hill ground is so much greater than the arable land. It would take the whole arable land to grow sufficient food to winter the stock kept on the hill ground.

4869. Yes, but keeping in proportion the arable and grazing for the holdings we are having in view, I suppose there could be holdings formed which might reasonably be expected to be worked at a profit—certain holdings?—I believe that if the townships were taken up as a whole, they might be profitably managed with a small crofter class on them.

4870. Would you have graded holdings, or would you have the holdings nearly all of the same size; supposing the scheme gone into?—I think the crofters at present are not in a position to take very large holdings. I think such a holding as I referred to would be about the thing that ought to be adopted; but the difficulty is as to capital.

4871. What size of holding would you form in view of the crofters' ability to take it?—I have described the size that, I think, would suit the crofter; but I would, along with that, put as many crofters on the township as would occupy the whole of it, in equal proportion.

4872. But don't you think holdings might be formed rather smaller than you have indicated, and which the crofters might occupy without extraneous assistance?—I don't think they would; they would require outside assistance if you make them smaller.

4873. I suppose you agree, Mr Robertson, that the crofter townships in Glendale over which you have supervision are somewhat congested?—I do.

4874. And the holdings of many of them, at least, are too small, and the land is worked out?—Yes, they are too small.

4875. And it would, therefore, be a very desirable thing if, on reasonable terms and with reasonable prospects, they could get larger holdings?—Certainly.

4876. Do you agree with the present system of crofting in Glendale, by which a man has a holding for a home, and depends upon the south or the east for paying his rent? Is that a desirable, or is it a vicious system?—I don't know that it is a vicious system.

4877. Is it a system you would perpetuate in the future?—No.

4878. Why?—I think the holdings are too small.

4879. You, therefore, agree that a holding which will not admit of rotation of cropping is not a desirable holding?—I think the smallest holding could be cultivated by rotation.

4880. The smallest holding?—The very smallest.

4881. Three acres?—Even a garden can be cultivated by rotation.

4882. You heard some of the crofters say they could not cultivate by rotation, as they had to go on cropping to get grain?—Yes, but I heard another say that by following a rotation he was able to produce as much from two-thirds of his croft as he did formerly from the whole of the croft.

4883. Then, admitting that the congestion is great and the land exhausted, what is your remedy?—The only remedy is to migrate.

4884. I daresay you agree there are lands within the limits of this island to which crofters might be migrated?—Oh, I fancy so; but I doubt if it could be profitably done.

4885. Then, suppose it could not be profitably done, what is your remedy?—Well, I think that where land is to be had of that kind, the Government should buy it up from the proprietor.

4886. Is that your only remedy?—I think that is the only remedy. Government should buy up the townships, and let them to the crofters. One could hardly expect the landlord to do so,—to build houses on these properties.

4887. I suppose you are not an advocate of the system of competitive rents for holdings of which the rent has to be got outside the croft?—Not in congested districts.

4888. Or in any districts?—Well, on the east coast, where they have got different lands, the farms there are all let by competition.

Dunvegan, Skye.

John Robertson.

4889. Then are you in favour of competitive rents where the rent cannot be got out of the croft?—I am in favour of fair competition, but I don't think it would do at all where the districts are congested, because there are too many wanting land, and they will give more than its value.

4890. Then, not being in favour of competition, you are in favour of the system that is at present prevailing of fixing the rent by an independent tribunal?—I think that where you have crofters to deal with, it is the only system you can adopt.

4891. Now, are you in favour of fishermen's holdings, the fishermen depending on the sea for his livelihood?—I am in favour of giving them a small piece of land.

4892. A patch of land; not so much as to take him away from the sea?—About £3 of rent.

4893. Do you think that system could be extended in any considerable degree in this part of Skye?—I think, near the sea, it could.

4894. And do you think there are men who would be willing to adopt that system, living by the fishing industry, and having small patches of land, with a rent not exceeding £3?—Oh yes, I think so. You see they have a number of benefits from the small croft, where there is a family brought up.

4895. What are the benefits?—They have got potatoes, and fuel, and a little milk, perhaps, in summer, and poultry; that is a very great thing to have in addition to the fishing.

4896. I suppose you agree with the general current of the evidence to the effect that none, or almost none, of the Glendale crofters pay their rents out of their holdings?—Well, I don't think that they do.

4897. Would you kindly look at a scheme of charge and discharge made by Mr Mackintosh, the factor, on Lord Macdonald's estate?—I heard him give it.

4898. You heard him give his evidence?—Yes.

4899. Just look at the account then. Do you agree in the main with that account? I don't want to pin you to particular figures, but taking the thing generally?—It appears to be a very fair thing made up, but I don't think he has gone into it exhaustively.

4900. Do you think it is reliable?—I don't think he has gone into the expenditure properly, the expense attending a croft of that extent. For instance, he does not show any charge for buildings.

4901. Then in that respect the account is deficient?—Well, it has been omitted. If you carry out this plan, you must put additional expense in putting up buildings, which, at least, would cost £200.

4902. You mentioned the matter of Government advances for buildings. Would you be in favour of that?—I would.

4903. Are you of opinion that the security there would be a sufficient security?—I am.

4904. And a permanent security?—Quite so.

4905. Would you be in favour of such advances on any other part of the holding, the stock?—No, certainly not.

4906. What is your relation to the estate? Do you call yourself factor?—Well, I do not, but the people do. I call myself a farmer.

4907. To whom does the property belong?—To the Rev. Mr Macpherson. I reside on the farm of Orbost.

4908. You manage the property for the Rev. Mr Macpherson?—Yes.

4909. And have done so for a number of years?—Yes, for the last ten years.

4910. Would you describe yourself as agent for Mr Macpherson?—Well——

4911. I suppose, *de facto*, you are agent?—I am quite satisfied either way.

4912. *Mr Sutherland.*—With regard to the estimate you made for buildings, don't you think they are a little over-estimated, the buildings I mean that would be necessary for such a croft as you have described?—I don't think so. The house that I referred to in Donald

Macdonald's evidence is a house that a crofter ought to have, and I don't think it can be put up for less than £100.

4913. Then I think you have indicated an opinion that that was perhaps too large a house for a croft?—I don't think so.

4914. But, in the general case of crofters, don't you suppose that they would erect a considerable part of the building themselves?—This man admitted that he had, but all the same he said it cost him £100 over and above his own work, as I understood him. I don't think my estimate for outhouses is over the mark—'stable, 'byre, and barn, £100.'

4915. I think some of the witnesses indicated that they would be quite prepared to proceed at the first with houses that they might ultimately replace as they succeeded?—I don't think that would be advisable. We have had black houses long enough.

4916. But, as a matter of fact, are they not improving the black houses, since they got fixity of tenure?—Some are building new ones.

4917. And don't you think, with increased facilities, they would improve even more?—I have no doubt, if you give new holdings, as is contemplated, you ought to have respectable buildings on the crofts.

4918. To begin with?—To begin with. That is a very small estimate in building houses.

4919. But, as a matter of fact, is it not the case everywhere where new holdings are being erected, that they have to put up with inferior buildings to begin with?—These are by no means expensive that I have referred to. You cannot build even a black house for less than £20.

4920. £20 of cash, besides their own labour?—Yes, it would cost that at least.

4921. So you don't see your way to modify that figure?—I don't think I could. I have not the least doubt that the Government would be quite safe, if the houses were properly put up, in advancing money for the building.

4922. Had you in your mind, then, a sufficient security as well as a good house?—I had merely the houses as security.

4923. You simply had in your mind, then, the necessities of the new settler?—Yes; and if it is proposed to make a new crofter township, that is what I had in view.

4924. Then, with regard to your estimate of a proper holding, which I am quite prepared to admit does not differ materially from those we have had, except in the case that you have allowed a larger proportion of arable to the whole area, and I quite see the wisdom of that, you have stated 250 acres of hill pasture; how many sheep would that carry?—I put down 80 sheep, including all ages.

4925. And you think it would be an advantage, then, to have such a large proportion of that arable as 20 acres?—I think it is necessary for the cattle, and it would also enable the crofter to winter his sheep over the arable lands in winter.

4926. May I ask you if that is about the proportion of pasture to arable land upon the large farms at present, or is it over it?—Well, I think it is about it.

4927. So, then, if we suppose the case where a large farm is divided into smaller farms, you think the proportion is pretty well observed?—I think so.

4928. That is an important point. There is one further remark that I noticed. You stated your opinion regarding statements made by witnesses as to the selling off of the stock on the change of tenancy, I suppose?—By valuation.

4929. That it was and ought to be sold above the market price?—Certainly.

4930. Do you not think that is a statement that requires a little justification?—Certainly not.

4931. I did not fully gather the ground of that statement?—Stock bred on the place are of much more value than stock purchased outside and brought in.

4932. That would depend, of course, on the distance which they were brought?—It does not depend on that at all. It depends entirely on the difficulty in bringing strange sheep to lands, and keeping them alive on the ground.

4933. That would apply, I think, to the land where the conditions were different as to climate and altitude, &c.?—The loss is heavier with the west coast climate.

4934. But if they were only transferred from one part of Skye to the other, do you think it would injure them?—The stock will not remain on the ground they were not bred on without close herding.

4934*a*. Is that an element to be taken into account?—Yes, what we call acclimatising. In making up valuations we always allow a certain sum for acclimatising.

4935. So that they have a different value on the hill and in the market?—Certainly.

4936. That is practically what you meant?—It is.

4937. *Mr Forsyth.*—Have the rents of the tenants of Glendale been fixed mostly by the Crofters Commission?—Yes.

4938. Have they been paid?—Yes; they are a little in arrear, but they have been doing their best.

4939. Are their arrears on account of arrears ordered to be paid by the Commissioners?—They have some of these to pay yet.

4940. But, on the whole, the rents have been fairly paid?—Excepting one township. One township has not paid much of the arrears ordered to be paid.

4941. Which township is that?—The township of Skinidin.

4942. That is the only one you consider to be seriously behind at all?—Yes.

4943. *Mr Gordon.*—Would you mind telling us, Mr Robertson, what difference, per head, you would put upon sheep on the ground?—In the first place, in making up the valuations we have to take the cast sheep as the basis; then we allow a certain amount for the younger ages, and we then allow a certain sum for acclimatising. We then take the average price of the ewe lamb and the wedder lamb, and we put these all together and arrive at the final value of the sheep.

4944. And what would be the general result,—I don't mean a specific result but the general result,—how much more do you put on the sheep, 7s. or 8s. or 10s. above the market value?—It would be more than that if you take the younger ages into consideration. The sheep that we sell, and on which we base our valuation, are old sheep; they are exhausted; the younger sheep are much more valuable, and they remain on the ground.

4945. Quite so. But what would be the difference between the market value of, say, 2000 sheep of all ages—ewes, wedders, and hoggs, blackfaced?—From 17s. to £1.

4946. The difference between the market value and the value on the ground?—Yes.

4947. That is surely a high estimate. Now what is the number of stock upon this farm of Waterstein?—567.

4947*a*. All told?—All told.

4948. How many townships would lie contiguous to this hill?—Two. We have given 300 acres of the farm already.

4949. How many holdings would participate in the whole hill, supposing it was to be given over to them?—I don't think it is a suitable township to give over to crofters at all, for various reasons. It is the home farm of the property.

4950. Is there a mansion house on the property?—There is a lodge.

4951. And is there an arable farm attached to the lodge?—It is a very romantic, wild place, suitable for the proprietor in various ways, if he came to reside on the property.

4952. But he would not care perhaps for the sheep stock?—I am sure he would be better pleased to have it in his own hands.

4953. Well, suppose it was given over. There was some discussion and some questions asked here to-day in regard to the relative rents that could be paid by

Dunvegan, Skye.

John Robertson.

crofters and by tenants. What is your opinion as to that?—It varies a little.

4954. Do you think that if a farm was divided among crofters they would be able to pay the same rent as an only tenant?—If they were in a position to take the land, I think they would.

4955. There would be the same rent drawn from it, but would they be able to pay the same rents as the tenant?—The chief objection on the part of the proprietor to many crofters is that they destroy a good deal of the land from cutting peats and neglecting to lay down the sods; in this way the land is becoming of less value.

4956. But suppose you put a farm such as Waterstein under crofters, you would have to devote a considerable portion of it possibly for the keep of the cattle and the horses. You speak about two horses to each 20 acre croft: now, if you divide that, you would have possibly 20 or 30 horses to provide food for?—I am not quite sure of the extent.

4957. But take any farm of the same size?—Take the farm of Ramasaig. It would be more easily managed to give the whole township of Ramasaig to the crofters.

4958. What is the rent of Ramasaig just now?—It is not separate from the rest of the farms. There are only two crofters there, paying £7, 15s.

4959. What is the rent of the farm?—The rest of the farms are all under one holding.

4960. And if you were to devote the farm of Ramasaig to crofting purposes, do you think you would get the same rent for it as you are getting just now?—Possibly.

4961. In regard to the proprietor's interest in these buildings, you propose an expenditure of £200 in building under a rent charge. Do you understand that this rent charge would form the first charge on the property before your rent would become exigible?—I understand that.

4962. And do you think it would be safe for a landlord to bring in this forehanded claim?—That is another matter.

4963. That is a very serious matter?—If the building is put up at the expense of the Government, of course I understand that the interest would be payable by the crofter.

4964. But you proposed to have a rent charge of £22, 10s. for buildings and stock together?—Yes.

4965. But £10 of that would be the first charge, and come in before the rent?—I understand that, of course.

4966. Would that not place the landlord in an awkward position?—I think not.

4967. That £10 would have to be paid before he could get any rent?—Certainly, but he would have the security of the stock.

4968. The stock might disappear?—The stock could not disappear in one year.

4969. Well, I shall only ask one other question. What is your idea about a club farm? Would you propose or prefer to keep a grazing of that kind under a club farm, or in individual holdings?—I would have it a club farm, compulsorily.

4970. *Mr Maccallum.*—There are not in Skye many holdings of the kind you described—20 acres arable and 250 hill grazing?—No, this is a new suggestion altogether.

4971. And you think that the formation of such holdings as these would be for the advantage of the crofters?—I think if you could put the crofters in a position to take them, it would be an advantage to them.

4972. After that it would pay them?—That would depend very much on the crofter. I know that one of the witnesses here, if he had a farm like what I have described, would make it pay. I refer to Campbell.

4973. You are afraid they have not the experience just now for managing?—There is a great want of experience.

4974. But if they had the experience, the holdings would be made to pay?—The present generation will not: you would require to wait on the younger generation to get experience.

4975. But suppose these farms were treated properly, they would pay?—It depends, of course, on the prices that might be got for stock.

4976. And that would relieve the congestion considerably, if these holdings were formed. They are not very large: you could find a good number of them, could not you?—Well, there could be some found.

4977. Do you agree with Mr Macpherson that there are lands in Bracadale?—I thought the lands in Bracadale were all let.

4978. Oh yes, exactly; but suppose these were available?—I am not acquainted with that part of the country at all, except by report. The people speak highly of it.

4979. Would it not also be for the advantage of the proprietor that these holdings should be formed? In the meantime does he not suffer on account of the land being let to large farmers?—In what respect?

4980. That they asked reductions, and that when the leases are running out, he has to let the farms at a greatly reduced rent?—I am not aware that they got more reductions than the crofters have got.

4981. Are you aware that some of the large farms in Skye have come down 50 per cent.?—I am aware of that; but I am also aware that the farms throughout Skye were raised in rent 50 per cent., and the crofters' were not raised as a rule: they remained as they were before. I can give you a statement of one township (I have not got it here) of crofters, where in 1836 the rent was £12: now the rent is £5, 10s.

4982. Might it not be the case that the rent charged from the beginning on the crofts was too high? That when the rents were fixed, they were too high?—That I do not know. I suppose it was by competition in those days.

4983. But was there not a valuation in some cases?—I am not aware of any: the present Crofters Commission was the first, I think.

4984. Were the rents not fixed for them by a valuator appointed by the proprietor?—Quite possible.

4985. In 1810, for instance?—I am not aware.

4986. Did you quite acknowledge this: that when a large farm falls upon the proprietor, he is in a great difficulty with the stock: for instance, at the taking over of the stock, he has had to pay more than the market value of it?—He has a right to.

4987. He has a right to pay more than the market value?—Yes. The incoming tenant would pay more than the market value.

4988. That may be just enough. Does it not operate in this way, that it is very difficult to find a tenant for a large farm?—It has been, of late years.

4989. Very much so?—Yes.

4990. It is very difficult to get a tenant for a very large farm on account of the increased value of the stock, which he has to pay over and above the market value; that interferes, of course, with the letting?—You must take the stock of a township if you take it over for crofters. You cannot expect the proprietor or the owner to sell off the stock in the market.

4991. But we will suppose that there might be some interference on the part of the Government: there might be some help, for example, for settling the crofters, but I don't suppose you look for help in the letting of large farms, for instance?—No, anyone taking a large farm is supposed to take the stock.

4992. As a matter of fact, it is very difficult to let large farms?—There are none unlet that I am aware of.

4993. Glenbrittle, for instance, in Bracadale?—Yes, you are quite right; that is one.

4994. And throughout the whole country, don't you find many of them in the hands of the proprietors?—I am not aware of any.

4995. Do you know Knoydart?—No.

4996. I think the whole of Knoydart is in the hands of the proprietor. It is a matter of notoriety that that is the case, but, with regard to these small holdings, would there be any difficulty in letting them?—I think

they could not be taken by the present crofters without help.

4997. But supposing they got help, they would be ready to undertake them?—Oh, ready enough.

4998. There is a great desire to take such holdings as these. Then you differ in opinion from Mr Macpherson in regard to Waterstein; you think that it could not be profitably occupied by crofters in small holdings?—I think it would be a pity to have it changed from what it is now. It is very much required as a home farm to rear certain animals that are required for the rest of the stocks.

4999. But leaving that out of account, is it such a place as could be profitably occupied by crofters?—Well, I don't know: it is a farm that should not be cut up, and the proprietor has gone to great expense in fencing and other improvements.

5000. But it is not under regular rotation of crop?—It is all under grass. It is only suitable for grazing.

5001. According to the remit made to us, we have to consider what lands, not under cultivation, would be suitable for such holdings as these. Are you prepared to say, for instance, that Waterstein would not be suitable?—I am prepared to say that the present proprietor will be very glad to sell the whole property to you, and you can put it under crofters or anything you like afterwards.

5002. I would like to have your opinion on that?—I have given my opinion: I don't think it is suitable for crofters.

5003. Why?—I have my own reasons for it, which I have explained as well as I can. It is required for the management of the property.

5004. The reason you give is that it is very suitable for something else, but was that the reason why it is not suitable for crofters?—I think the proprietor has a right to turn his land surely to the best account that he can.

5005. No doubt, but that is not the point?—If you want to take it over, of course it is a different thing.

5006. Well, passing from that, as you are not inclined to give a definite answer in regard to it: you acknowledge, however, that there is a valuable blackfaced stock upon it?—I do.

5007. And land that would carry a valuable blackfaced stock would surely be suitable for crofter grazing, would it not?—No doubt, if you are going to make grazing for them; but I think it would be a pity to turn it into cultivation.

5008. That may be; but unless the land is good it would not hold a valuable blackfaced stock?—It is very good land indeed.

5009. Too good for crofters, perhaps?—Well, very likely.

5010. *Mr Macleod.*—With regard to this farm of Waterstein, I understand that your objection to interfere with it is more on account of the interference with the amenity of the property rather than that it could not be profitably cultivated?—That is the chief reason.

5011. What stock did you say was on this farm at the present time?—About 600 sheep, rather less.

5012. Is that the regular stock, or is it lower or higher than it has been?—We keep it lower. We purchase about this time of the year a number of cattle from the tenants, and we have a suitable place for grazing these cattle: without that they would be unfit to go to the market.

5013. That is, along with the blackfaced stock you graze a number of cattle?—Yes.

5014. But the figure, as regards the sheep stock, is about what it has been all along?—Yes.

5015. Has it always been a blackfaced stock?—No; but since it came into the hands of the present proprietor it has. Previous to that it was let to the late Dr Nicol Martin, and he kept cattle on it.

5016. Did he get valuation for his cattle when he went out of the farm, or did he clear them off?—He took the cattle off, but the proprietor paid the valuation for the sheep that were brought there by Mr Macdonald, Tormore.

5017. Putting aside for a moment the question of the amenity of the house at Waterstein, you don't see any great difficulty in handing over that stock at valuation as a club farm, supposing there was a club farm formed there?—I think it is a farm that ought to be retained where it is. If you put crofters on it, you will cut up all the available grass lands, and the high lands are unfit for cultivation.

5018. But you said in your statement, with regard to what I may perhaps term your ideal croft, that that portion of it which would be cultivated by the crofter would provide wintering for his stock?—Yes; but it is a larger proportion than usual for the purpose. There is more arable land to be had in it, in proportion to the hill ground, than in most farms in the district.

5019. On Waterstein?—Yes.

5020. There is a larger proportion of arable land on Waterstein than there is to be found on other places?—I think so.*

5021. So that in that way it would be more profitable for the crofters' holdings that you have been speaking of to-day?—Yes; but you would destroy the value of the grazing.

5022. Now, there was a point that came up here to-day several times as well as elsewhere, with regard to the rents paid by crofters, and the rents paid by large farmers. What is your view: do you think that the crofter pays per acre a lower or a higher rate than the tacksman?—I think about the same rate.

5023. And I daresay you will also agree that the crofters' land is not better at any rate than the tacksman's?—I think it has been as good.

5024. But there is no great difference between the quality of the crofters' land and the land of the large farm?—Oh, well, you will get farms to vary very much.

5025. Taking it over the whole?—I don't think the crofters' land, on account of its being bad, was the cause of their being situated where they are. I think it was on account of it being near the sea.

5026. What I wish to know is, whether, speaking from your large experience, you can tell us whether the tacksman's or the crofters' land is the better at the present time?—The tacksman's land is in a better state for cropping than the land under the crofters.

5027. Just so, and the rent is about the same?—As far as my experience goes.

5028. And do you think there would be any difficulty in getting the small tenant to pay a rent equal to the tacksman's?—Oh, I think if they had the means they would pay the same rent.

5029. *Mr Munro.*—As one remedy for the congested state of many of the districts in Skye, I understood you, Mr Robertson, to suggest migration of the crofters to the more fertile lands of England?—I did.

5030. Might I ask whether you have made that suggestion with the approbation of the crofters themselves?—None of them.

5031. You do it on your own responsibility entirely?—Entirely.

5032. Would such a scheme meet with the approval of the landlords in Skye?—I think they would be very pleased.

5033. Do you think such a proposal would result favourably to the crofters themselves?—I do indeed. I passed through a great portion of the north of England last year, and there is a great extent of lands there lying waste, and much better suited for crofter occupation than the lands we have here.

5034. Then, if such a scheme were thought of, how would you propose to give effect to it?—Well, you proposed to give them a certain sum of money to carry them away to Manitoba. Why not give them the same means to enable them to migrate to England.

5035. We proposed nothing. But you suggest that they should get money aid to carry them to England. Now, don't you think that such assistance might be as profitably given in helping them to migrate in their own island?—If it could be done; but the lands in the island will not give the same return that can be got from these lands in England.

* With reference to this answer Mr Robertson has since written—'This I now find is a mistake, a large portion of the 'low ground being marshy and unfit for cultivation'

Dunvegan, Skye.

John Robertson.

5036. Supposing the landlords in England were unwilling to receive the crofters? you wish to get rid of them, and they may be unwilling to receive them?—Oh no, we don't wish to get rid of them.

5037. I am glad to hear it.—I merely make the suggestion as being better than the idea of settling them in this land with its poor climate.

5038. I understand you to suggest that they could be removed with advantage to themselves, and benefit to the island of Skye?—I hold that opinion.

5039. You also hinted that it might be a favourable scheme for the Government to acquire the lands of Skye, and to let them out in portions to the crofters?—In townships.

5040. Have you ever considered what would be a fair basis of purchase of land in Skye?—Yes, I have considered that too.

5041. On a fair rent what would you consider a fair purchase?—From eighteen to twenty years for crofters' townships.

5042. Now, supposing that lands were acquired in that way and given to the crofters, do you consider that the crofter could pay up principal and interest spread over a number of years, say from thirty-five to forty years?—I think if you gave them a start they would.

5043. So that all that is wanted towards the prosperity of the crofter is that he should be settled down upon the land under fair conditions?—With capital.

5044. Of course, I am assuming that?—Yes.

5045. *The Chairman.*—What counties in England did you particularly refer to in making the suggestion you did?—I referred to Yorkshire, Northumberland.

5046. Any counties farther south?—And Lancashire. I have not been through any other.

5047. Would you mention what parishes in these counties?—I cannot give you the particulars, or the names of the places.

5048. Could you give me the name of any estate?—No; I merely point out that the lands are there.

5049. But you could take us to them and show us them?—I could.

5050. On whose estates are they?—I cannot say.

5051. I want the latitude and longitude then?—Sir George Trevelyan has most extensive properties, most of them in his own hands, and he himself or his forefathers, I understand, evicted all the tenants that were on it.

5052. You understand upon what ground?—I think the Duke of Argyll said so.

5053. I suppose you admit that the land called Waterstein is within the limit of the terms of reference?—I suppose all lands in Skye are.

5054. No, all lands in Skye are not. But you admit, I daresay, that the lands of Waterstein are within the limits of the terms of reference?—I understood that you had power to view any lands in Skye that you thought suitable for settling crofters on.

5055. But we have no cognisance of crofters' lands at all—crofters' grazing lands or arable. I must repeat a question which has already been put in more forms than one. I think in the earlier stage of your examination you said that the farm of Waterstein was unsuited for various reasons. Would you just epitomise these reasons as briefly as possible?—In the first place, we look upon it as the home farm of the property. In the second place, we keep a selected class of ewes on that farm, from which we rear very select tups—young tups for the rest of the lands in the possession of the proprietor.

5056. Any other reason?—We have also used this farm for grazing the stock purchased from tenants about this time of the year; and without the grazing lands the stock would be unfit to go to the market. Also that the crofters for the portion they got, paid no rent for six years. Another reason is that there is a rabbit warren on the high land of Waterstein.

5057. Any other reasons?—Those are the chief reasons; also that the proprietor went to an expense of £500 or £600 in fencing the property in 1883 or 1884.

5058. In your mind these are the main reasons?—These are the main reasons.

5059. Does any Glendale crofter present desire to suggest a question to be put to Mr Robertson?

Dunvegan, Skye.

John Robertson.

5060. *Mr John Macpherson.*—First of all, I was here, about a fortnight ago, before the Crofters Commission, and Mr Robertson then said that there were 773 sheep on Waterstein; to-day he said there were only 576.—*The Witness.* One of the assessors is present, perhaps he will bear out my statement that I said 576.

5061. *Mr Watson.*—The number stated by Mr Robertson to the Crofters Commission was 576.

5062. *Mr Macpherson.*—Is that the number he and his shepherd gave?—*Mr Watson.* Yes, that is the number. His shepherd gave the figures in detail.

5063. *Mr Macpherson.*—Would any human being, such as you have seen to-day from Glendale, be more valuable in your view than rams, Mr Robertson?

5064. *The Chairman.*—I disallow that question.

5065. *Mr Macpherson.*—Was Waterstein ever a home farm before your days?—It has always been; it never has been in the hands of the crofters.

5066. And what is Hamara?—There is only a park there.

5067. *The Chairman.*—We will see the ground for ourselves.

JOHN MACLEOD, Crofter, Harlosh (54). (Examined in Gaelic through an Interpreter.)

John Macleod

5068. *The Chairman.*—Are you a crofter?—Yes.

5069. What is your rent?—£3, 3s.

5070. What was the old rent?—£4, 4s.

5071. Are you a joint-tenant?—Yes.

5072. I see the holding contains 6 acres 1 rood 12 poles arable, and 18 acres 1 rood outrun, with $\frac{1}{26}$th share of 55 acres common pasture, and 1180 of grazing common to Greep, Roag, and Harlosh. Do you wish to make a statement to us?—Yes. It is as follows:—

Statement of the crofter townships of Roag, Herebost, Roskhill, and Harlosh, on the estate of Macleod of Macleod, in the parish of Duirinish.

These townships are overcrowded, on poor, miserable holdings that are far too small. They are occupied as follows:—

	Name of Township.	No. of Crofters.	No. of Cottars.	Hill Grazings common to the Three Townships.
1	Roag and Herebost, -	36	11	1180 acres of inferior hill grazing among 88 families, equal to a little over 13 acres to each family.
2	Roskhill, - - -	8	0	
3	Harlosh, - - -	27	6	
		71	17	88 Families.

What the people require to improve their condition is to lift most of them out of their present holdings and plant them on the large farms on larger holdings. Suitable and available lands are to be found in our neighbourhood for carrying out this proposal in the farms under-mentioned.

Feorlig.

The rent of this land was £200; it is held by an absentee tacksman, Mr Scobie, who holds immense farms in Sutherlandshire. It carries 1200 sheep, 50 head cattle, and 4 horses. It is the identical kind of farm to subdivide. (1) An old township, called Crosernish, where there were five tenants, was cleared by

Dunvegan, Skye.
John Macleod.

Macleod of Macleod for Mr Gibbon, his factor, and they were thrown upon Harlosh; (2) Glen Feorlig was cleared of nine tenants, and shows stretches of old arable land where the plough could draw a furrow for about half a mile.

Balmeanach Farm.

Rent, £105. In it there were old tenant townships that were cleared, such as (1) Groban, from where there were four families evicted without being a penny in arrears. One of the tenants, Murdo Macrae, after keeping his own family in home-grown meal, and having wintered his stock of cattle, took 6 sacks of oats out of the place when he was evicted at the Whitsunday term, after having done all the tillage as formerly; (2) Shaigary, where there were two families evicted.

Ose Farm.

Tenants could be migrated to Glen Ullinish, where there is plenty old arable land. Besides, there are 19 crofters on Ose Farm in very miserable circumstances through smallness of their holdings, and being able to keep only one cow each and no sheep. There is enough grazing in their neighbourhood to put them into proper condition, if given to them.

Ebost Farm.

This farm rents at £250. The tenant to-day cultivates only about 24 acres of this farm. The following old townships are in this farm, to which new tenants could be profitably put:—(1) Colbost, where tenants were before, and where there is plenty of arable land which was not cultivated for 50 years; (2) Glen Ostle, where there is a lot of old arable land, and where new tenants could be comfortably placed; (3) Glen Colbost, where five tenants once lived, but were evicted over forty years ago; each of them had at the time 5 or 6 cows, besides younger beasts, a horse, and flocks of sheep. Delegate John Macdonald knew every one of them. They were sent down, with several others, to Glendale to be made into fishermen, a calling of which they were absolutely ignorant.

Glenvicaskill and Glenose Farm.

This farm is presently occupied by the Laird of Skeabost. Delegate John Macdonald remembers five tenants being in Glenose; each of them have had, at the time of their eviction, eight cows, a horse, and about forty sheep. They were evicted into Glendale to be made into fishermen. Glenvicaskill is admirably suited for new holdings. Delegate John Macdonald remembers the clearing of this glen by Macleod and his factor. The old tenants were in splendid circumstances.

Orbost Farm.

New tenants could be placed in the following parts of this farm:—(1) Forse, where there were tenants before, but were evicted; (2) Brandersaig, which was also formerly occupied; (3) Varkasaig and Idrigil, where tenants were before.

Uiginish Farm.

This farm is in the hands of the Macleod himself. On the outskirts of it is the old cleared township of Ostle, where three were before, and which is admirably suited for new holdings.

Claggan Farm.

Rent about £600. On this farm were the old townships of Lowavaig, Nishabost, Orlarach, Swordale, Totachoger, and Bay. Besides the Claggan home farm, all these places were cleared over fifty years ago, and made into a sheep farm. It is exceedingly suitable for small holdings. Not to speak of the above-mentioned farms, there is enough land in Bracadale in the three farms of Glenbrittle, Talisker, and Drynoch on the Macleod estate, to provide for the whole of the people of the parishes of Duirinish and Bracadale; and it is our desire to see these lands given to the people, and the people put back to these lands from which they were evicted in former times.

It is evident, from the present circumstances of the tenants of Vatten, a farm that was broken up eight years ago, and given to crofters, that if the large farms were broken, crofters would work them to a profit.

(Signed) JOHN MACLEOD, Harlosh.
JOHN MACPHIE, Harlosh.
JOHN his × mark. MACDONALD, Roskhill.
MALCOLM MACLEOD, Harlosh.

5073. Who prepared that statement?—A meeting of crofters.

5074. Who wrote it out?—Roderick John Campbell, Roskhill.

5075. It had better be signed by him and by yourself.

5075*a*. *Mr Macleod.*—How many crofters are in the township you represent?—Twenty-seven.

5076. And cottars, six?—Yes.

5077. What is the average size of the holdings?—They are all very small.

5077*a*. And is there a considerable number of the crofters and cottars in the township prepared to take new holdings if they were put at their disposal?—Yes.

5078. Would they require assistance to stock such holdings and to erect the buildings?—They would be the better of it; but I believe that if they got the land they themselves would pretty well stock it.

5079. You heard to-day an estimate as to the cost of out-buildings. Do you think it would cost a large sum to put up the necessary buildings?—It would not cost the sum that I heard.

5080. What do you think it would cost?—I believe £20 would suffice well enough as they would do all the labour themselves.

5081. That is to begin with?—Yes. They would put up the buildings themselves; they have put up good houses already on our township, on the patches they are now in possession of.

5082. Did they get any assistance?—Nothing.

5083. Could you tell us whether the tenants in your township have been improving their mode of cultivation within recent years?—They have no room to cultivate different from what they used to, but they are making the best of it.

5084. They have no land under rotation?—No; nor room for the purpose. Their present holdings being so small they require to have them all tilled in order to provide wintering for their cattle.

5085. Do they contemplate putting the land under rotation if they get larger holdings?—Yes, they would readily do that.

5086. Would you say what is your impression as to the relative rents paid by small tenants and by tacksmen; which is paying most per acre?—The crofter pays more per acre—twice or three times as much.

5086*a*. *Mr Maccallum.*—I notice an important statement at the end of your paper here, where it is said,—'It is evident, from the present circumstances of the 'tenants of Vatten, a farm that was broken up eight 'years ago, and given to crofters, that if the large farms 'were broken, crofters would work them to a profit.' Can you tell us about the breaking up of this farm, and the circumstances of the people when they entered, as compared with their circumstances now?—The landlord gave the crofters the farm of Vatten, and they found security for the stock that was on it at the time. One of the Vatten tenants is here, and he can tell better about it.

Dunvegan, Skye.
John Macleod.

5087. What is his name?—Murdo Montgomery.

5088. We may get it from Donald Ferguson?—Yes, he is here too.

5089. They had not the money for purchasing the stock when they entered?—No.

5090. But they found security for it?—Yes.

5091. And have they been able since then to pay the stock?—I understand they have managed it.

5092. Can you tell us as to the present condition of the stock, whether it has improved or otherwise?—I believe the stock is quite as good now as it was then; but I refer to one of the Vatten tenants who is here.

5093. *Mr Gordon.*—You say that the small tenants are paying twice or three times as much for the land as the large tenants. Is it off the ground that you are paying that rent, or from your own personal labour?—We take it from the earnings of our labour.

5094. You could not say that the small tenants would be able to pay their rents without labour?—They cannot pay at all the rents of their present holdings.

5095. They are paying more for house rent than for land?—Quite so.

5096. *The Chairman.*—You say that crofters pay three times as much as large farmers. On what is that answer based?—I know the township in which I live pays at that rate.

5097. Well, now, compare the rent of that township with some farm that you know, and show us how it is three times as much as the farm rent?—It is quite visible on the tack of Feorlig, which is near us. There is fine open land there.

5098. How do you say that your township rents are three times as much as that of Feorlig?—I come to that conclusion, because the lands of that farm are fine good land, and we are very much confined into a park.

5099. Is that your sole reason?—Yes; I have no other way of getting at it.

5100. *Mr Reginald Macleod.*—You have said that you pay £3, 3s. of rent. What stock do you keep on your croft?—Two cows; that is the souming of it.

5101. Any sheep?—No.

5101*a*. And you have a certain acreage of arable land?—Six acres 1 rood 12 poles.

5102. Do you think that a large farm with 6 acres of arable would keep two cows and have a considerable outrun for the payment of £1, 1s.?—In my opinion the sheep farmer is not paying so much as we do, as the grazing of six Cheviot ewes is equivalent to that of one cow. The souming of Feorlig is 258 cows, and at the present rent that would only make 15s. 6d. for each cow.

5103. Passing to another point, what do you know about evictions that you allege to have taken place on the Macleod estate? Hearsay is nothing. What do you know personally?—I don't remember anything; but I remember the people being sent away from Glenose and Glenvicaskill.

5104. You yourself remember them being sent away?—Yes.

5105. Do you know anything of the lands to which they went in Glendale?—No; they were sent to Lowergill and Ramasaig, and I don't know anything about these places.

5106. Would you be surprised to hear that instead of these people having been evicted from good lands and sent to bad, the lands to which they were sent were better than those from which they came?—No; my belief is that they were sent from good land to worse land.

5107. That is contrary to the fact.

5108. *The Chairman.*—You used the word 'sent': in what sense does that apply?

5109. *Mr Reginald Macleod.*—I think it cannot be said that a man is 'evicted' when he is taken from one part of the estate and placed on another.

5110. *The Chairman.*—Did they go of their own consent, or were they sent forcibly?

5111. *Mr Reginald Macleod.*—I understand not forcibly, but by agreement with the landlord. *To Witness.*—You have said you were very much crowded, and you have given figures as to the number of crofters and cottars in the different townships. How did the cottars get established on these crofts?—So far as the cottars in my own township are concerned, they have been there as far back as I recollect.

Dunvegan, Skye.
John Macleod.

5112. Are they not the sons of crofters who have preferred to settle at home on their father's croft rather than go farther afield?—No, not one of them is of that class.

5113. They have been there all your life and knowledge?—Yes.

5114. Can any of the crofters or cottars in your township stock a holding such as was described by Mr John Macpherson and other witnesses earlier in the day?—The crofters could, but the cottars could not.

5115. Have the crofters got means or stock, have they got money in the bank? I am very glad if they have; but have they, as a matter of fact, got money in the bank, or is it stock that they already possess to put on these lands?—Some of them would stock the new holdings with what stock they possess, and others with moneys which they have in bank. If they get the land, there need be no fear but they will stock it.

5116. Then crofts in your district must be very profitable if the crofters have been able to save money and place it in bank?—Whatever way they came to have the money, if they get the land they will stock it, and they will make good use of it.

5117. You have alluded to Vatten, which Macleod broke up some seven or eight years ago, in order to benefit the best of the crofters in the district. Are you aware that those selected crofters, who were the most competent in the district, had not means to stock the land, and that in some instances the proprietor himself, in his anxiety to carry out this experiment, advanced them or became security for the money himself?—The tenants who took Vatten in that way were not a bit better off than the rest of the tenants in the township from which they were taken, as the most of them were in arrears when they got Vatten.

5118. I ask if you are aware of these facts?—I know that they had no money when they got the stock, and that they could not get the stock without finding security; and they themselves are saying now that the stock is cleared, that they have paid it all.

MALCOLM MACLEOD, Crofter, Harlosh (60)—*examined.* Malcolm Macleod.

5119. *The Chairman.*—You are a crofter from Harlosh?—Yes.

5120. I find from the Blue Book that your holding has 5 acres 34 poles arable, 13 acres 3 roods 9 poles outrun, and a share of 56 acres common pasture, divided into 26 shares; also a share of 1180 acres hill pasture, common to the three townships of Greep, Roag, and Harlosh. The rent was formerly £2, 19s. and is now £2, 12s. Do you know of land in the neighbourhood of your holding, which, in your opinion, would be suitable for new holdings?—Yes.

5121. Where is that land?—Feorlig.

5122. Is that a farm?—Yes.

5123. Who occupies the farm?—Mr Scobie.

5124. Does he reside on the farm?—No.

5125. Is there a dwelling-house on the farm?—Yes.

5126. Does anybody live there?—The shepherds live there.

5127. But he himself, I understand, lives in the county of Sutherland?—Yes.

5128. How long has he had this farm?—About forty-one years.

5129. On a succession of leases?—Yes; his father was there before him.

5130. Is there land there that would accommodate a number of crofters?—Yes, a good number.

5131. On holdings of what size?—14 to 20 acres arable.

5132. And a corresponding grazing?—Yes, along with it.

5133. And is the old arable there good?—Yes, very good.

Dunvegan, Skye.

Malcolm Macleod.

5134. Do you know about rotation of crops?—Oh yes, I am well acquainted with the like of that.

5135. Do you cultivate your present holding by rotation?—Yes.

5136. Then if you got into a new holding, you would be able to carry out that system more efficiently with a large extent of ground?—I would rather the ground than the fishing.

5137. (*Question repeated*).—Yes, I would.

5138. What stock would you think it right to have on a holding of 14 acres arable?—Four cows, a horse, and 20 sheep.

5139. Are you favourable to the club farm system?—It would need to be club stock.

5140. You would be in favour of making the club farm system compulsory upon the crofters?—Yes.

5141. And do you think there is such a feeling towards it that there would be a general consent to the adoption of that system?—Yes, quite.

5142. Is it the current belief of the crofters that it would be more profitable to them?—Yes, it would.

5143. Do you know about the Grazings Act passed recently?—Yes.

5144. Has it been adopted to any extent in this district?—No.

5145. Has there been any meeting of crofters to consider it?—No.

5146. Have none of you got a copy of the Act?—No.

5147. *Mr Sutherland.*—How far is your present holding from the place where you think new holdings could be advantageously formed?—It is not twenty yards.

5148. *Mr Macleod.*—Is Feorlig the only place where there is arable land on the farm of Feorlig?—There are other townships, small places.

5149. Can you give their names?—Glen-Eoghainn, Brechganish, Caroy, Crosornish, Balmore.

5150. These are all on Feorlig?—Yes.

5151. And you would be prepared to point out those townships if we came to look at them?—Yes.

5152. *Mr J. T. Mackenzie,* Factor for Macleod of Macleod.—You said that a croft with 4 cows, 20 sheep, and 1 horse was according to your idea of what the size of the croft should be. Now, what rent would you be inclined to pay for such a croft?—I have nothing to do with the rent.

5153. But you will have to pay the rent?—Oh, yes, to be sure: but the Commission is there.

5154. Would you give £20 for it?—I will say nothing about the rent.

5155. But you must answer the question.—I will not answer your questions. I have nothing to do with it.

5156. What rent would you be inclined to give?—I have nothing to say as to the rent. There are Commissioners going round, and let them look at it. I want a fair rent.

5157. Would you give £10 for the croft?—Ten pounds?

5158. Would you give £5 for it?—I would give a fair rent for it.

5159. Would you give £5?—That will do! a fair rent.

5160. I want to compare his reply with the statement of the previous witness, who said that their lands were much dearer than the amounts paid by the farmers; and I want to bring out the answer to these two points. If he says what he will give for the croft that he has quoted the stock for, I will then say what the rent of the ground now is.

5161. *The Chairman.*—Will you kindly ask further?

5162. *Mr J. T. Mackenzie.*—I am afraid I cannot elicit any satisfactory reply.

hn Macphie.

JOHN MACPHIE, Crofter, Harlosh (64).
(Examined in Gaelic through an Interpreter).

5163. *The Chairman.*—I see you have a croft of 6 acres 1 rood 29 poles arable, and 3 acres 3 roods 37 poles outrun, with pasturage the same as the previous witness. Your former rent was £4 and your fair rent is £2, 8s. Do you desire a new holding?—Yes.

Dunvegan Skye.

John Macphie.

5164. Where would you have it?—In Feorlig.

5165. You heard the previous witness's statement with regard to the farm?—Yes, and I concur in it.

5166. Do you know of other lands besides Feorlig which would be suitable for new holdings?—The only other land I know is the lands of Crosornish and Balmore.

5167. Any more?—Yes, there are other lands up the way of Bracadale.

5168. Do you know the old township of Dun-an-eil-thirich?—Yes, I know it well.

5169. Is there a crofter township there?—Yes, and very much overcrowded.

5170. Any other places besides Crosornish and Balmore and Feorlig?—I don't know any other lands near our present township. Where we are at present, we have to keep the cattle on tether for want of room.

John Macdonald.

JOHN MACDONALD, Tailor and Crofter, Roskhill (66).
(Examined in Gaelic through an Interpreter.)

5171. *The Chairman.*—Has your rent been fixed by the Crofters Commission?—Not yet.

5172. What rent are you paying at present?—39s.

5173. Mr Macintyre looked at your holding recently?—Yes.

5174. Can you tell us the size of your holding?—It is a small bit of peaty, boggy land which was given to me, and which was never tilled until I got it, but which I brought into cultivation myself; and if it had not been bad I would not have got it. I built a house on it.

5175. You say it was given to you: when was that?—Thirty-seven years ago.

5176. Where had you come from?—Bracadale. I could not get leave to stay at Bracadale, because I married.

5177. You desire to get a new holding?—I have a big family, and strong young lads growing up, and would be prepared to take a new croft like others.

5178. Where do you say there is available land?—Between Bracadale, Minginish, and Duirinish there is plenty of land.

5179. Do you carry on business as a tailor?—Yes, I do.

5180. And do you pay your rent from your trade?—Yes, by my trade, I have always been paying it. I paid it regularly, except for a few years; we got into arrears lately, and we got summoned.

5181. How far is your place from Harlosh?—About 2 miles or 1¾ miles. The two places are marching: only Vatten is between us.

5182. Can you give us the names of any other places besides those that have already been mentioned, where there were small tenants in past years?—Is it in Bracadale or Duirinish you wish to know?

5183. In Duirinish?—Not that I know.

5184. *Mr Reginald Macleod.*—You have a large family growing up, I think you said, wanting crofts: is that so?—The family as they grew up had to leave home because they could not get a holding in their native country; but they are quite ready to come back, and take new holdings whenever they can get them.

5185. Is it your opinion that it is desirable for this country, or for any other, that there should be a habit on the part of the sons of people of any rank to think that they should necessarily and rightly obtain crofts or holdings, or whatever it may be?—I think it would be a very good thing for the country that our sons should be provided with holdings at home.

5186. Are you aware that the sons of persons who are in a somewhat richer position than most crofters have been obliged to seek their fortunes in a wider field?—Very little thanks to them for that: they are just hunting for wealth.

5187. Would it not be desirable too for the crofters' sons to 'hunt for wealth'?—There are a number of crofters' children coming into wealth in their journeyings

Dunvegan. Skye. — John Macdonald.

through the world as well as the children of the upper classes.

5188. If, however, you, and others like you, always kept your children at home, do you not admit and agree that the island, as we are a very prolific race, would soon become too small for us all?—The island is wide, and it will take a long time for the population to outgrow the available space. There is a great deal of vacant land to be peopled all through Minginish and Rhuanduna and these places.

Lachlan Mackay.

LACHLAN MACKAY, Kilmuir, Dunvegan (40)—*examined.*

5189. *The Chairman.*—Are you a crofter?—Yes.

5190. Has your township any other name than Kilmuir?—No.

5191. Were you before the Crofters Commission?—No.

5192. What rent do you pay?—£1, 17s.

5193. You are close to the church here?—Yes, about 500 yards east from where we sit.

5194. Did Mr Macintyre deal with your case?—No, the township never applied to the Commission.

5195. Are you desirous of obtaining a new holding?—Yes.

5196. Why?—Because the place I am in is inadequate for me to maintain myself and bring up a family. I have about two acres arable.

5197. And what outrun?—My share would run about six or seven acres.

5198. It is a township outrun?—Yes.

5199. How many are in the township?—The township is divided into 38 crofts and 6 half crofts.

5200. Is that in addition to the 38?—Yes, but the half crofts have no hill pasture.

5201. Are there any cottars?—Seven cottars.

5202. Do they pay any rent?—No. There are in all 56 different houses.

5203. Are the rents much the same as your own?—Yes, very much the same. Some of them run a little over £2.

5204. They run from 30s. to 50s.?—Yes, about that.

5205. Is it an old township?—It has been formed within the last sixty years, I think. People came from Claigean sixty or seventy years ago.

5206. How did they leave Claigean?—It went under sheep at that time.

5207. Did they leave holdings of a larger size than they got in Kilmuir?—Oh yes, I believe so.

5208. Has your rent, so far as your recollection goes, always been the same?—I have only been here four years.

5209. Where did you come from?—I am not a native of the island: I came here by marriage, and got possesson of my father-in-law's croft.

5210. You know nothing of the history of the place?—Yes, I have been learning a good deal from old residents that have been removed from Claigean.

5211. But you know nothing of your own knowledge?—Nothing of my own knowledge.

5212. Is the land in your township exhausted?—It is, very much.

5213. Are the holdings, every one of them, too small?—They are.

5214. Would it be a great advantage if a number of the people could be removed to other and larger holdings?—It would.

5215. Leaving a certain number upon the township of Kilmuir?—Yes.

5216. What size of holding would you make upon the township of Kilmuir?—I would leave it to about 10 crofters.

5217. Then you would remove about 46 crofters and cottars to other holdings?—Yes.

5218. Where would you put them to?—To Claigean.

5219. Is that a suitable place?—Very suitable indeed.

5220. Old arable land?—Old arable, and very fertile.

5221. How is it occupied at present; is it a farm?—It is a sheep farm.

Dunvegan, Skye. — Lachlan Mackay.

5222. In whose possession?—Rented by Nicol Martin, who is resident on the west side of the loch.

5223. Does he rent it alone, or along with other ground?—He rents it alone.

5224. What is the size of it?—There have been seven different villages where crofters formerly were.

5225. On Claigean?—On Claigean.

5226. Can you give me the names of these villages?—Yes.

5227. You heard them mentioned already?—I got the names,—I know the places personally.

5228. Let us hear the names?—Totahor, Swordal, Corlarach, Duart, Nisabost, Claigean, Bay Head.

5229. Are all these sites of old townships upon the farm of Claigean?—Yes.

5230. And form a part of this grazing?—Yes.

5231. Would they, in your judgment, be suitable for holdings in the present day?—Yes.

5232. Large enough to enable the crofter occupying to subsist by the holding?—Yes.

5233. What experience of land had you before coming to Kilmuir?—I had a lot in my own country. I belong to Sutherlandshire.

5234. What part of Sutherland?—The west coast.

5235. What quarter?—The head of Loch-Inchard.

5236. Was your father a crofter there?—Yes.

5237. Is he there still?—My mother is still there.

5238. What rent does she pay?—£4. It is at Achresgill at the head of the loch near the Duke of Westminster's forest of Reay.

5239. You were brought up as a crofter?—I was, in my early days.

5240. Were you employed in the deer forest?—No, never. I have done something in farming and shepherding; and I have been abroad in the Government service for twelve years.

5241. What service?—Police service.

5242. Where?—Hongkong. I went at the age of twenty-three years, and retired in 1887.

5243. You are a man of intelligence, Mackay. Suppose you got a holding of the kind you refer to on Claigean or another part of the land mentioned, would you undertake to make it pay in average years?—I would, at a rental of about £10 to £15.

5244. You would enter upon a holding with a rent of £10 to £15, and expect to make it pay, with fair chances?—Yes.

5245. And could you stock it yourself, and put up buildings?—Yes, at very little cost.

5246. And you would not wish to be indebted to any body?—No.

5247. Would you say that the township of Kilmuir is so congested that it is impossible for the people to get on comfortably?—It is.

5248. Does any body in Kilmuir live by his holding?—Not one.

5249. How do they live?—A few of them work on the estate, and others are kept by their friends in different parts of the country. The rent is small, and it is just a home for them.

5250. The relatives elsewhere send them money?—Yes, those who are not able to work.

5251. And you say that but for that they could not get along?—No.

5252. You say there are seven cottars?—Yes.

5253. Are these cottars a considerable burden upon the crofters?—Oh no. Some of them are on the poors' roll, having houses outside the limits of the township. Others are inside, with a small patch but no hill grazing.

5254. You don't live by your holding yourself?—No.

5255. How do you live?—I have a pension of £25 a year, and I work every day.

5256. At labour?—Labour.

5257. On the estate?—Sometimes on the estate, sometimes on other places.

5258. Do you get constant work?—I have had pretty constant work for the last two years, but not every day.

5259. I suppose I may take it, however, that you are the best off man in the township?—No. I have no assist-

Dunvegan, Skye. Lachlan Mackay.

ance but myself. A good many of them have assistance from outside, and they had a better start than I had. If I had more land I would have a chance of getting on.

5260. You would like very much to get a larger holding?—I would.

5261. And, as you said already, you would undertake to make it pay you, if it could pay at all?—I would.

5262. *Mr Sutherland.*—I would like to ask you a question. You have no fear of the population increasing beyond the average, have you?—No, I think the reverse. They are a great deal under the average they ought to be.

5263. Do you know the average per acre or per mile in the island of Skye?—No.

5264. Can you give me any idea of what it is per acre in the township of Kilmuir?—Kilmuir is not much more than a mile square, 700 acres.

5265. How many people are there? Compare it with Claigean farm. Is there a great difference in the population of the two areas?—Oh yes.

5266. You do not think that Claigean is overpopulated, do you?—No.

5267. And, keeping that in view, it is a strong argument in favour of forming new townships, is it not?—It is.

5268. And from the opportunity you have had of observing the people here since you came, you have no doubt they would be successful in such a holding?—They would. I would like to bring before your notice that the estimate of Mr Robertson for building houses is too much by more than half.

5269. *The Chairman.*—Well, give us your own opinion of it?—A good house could be built for a crofter, a very comfortable house, for £40. The barn, byre, and stable for about £20. £60 would be a good start for a man to begin a new establishment for a 15 acre croft.

5270. Do you mean a stone house with slated roof?—Yes; but I would put the black thatch on to start with. I would make it very comfortable inside, with stone and lime for the walls.

5271. *Mr Macleod.*—With regard to the buildings, if new holdings were formed, you think that a thatched house could be made very comfortable?—Yes, very comfortable indeed.

5272. And there would be nothing to hinder them putting on slate when they made a sufficient profit to put slate on the house?—No.

5273. And that if a man got £50 or £60 of a loan for the buildings, he might do very well?—Yes, and I don't think it necessary that a man should even fill the stock right away when he went in.

5274. Why?—If he was getting the land at a fair rent, say, if he had half the stock for the first year, he would get on very fast with one horse and four cows, and ten or twelve sheep: he would very soon increase it, if he was a hard working man, and pay his rent besides.

5275. You think he would be able to pay the rent, although he only half stocked the place to begin with?—Yes.

5276. Because the cattle would have better feeding, and would turn out better?—Yes, and he would have his chance of working otherwise.

5277. Have you any knowledge of the fishing since you came here?—I have.

5278. Had you any knowledge of it before you came here?—I had. I have fished every place on the east coast, from Stornoway to Lowestoft in England.

5279. And there is nothing to prevent the people taking to the sea at the present time, if they were inclined that way?—No; Claigean is the most suitable place on the west of Skye for fishing from. It is near the fishing ground, and there is a splendid harbour.

5280. The difficulty hereabouts is that it is too far from the fishing ground?—Yes.

5281. But if there were tenants put on Claigean, they would be nearer the fishing ground?—Yes, they would.

5282. *Mr Gordon.*—Do you think there is a proportion of the population who would be willing to settle down in Claigean as fishers?—Yes.

Dunvegan Skye. Lachlan Mackay.

5283. You would have no difficulty in getting as many as would fill a small township?—No.

5284. You specified a rent of £10. What would be your maximum stock when you were fully stocked?—In my country, under the Duke of Sutherland, the idea was that they kept a Highland cow and five sheep for every £1, but in Skye it is dearer. They did not keep so many crosses.

5285. Have you been accustomed to club farming, or seen it?—I have seen it.

5286. And do you approve of club farming?—I do; if it is properly managed, they get on very well.

5287. Some of the other witnesses before you referred to Claigean as a crofting ground. How many families would you suppose could be comfortably located, with a £10 rent, on Claigean?—Forty odd.

5288. What is the present rent of Claigean?—I think about £700.

5289. That would make only £400 instead of £700?—Well, I think £400 would be quite enough for the Claigean farm.

5290. You don't think the crofters could pay as much as the sheep farmer does?—I know the farm is not paying at the present rent.

5291. You think £400 would be plenty of rent for it?—Yes.

5292. But suppose the proprietor can get £600 or £700, what would you say to that?—Well, I think the crofters, if it was going to competition, could pay as much as the sheep farmer, and make it pay too.

5293. It may be that £400 is enough for the crofters to pay, but would it be fair for the proprietor to have to take that when he can get much more?—It would not be fair if he can get more for it.

5294. That is your idea of the value of it to crofters—forty holdings at £10 a piece?—Yes.

5295. *Mr Reginald Macleod.*—I understand you don't contemplate that it is right to do any injustice to the landlord to occupy his land against his will at a reduced rent?—No.

5296. And, therefore, if the landlord is able for any given farm—say Claigean—to obtain a given rent—say £600 or £700 a year—you think that if that were given to crofters they ought to be bound to pay the same?—Yes, I do.

5297. You yourself, I think, are a stranger altogether here?—I am.

5298. I should think, from what you said, that most landlords would be very glad to see you tenant of a reasonable holding, because, from the life you have led, you would be able to make it succeed; but do you think that a man who comes as a stranger to a country has any claim, moral or otherwise, to be placed by a higher power upon lands, if it should be against the landlord's wish?—I think I have a claim on any place under the crown of Britain.

5299. By force?—No, by legal and lawful right, if I clear my way.

5300. It is one thing to do it voluntarily, and another thing by force?—I don't mean that.

5301. I should like a word about the seven townships, which, you say, were cleared upon Claigean. I have reason to believe that those townships were not settlements of crofters at all, but were tenancies of tacksmen who had around them, at a distant period from now, a group of farm labourers who had a little land to assist them, and as part of their wages. Is that not the case?—Well, in some cases it may have been so, but not in all—not in Corlarach and Duart. It might have been so in Bay and parts of Claigean.

5302. I understand the whole of Claigean farm has been under one tacksman for a great deal longer than the memory of man. You are unable to contradict that from your own knowledge or inquiry?—I have had a statement from an old man that was born there 80 years ago, John Macneill.

5303. Was he not a tenant of one of the tacksmen enjoying, no doubt, a portion of land for the purpose of raising potatoes, and grazing a cow?—Yes.

Dunvegan, Skye.

Lachlan Mackay.

5304. You have said it would cost £40 to build a house, and £20 to build a barn and stables. What have you estimated it would cost to stock the £10 holding?—I did not estimate anything as to stock.

5305. Would you mind doing so?—A man going there from a different district would have some of his own.

5306. Take yourself, for instance; what stock would you propose to put on?—I would put on 8 cows with their followers.

5307. What number of sheep would you expect to put on the holding?—Between 40 and 50.

5308. Do you think that £1 per annum is a high or low rent for a cow with her followers?—I think it is very fair.

5309. I am taking what I understand to be a very fair rent. Taking that as at £1, that would be £7 for the cow and followers, would only leave £3 out of the £10 for 40 or 50 sheep, besides, presumably, a horse and the arable ground. Surely that is not a fair rent?—That is my estimation.

5310. That is to say, you would expect grazing for 40 or 50 sheep, and a horse, and arable land of 15 acres, for £3? I just want to get your answer in black and white. You have said that you could pay what is a fair rent, even while the holding was only partially stocked—only half stocked was your phrase?—Yes, smaller rents than £10.

5311. I think we have been trying to get at your views with regard to a £10 rent, because is it not your opinion that a smaller rent than £10 would not enable a crofter to live upon the croft?—Not thoroughly.

5312. If there was a large number of crofters scattered through the island, all of them, or most of them, unable to live without labour, would not the labour market be overstocked, and the crofters be unable to find occupation?—I don't think that.

5313. A question was asked and an answer given as to the acreage and the proportion of population to the acre. I should like also to elucidate this point, the proportion of population to wealth. Men don't live on acres, but they live on the produce of acres. Have you any idea what the population of Skye is, as compared with its wealth?—No.

5314. Well, I may inform you that the population of Skye is about 17,000, and the value of the island in the Valuation Roll is certainly not much over £30,000; consequently there would be a value of 32s. or 33s. per head, which is probably a fifth or a sixth of the value found in any ordinary county. You are not able to go into that, perhaps?—Not at present.

5315. *Mr Sutherland.*—Are you of opinion that the value of Skye might be very largely increased with the value of labour on the land?—It would.

5316. *The Chairman.*—You took a limit of rent. Suppose for the holding you have been describing, your rent was assessed at £15, would you undertake to work such a holding and endeavour to pay the rent?—I would.

Murdoch Montgomery.

MURDOCH MONTGOMERY, Crofter, Vatten (58).
(Examined in Gaelic through an Interpreter.)

5317. *The Chairman.*—Are you a crofter or a cottar?—A crofter.

5318. I see your holding is 9 acres 1 rood 37 poles arable, no outrun, and a share of 1190 acres, occupied by eight tenants as a club farm. The former rent was £8, 15s., and the fair rent £7, 14s.?—Yes.

5319. Do you wish to make any special statement with regard to the township of Vatten?—I have nothing further to say. I was not aware that I was coming here to speak at all.

5320. You and your neighbours were settled there six or eight years ago?—Yes.

5321. How have you been getting along?—It is coming on we are, much better than where we were.

5322. Where were you?—I was in Greep, Roag.

5323. Did Macleod make any advances to you?—He gave me no advance.

5324. *Mr Macleod.*—When you were at Greep you had a certain amount of stock there?—I had two cows, a stirk, and a calf when I went to Vatten.

Dunvegan, Skye.

Murdoch Montgomery.

5325. How did you manage to get the means to take the share in the club farm?—It was very difficult, but I had a friend, and between himself and Mr Macdonald, the factor at the time, they went security for me.

5326. Might I ask if you have been able to meet the advance?—Yes. Two or three years ago I was clear of the bank for the sheep and the house.

5327. Are your neighbours in the same happy position?—I cannot say, but I believe the most of them are.

5328. Do you think the club farm system is a good one?—Well, in a way I would say it is the best mode of keeping sheep.

5329. And in what way would you say it was not?—It might be desirable occasionally to take a sheep out of the stock, in the event of sickness being in the house or that; and in the case of a club stock one cannot do that.

5330. But there would be no difficulty in making an arrangement by which that could be done?—There would be no difficulty.

5331. You have no more serious objection to the club farm system than that?—No, that is my difficulty; but I think that having the sheep in common as a joint stock would make the stock better. We would be able to keep proper tups.

5332. Have you got any opinion as to what number of crofters could conveniently be about the same club stock?—I think that eight would be quite sufficient; the same as we are ourselves in our township.

5333. How often do they have a meeting with regard to the management of the stock?—I cannot say; at clipping time and at dipping time we meet, and then again at the time of dividing the income from the sheep.

5334. And is it one man that you have as manager, or two or three?—It is worse than that with us; we have not any particular manager at all, and that is not a good state of matters.

5335. Don't you know places in Skye where they do have a meeting every year and appoint a manager?—I believe there are such townships.

5336. And you think you would be the better of that?—Yes, doubtless.

5337. If you met once a year and appointed one or two of your number to look after things?—Yes.

5338. Then with regard to the rent of this farm of Vatten when you got it, did you get it at the rent that the tacksman paid before?—I cannot say, we did not get the place as it was in possession of the tacksman. There was one thing done that was not pleasing to me; I don't know whether it was the landlord or the factor who did it. We were compelled to take the stock at valuation, and a good bit of the place which was considered indispensable for the proper feeding of the stock in the tacksman's time was taken from us and added to Mr Scobie's farm of Feorlig; they were apparently under the impression that our sheep could live any where. I don't know whom to blame for this.

5339. But you cannot tell how the tacksman's rent compares with the rent that you are paying?—I cannot say, because the tenant of Vatten House pays to Macleod yet, and there is another man who has land in the place, and he also pays to Macleod. I don't know how Mr Scobie held it.

5340. Now about the stock, what objection had you to take over the stock at valuation, was it not better for you to get the stock on the ground rather than buy in a stock?—We had no objection to taking the stock at valuation, we think it suited us to take over the stock on the ground better than to get in a stock.

5341–42. The objection that you had to what was done was not to taking over the stock at valuation, but to cutting off this piece of the farm and adding it to Mr Scobie's?—Yes; at the time we were wanting Vatten to be Vatten, and Feorlig to be Feorlig, and we are in hope that it will be so yet.

5343. *Mr Maccallum.*—You say that a part of the land was attached to Feorlig. Did Mr Scobie also take

Dunvegan, Skye. — Murdoch Montgomery.

part of the stock?—I cannot say, because the stock of Feorlig and Vatten were joint at the time.

5344. Vatten was not held as a separate holding?—No.

5345. How did you get the houses built, had you to build houses?—Yes, certainly.

5346. Were the tenants generally able to build houses themselves without advances?—They did it all without any assistance.

5347. Are these houses suitable for their holdings?—They are built according to the instructions of the factor; he told us to build houses with two gables, and thatched.

5348. And you think them suitable and comfortable?—Yes; any ordinary man could stay in them with comfort.

5349. What would the dwelling-house have cost?—I myself laboured at the building of my own house.

5350. But leaving that out of account, how much had you to lay out in money?—I got another man to help me, and I paid him £5.

5351. And what other outlays in connection with it?—I got £2 or £3 worth of lime, and I bought the timber for the roof in Dunvegan here.

5352. What did that come to?—I am not sure whether that was 8s. or 10s. a couple, six couples say.

5353. Any more expenses in connection with it?—Carting sand, but that was my own work.

5354. These are about all the outlays you had?—I floored it above and below, which would cost me about £3 or £4 besides. The house is 7 feet high, and the walls 37 feet long, and there was a byre, a barn, and a stable.

5355. You gave your own labour for putting up these also?—Yes.

5356. What do you think your outlay for these would be, leaving out of account your own work?—The amount was very trifling altogether, apart from my own labour; but the most of the expense was my own work. The £5 which I gave to that man who was assisting me was all that I paid for any extra labour.

5357. Then, you say that the tenants generally had to get an advance, in order to pay for their stock, and I suppose also for building their houses?—They got no money assistance for the building of houses.

5358. They had money of their own for that purpose?—We had to endeavour to put them up without assistance, and we succeeded. We got a little for the houses we left behind us.

5359. But the money for the stock was got from the bank, was it?—Yes.

5360. And you had to pay bank interest?—Yes.

5361. And the whole of the tenants have profited, you think, by this change to Vatten?—Yes, I think it was to our profit, but our holdings are too small after all. I think that if I had as much again as I have I would be the better for it. I could keep my family about me.

5362. Compare your rent with what is paid by the large farmers in the neighbourhood, do you think it is lower or higher?—I cannot tell that.

5363. You say that you have laboured under some disadvantage in this experiment that managers were not appointed?—I believe that to have been the case.

5364. But, after all, you have succeeded in paying the advances and your rent?—Yes, that is the case. But I had a family here helping me. I could not have done that at the beginning without the assistance of my family.

5365. *Mr Gordon.*—What number of sheep have you?—250 we had to take over from Mr Scobie when we entered.

5366. That is 30 sheep a-piece?—Yes.

5367. How many cows have you?—Four cows and a horse.

5368. And you pay £7, 14s. of rent; it is very creditable to you that you have been able to pay up the advance of stock, but was it off the croft itself that you paid it?—Am I not stating that my family were assisting me. But I think if I had had two crofts instead of one I would have succeeded quite as well, if not better.

5369. At present you do not manage to live entirely from the produce of your croft; do you work yourself, or get money from your family?—We are not at present able to support ourselves entirely out of the croft; the family are away.

Dunvegan, Skye. — Murdoch Montgomery.

5370. You are still getting money from your family, or making it yourself?—I am still getting money from them. I have three daughters at service, and they always assist me at the term. I had a son who came home for the spring work, and he is away the night before last.

5371. Away back to work in the south?—Yes. But if I had plenty of land, the fellow would not need to go back and forward spending his money.

5372. You think that if you had twice the size of croft, you and your son would be able to stay permanently upon it?—I think I could.

5373. And to pay £14 of rent?—Yes, and that would encourage the boy to stop along with me. It is bad to spend the money coming home to help me, and going away again.

5374. Where was he working, on the railway?—He used to go to the east coast fishing, and when he left that he went to Edinburgh, and was working there till the spring time at a brewery.

5375. *Mr Reginald Macleod.*—I wanted to bring out a little more closely the statement you made with regard to the security of the money that you obtained from the bank. The question was asked, whether Macleod had become security, and you said no. Was it not the case that Mr Alexander Macdonald, so far as you know, became security?—I know it is Angus Macleod, an uncle of mine, who was in the bill along with me, and always when I got it to be renewed, it was my own name and Angus Macleod.

5376. Was it not by Macleod's assistance through his factor that you obtained the advance?—I never knew anything about that.

5377. Then I think it is only right that you should be aware of it now. Are you aware that the rent of the farm before you got it was very much larger than you and your colleagues pay now?—I believe that, but the third of the farm is from us now.

5378. We are dealing with the farm of Vatten only; we are not talking of Feorlig?—There are between twenty-seven and thirty people from Harlosh cutting peats on Vatten to-day.

5379. I did not talk about peats at all. I was asking you about the rent of Vatten before you got it and afterwards. Are you aware that the rent of Vatten, as you have it, was about £120, and that it is now £70; and that reduction was made by Macleod before it was made by the Commissioners?—But am I not telling that the third part of Vatten was taken from us and added to Feorlig.

5380. *The Chairman.*—Answer the question, and then make any explanation you desire. Is this your answer, that the old rent of £120 was reduced to £70, but you desire to add that you did not get the whole farm, but only two-thirds of it. Is that what you want to say?—Yes, I know that was the case. But Vatten House, which belongs to Vatten, is not on our ground. Mr Porteous, the tenant of Vatten House, has three acres of our land too.

5381-2. *Mr Reginald Macleod.*—Mr Porteous pays £10 a year, and the old rent was £130 a year, including the house. Therefore the rent without the house was £120, and you now pay £70? Then old Mr Chisholm was paying £4 to Mr Scobie, and he is now paying to Macleod. I will not labour the point, my lord, because what I want to get at is that they have the rent as it was fixed by Macleod on his own initiative, without the Commission, at what the Commission ultimately decided to be a fair rent.

5383. *The Chairman.*—Quite so. The only point to be cleared up is this (*to Witness*), do you say that you got less land than had been previously included in the farm of Vatten?—Yes, certainly.

5384. How much less?—Ewen Chisholm has from £3, 15s. to £4 of it.

5385. Is that all the difference?—Mr Scobie has

Dunvegan, Skye.

Murdoch Montgomery.

another piece given him that was the best part of Vatten.

5386. What was the extent of it?—I understand that the annual value of what was given to Mr Scobie was £3.

5387. Did you practically get the same amount of land that had previously been rented at £120?—We got it all except the piece that was given to Mr Scobie, and what is in possession of Mr Chisholm and Mr Porteous.

5388. And what is the size of that?—There is a good piece, but I cannot say what the extent of it is.

5389. *Mr Reginald Macleod.*—The point may be very simply put in this way, that Mr Scobie, the tenant of the farm, got a reduction of £120 for being deprived of the land for which the seven crofters now pay £70.

5390. *The Chairman.*—The same area?

5391. *Mr Reginald Macleod.*—The same area. (*To Witness.*)—You will admit, Mr Montgomery, that Macleod, in making this arrangement before the Crofters Commission came to Skye, was consulting, to the best of his ability, the interests of the crofters concerned?—That was our own view, but it was surprising us very much that that piece was taken from us and added to Mr Scobie who had enough already.

5392. I am almost tempted to ask—Did you ever know a crofter who was contented? Is your stock in as good condition as when you came in?—Yes, I believe it is quite as good, and even better.

5393. What have you done for tups?—We buy them.

5394. Buy them yourself?—Yes. But when we were taking over the stock we got none of the tups; they were kept from us.

5395. They were on Mr Scobie's farm, and he, for the first few years, used to lend you these tups, I understand?—We were paying 10s. a piece for the use of them.

5396. And you ceased to use them, and bought others for yourselves?——

5397. We shall have other evidence on that point. You do not depend wholly on the farm but I think you do some carting or outside labour; is that so, Mr Montgomery?—Yes, doubtless; I support myself in that way, besides the croft.

5398. From whom mainly do you get the carting?—I am repairing roads; that is the most of the carting I do.

5399. Then, if there were a very much larger number of crofters in your position requiring labour outside their crofts, there would be less labour to be got, and carting would be scarcer, would it not?—The work is too scarce as it is.

5400. *Mr Macleod.*—As a matter of fact, Mr Montgomery, you do not know what reduction Mr Scobie got on his rent; do you know, of your own knowledge?—No, not very well; but I know that some of the tacksmen have their farms down to half what they were paying, and are still complaining that the rent is high.

5401. *Mr Sutherland.*—Is there a farm-house on Vatten?—Yes, Vatten House.

5402. Is it a large house?—A good lump of a house.

5403. Have they got that house now in their holdings?—No, that is what I complain of.

5404. So that the house, which was a very large part of the valuation, they did not get at all?—No, did not get at all.

5405. *The Chairman.*—Did you and your friends consider it a great advantage to get a transfer to Vatten when you went there originally?—We were very needy to leave the place where we were.

5406. Did you get a better place?—Yes.

5407. Were you all very willing to go there?—Yes. It was not against our will that Macleod sent us there at all.

5408. And you were very willing to pay the rents which he fixed eight years ago?—Yes.

5409. Are you satisfied now that, notwithstanding any disadvantages that may attach to the place, it was an improvement on your condition to get these holdings at Vatten?—Yes, there is nothing to complain of, but that the place is too small for us.*

Dunvegan, Skye.

Murdo Montgomery. John Taylor.

JOHN TAYLOR, Ebost (40)—*examined.*

5410. *The Chairman.*—You are the tenant of the farm of Ebost?—Yes.

5411. What rent do you pay?—£180.

5412. What is the area of it?—2,600 acres.

5413. Arable and pasture?—Yes.

5414. How much arable?—Slightly under 40 acres.

5415. How much over all do you pay per acre?—I pay 4s. 6d. per ewe.

5416. Do you hold under lease?—I do.

5417. For nineteen years?—Fourteen years.

5418. Expiring when?—Four years hence.

5419. It has a remaining currency of four years?—Yes.

5420. You have another occupation; you act as a surveyor sometimes?—I do.

5421. And you did a great deal of work when the Crofters Commission came here in 1887 in surveying crofts?—Yes.

5422. *Mr Reginald Macleod.*—You surveyed these lands before they were given to the present tenants?—It was I who subdivided the farm.

5423. In what condition did you find the lands when you surveyed them for that purpose?—It was very good grazing ground—the portion below the road, in particular.

5424. Did that part bear evidence of having been taken in and drained for cultivation at a previous period?—It did.

5425. Are you aware that it was done by Macleod himself some forty or forty-five years ago?—I was not.

5426. You, I suppose, have seen the lands since the occupation of the present tenants?—I have not seen much of them.

5427. Are you able to say, from any observations you have had an opportunity of making, whether the lands are in an equally good condition—whether they are capable of yielding the same crops that they would have done seven years ago?—I cannot give a distinct answer as to that particular portion.

5428. You are aware that some holdings have been divided amongst tenants of a larger character, but still there are small tenants near your own farm; are you of opinion that the land under their cultivation has deteriorated or not?—It has not improved.

5429. Has it deteriorated?—I think it has.

5430. Do you think that the general character of cultivation adopted by the crofters throughout the country is less likely to maintain the fertility of the land than that adopted by the tacksman?—I think so. I think that the crofters admit, in their own evidence, that the land deteriorates under their usage.

5431. *The Chairman.*—Never mind what they admit; you are asked what you know?—My opinion is that land is very much better cultivated by tacksmen than by crofter tenants.

5432. *Mr Reginald Macleod.*—Is that because they do not attend to a rotation of cropping as a general rule?—As a general rule they do.

5433. And do they manure their land?—They do not treat it in a very workman-like fashion at all.

* A proof of the foregoing evidence was sent to Montgomery for revision. It was returned on 9th August 1893, accompanied by the following note:—

Vatten, *9th August* 1893.

We the undersigned tenants of Vatten do hereby certify that the evidence given by Murdo Montgomery to the Royal Commission at Dunvegan is absolutely true.

(Signed) Widow JAMES FERGUSON, No. 3 Vatten.
NORMAN MACLEAN, No. 1 Vatten.
DONALD MACLEAN, No. 2 Vatten.
DONALD FERGUSON, No. 8 Vatten.
Widow NEIL MACDONALD, No. 6 Vatten.
ALEXANDER MACLEAN, No. 4 Vatten.
NEIL MACLEOD, No. 7 Vatten.

5434. Turning from the land to stock, are you able to say, from your own knowledge, that the Vatten stock has deteriorated since it was taken over?—My opinion is that it has.

5435. Can you give any reason for it?—Well, it was crossed. I think blackfaced hoggs were brought in, and they have crossed the sheep which are not now in the same position as under Mr Scobie.

5436. So that if both farms were valued now, they having been precisely the same seven years ago, the one stock held by Mr Scobie would fetch more per head than the stock held by the crofters on Vatten?—Distinctly.

5437. That is quite enough on that point; I should like if you can tell me the dates of the harvest in this country, is it very late?—A late and a wet harvest.

5438. The grain is frequently secured in bad condition?—Bad condition and inferior grain.

5439. So, would you say that, as far as cultivation is concerned, it is impossible, however hard crofters work (and we all admit they work very hard on many occasions), you think they could not get as good a return for their labour by cultivating land here as they could in other parts of Scotland?—No, I don't think they can.

5440. Consequently it is not a desirable thing to foster the cultivation of land for the purpose of growing crops, except so far as is necessary to feed cattle in winter?—Quite so.

5441. What would you say would be the ordinary number of returns for seed sown in a well worked farm in Skye; can you give me any instance in your own knowledge?—I daresay tacksmen will get perhaps a return of about five.

5442. Then you would think seven returns, which was mentioned by one of the witnesses this morning, is altogether unusual?—I don't think crofters will exceed three.

5443. You think a good crofter's average would be 3?—I should think so.

5444. As to the prices of the stock sold off the tacksman's farm and off an ordinary crofter's holding, should you expect there would be any very great difference in the prices realised in the market for stirks?—Very large.

5444*a*. What amount of difference?—A tacksman's should be worth about double, as a rule.

5445. Double, taking them year in and year out?—I should think so.

5446. Consequently, if the whole of the ground were put into the hands of small tenants, the character of the stock would deteriorate, and become, judging by the past, of very inferior value?—The stock in their possession at present is inferior to that in the possession of tacksmen.

5446*a*. *The Chairman.*—Had you instructions from Macleod of Macleod before you proceeded to lot out these holdings?—It was by Macleod's instructions that I went there.

5447. From whom did you get the instructions?—From Mr Alexander Macdonald, Portree.

5448. What were the terms of his instructions?—To go to Vatten with him and mark off the farm of Vatten into eight crofter holdings, and if possible to try and give the crofters what they themselves considered equal divisions of the ground.

5449. You were to find accommodation for eight crofters.—For eight crofters.

5449*a*. That was the instruction you were to act upon, without reference to the nature of the land?—The land was there, we could not alter the quantity.

5450. But you could alter the number you put upon it?—We were confined to eight.

5451. And you were to find room for eight?—Quite so.

5452. That was without reference, then, to whether each holding would be sufficient to enable the crofter to subsist upon it?—I rather think there had been just eight applicants at the time, and the thing had been well considered, and the ground was thought well suited for eight.

5453. How do you know that—are you aware of that to your own knowledge?—Yes.

5454. In what way?—Mr Macdonald and I had frequent conversations about it before it was marked off at all.

5455. Had you conversations about the number of holdings?—The number of tenants.

5456. And you went to find room for eight tenants?—For eight tenants.

5457. What area had you got to operate upon?—I really forget at the present moment.

5458. Try and remember?—The area was mentioned before the Crofters Commission.

5459. 1100 acres?—I think it would be about that.

5460. How much arable to each?—I think they had some 10 or 12 acres. That must be in the Commissioners' Blue Book likewise.

5461. And corresponding grazing?—Corresponding grazing.

5462. None of these holdings were sufficient to enable the crofter to subsist upon his holding?—I am not aware of that, quite.

5463. I would like you to address yourself to that point?—It has been said here to-day that 5 to 6 acres is sufficient.

5464. Did you consider the question at the time whether it would enable the crofter to subsist upon his holding?—That was the intention.

5465. You thought when you laid out the holdings that the crofter could live by his holding?—Yes, if the croft was properly worked and farmed.

5466. You are aware that that has not resulted as a matter of fact?—I am rather inclined to think it has, if they have paid up the stock already.

5467. But have not you heard a good deal of the evidence that they have been giving?—If they entered the croft with nothing, and have now paid up the stock, I think they have done remarkably well.

5468. With outside assistance?—I don't know that they said so.

5469. The last man examined said that he had got family assistance, and spoke of a son in Edinburgh?—Perhaps he is an exception.

5470. But do you know that he is an exception?—I don't know: but I expect if the others had got assistance they would have told it.

5471. You are aware that the holdings in this district generally do not enable the crofter to subsist by his holding?—I believe that is so.

5472. Do you approve of the system?—No, I can't say that I do.

5473. Then you would alter it if you could?—Well, if it was possible to improve them.

5474. In what way would you do so; would it be by giving them larger holdings?—Either that or smaller ones.

5475. Some fishermen's holdings and some large crofters' holdings?—Quite so.

5476. Are you of opinion that there is land in this district which would be suitable for self-subsisting holdings?—There might be: is it agricultural or grazing land that you mean?

5477. I mean with a stretch of arable, and corresponding grazing: are you of opinion that you could form such holdings on some of the lands in the district?—My experience is that the arable land is rather limited for the amount of grazing land.

5478. But could you not find good arable which, with corresponding grazing, would enable the crofter to live?—Yes.

5479. Don't you think that the gradual and careful extension of such holdings would be to the benefit of the crofters?—I don't know: I think the smaller the rent the less chance of going into arrears.

5480. The smaller the holding the better for the crofter?—That came out in Mr Mackintosh's evidence.

5481. Never mind Mr Mackintosh. Is your doctrine that the smaller the holding the better for the holder?—In some cases; it depends very much on the family.

5482. Then you are in favour of holdings where a

Dunvegan, Skye.

John Taylor.

man cannot live by his croft but has to get extraneous assistance?—I am in favour of that for fishermen.

5483. Don't you think it would be an advantage to Skye if there were graded holdings, varying in size from a fisherman's croft to a large croft?—I think it would.

5484. And you think you could form such holdings in this district; there is land?—There is, in parts: but the question comes to be, would it injure the letting value of the remaining land around.

5485. But leaving out of view the value of the remainder, could not such holdings be formed in considerable numbers?—There might be.

5486. Now you were asked some questions about deterioration of stock in holdings occupied by crofters. Suppose holdings of the kind I have indicated to be formed, would not the stock of the crofter be considerably better than it is at present?—I don't know; it would depend very much on how it was managed.

5487. Assume it to be managed with a fair degree of intelligence and industry?—From past experience, the crofter does not make a good grower of stock.

5488. You don't think he could be trusted to grow a stirk?—I should not like to have him as manager, at any rate.

5489. Don't you think crofters endeavour, to the best of their knowledge, to improve their position and to improve the breed of stock?—I have no doubt they do, but they lack the knowledge.

5490. But you think it is attainable?—Possibly.

5491. Would not it be more readily attainable in a holding of a larger size than they have at present?—I don't know that; I think a small farm can be as well managed as a big one.

5492. You would squeeze the crofter into the small holding?—My opinion is, that if they cannot manage a small holding it is not likely they will manage a large one.

5493. But don't you think it may be impossible to manage a small holding from inability to cultivate by means of rotation?—I don't think the size has got anything to do with rotation. Any size of holding can be cultivated by rotation.

5494. Possibly we do not all share that view. What was the rent of Vatten before Macleod subdivided it into holdings?—£120, I believe.

5495. And what rent did you fix upon the crofters?—£80.

5496. Did they get the same land or less land than the farm?—They got the same land except one little piece, perhaps about 5 acres, I think.

5497. Was the house upon it?—No house.

5498. They did not get Vatten House?—No: that was occupied at the time the crofts were divided.

5499. What extent of land was round the house?—Three acres, I think, but I am not quite certain.

5500. How many acres altogether did they lose or did they not receive?—They lost this little piece near the high road, and a croft that a man down there had in possession at the time. I think he was a sub-tenant of Mr Scobie's.

5501. What value would you attach to that?—Perhaps £5 for the lot, or less.

5502. What would the house let at?—The house of itself is worth about £5, I think.

5503. Do you say they got the land, subject to these qualifications, at a considerable reduction when they got it at £70?—Yes, I do.

5504. *Mr Sutherland.*—You have stated that the stock of the crofters now is not so good as the stock of the neighbouring farm?—I said so.

5505. Could you tell us if their stock is better than when they went to Vatten?—It is worse, in my opinion.

5506. It is worse than the stock they had before they went there?—I think I have already said so.

5507. The stock they had on their old crofts: is the stock they now have on Vatten better?—I did not know their old stock at all.

5508. Have you reason to suppose it is better or worse?—I should think it is better. The stock was on the ground when they went there.

Dunvegan, Skye.

John Taylor.

5509. But the stock they have now at Vatten is better than the stock they had before they got Vatten?—I should think so, because the former was a crofter's and the present is a tacksman's.

5510. So that, as the holding increased, the stock improved?—Not at all; the improvement is not due to that.

5511. Is it your opinion that the stock they have now will go back to the state of the stock they had before they went to Vatten?—It depends very much on how they use it.

5512. But then the point is,—has their stock not improved as their holding has enlarged?—I don't gather what you mean at all. I thought I had explained it. The stock they have now is the stock they got upon the increased holding from the tenant when they entered.

5513. Is that stock they have now a better stock than they had on their own holdings?—Certainly, it is the stock that the late tacksman had.

5514. So they have a better stock now than they had on their old holdings?—Certainly, if they keep it at that.

5515. As the holding enlarged, the stock got better?—No, I say the stock is getting worse now.

5516. The comparisons you made between the returns that were given by a tacksman and by a crofter were based upon the state in which the crofts now are?—Based upon actual results.

5517. On the results of the present small holdings?—Actual results.

5518. There may be a very different result if the holdings are to be enlarged?—No, I don't see it at all.

5519. A certain enlargement of holding was given to these crofters now in Vatten. By your own admission they are now better off than before?—I would imagine they may be.

5520. They have improved as their holdings were enlarged?—You would attribute it to that I suppose.

5521. Is it not natural to attribute it to that?—Well, possibly it is.

5522. So that you admit, as a general principle, that, as you enlarge the holding, their condition will get better?—That is the idea: that is why they get larger holdings, I think.

5523. But do you deny that? Is it controverted by the experience you have had yourself?—It is not a common thing: you don't find many proprietors giving crofters larger holdings.

5524. We had the case of Glen-Haultin, and the same result followed there. They all admitted they were better off than before. It is not a solitary case?—They are rather rare, I think.

5525. *Mr Maccallum.*—I notice a statement of yours, that a tacksman's stirks fetch twice the price of the crofters' stirks. Now, is it on account of the want of skill in the management of the crofters that that comes about?—It is owing to the difference in the breed of the cattle.

5526. They have a different breed altogether?—A distinct breed altogether.

5527. A crofter breed and a tacksman breed?—Quite different.

5528. Now, they attribute the comparatively low price they get for their stirks to this, that the souming of their crofts is too high. Do you concur with that?—The soumings of the crofts vary very much. I have no doubt some are too high and others perhaps too low.

5529. But you agree with this, that, generally speaking, the souming is too high, and that the crofters' grazings are overstocked?—I don't know. I find that in a great many cases crofters can sell fodder and straw: that shows that they are not overstocked.

5530. Might not that be for paying the rent?—It is simply because they cannot consume it.

5531. May not these be some who are too poor to keep up stock?—I am talking of those who have got the souming on their croft.

5532. Have they the full souming and selling corn and straw?—Yes

5533. You said that you thought the Vatten experiment was a success. You meant these to be self-sustaining holdings, and you think they have been self-sustaining?—My opinion is, that if the people entered there rather poor, and if they have been able to pay for the stock now, it has been a success.

5534. And do you think the crofters are quite capable of learning how to use the land properly?—Possibly they are, some of them I daresay.

5535. Don't you think, taking the thing in a general way, they are all quite intelligent, and able to learn if they had an opportunity?—I don't know, I cannot speak to them all. A lot of them cannot speak English, and I don't speak Gaelic.

5536. And you take a very low view of their intelligence?—Certainly not, I do the very reverse.

5537. Then they must be capable of learning. We know, first of all, they have a very great desire to get upon the land; we know that they are very anxious to succeed, and they are intelligent; why then should they not succeed, with a little help, in the way of instruction, for instance?—Who is going to instruct them, might I ask?

5538. For instance, the County Council take to do with instruction?—Well, if they are taken under the wing of the County Council they may be more successful.

5539. Now, you say that if they are not able to manage a small holding they would not be able to cultivate a larger holding?—I don't think so.

5540. And you say that it is just simply because of their want of skill that they are not able to manage their present holdings?—Principally.

5541. Are they able, for instance, to get ploughs and horses with their small holdings?—Some have and some have not.

5542. Don't those that have horses cultivate better than those who have not horses?—They ought to in any case.

5543. Well, but do they?—I should think they do, it is natural that they should.

5544. Then here is the difficulty. You were referring to small holdings, and you thought they might be cultivated just as well as larger holdings. But had you in view that they had not horses to cultivate with on the small holdings?—A great many of them have.

5545. But small holdings that cannot keep a horse, and that have not a horse in their souming, how are they to cultivate scientifically?—There are lots of crofts in Skye a horse would be no use in.

5546. But are there not many places that are ill cultivated on account of not having horses and modern implements?—I should think so, plenty are not able to buy a horse.

5547. And is not that the reason for bad cultivation, the want of a horse?—It is not the fault of the soil that the horse is not there.

5548. No one said that, but do not the crofters find a difficulty in cultivating their holdings, because the croft will not keep a horse?—I should think they must.

5549. So that it is more difficult to culivate properly a small holding than a large one?—There will be more manual labour on it certainly.

5550. Which will not pay so well?—But you will always find that there is a large population in Skye that could not take a large holding, and that a certain amount of manual labour will always exist.

5551. But, as a matter of fact, the want of horses is the great reason why these crofts are not cultivated as they should be, and the smallness of the holding?—I don't know: perhaps an industrious man with manual labour would make a neater and better job than a man with a horse and a bad plough.

5552. But it would not pay so well, would it? Is the soil so good that it would pay?—I do not think the land in Skye is meant for cultivation at all, that is my opinion.

5553. Do the tacksmen cultivate it?—As little as possible. They don't cultivate it to a profit.

5554. Now, with regard to the farmers' stock, you think that at present their stock is very valuable, and that if it were given to crofters on small holdings the stock would not be so valuable: the stock would deteriorate under small holders, you think?—That is my opinion.

5555. But look at this point. When the small holders cultivated the ground properly, would not that improve the grazing?—When they did cultivate it properly.

5556. Yes, as we suppose they will do. Would not that increase the value of the grazing?—That is a matter of supposition.

5557. If the old arable land were cultivated properly, would not the grazing be better than it is at present under fog?—The older the grazing is, of course, the worse it gets, you have got to turn it up occasionally.

5558. And would there not be better wintering for the stock if the old arable were cultivated?—It would not get worse.

5559. Would it not get a great deal better by cultivation?—Not in every case. There are a great many places where, if you tried to cultivate, you would only lay the rocks bare, you had better leave it as it is.

5560. What is the covering, is it a covering of moss?—Yes.

5561. Are not you aware that the crofters, when they worked it, put soil upon the rocks?—I have heard of such a thing being done.

5562. Now, with regard to the rent of Vatten. They got no house upon it?—There was just the house belonging to the place.

5563. But did they get the house?—No, they did not.

5564. Now let us suppose this, that it were advertised to let as a separate holding, without the old house. Do you think it would have fetched a higher rent than was laid upon these crofters?—Likely an arrangement would be come to in a matter of the sort between the landlord and his tenant.

5565. I want your own opinion, as a skilled man and a man of experience. Supposing it were offered without a house, would it have fetched a higher rent than what was imposed upon the crofters?—I don't know that it would; but at the same time, if the proprietor was to build a house, and if he reduced the rent £40 per annum, I think the tenant could afford to pay interest on the building without being a loser.

5566. But would not these small tenants themselves, if they had got the improvement made for them, be quite as able to pay a rent?—I don't know anything about their ability.

5567. But, however, you think that without some improvement it would not very readily let?—What kind of improvement?

5568. A house, for instance, to be built upon it?—Supposing a house to be built at a cost of, say £400, if the tenant paid 7 per cent. interest on the money, that would only be £28, whereas the rent was reduced £40.

5569. But don't you find that other places are falling in rent as well as that particular place?—I think it is general.

5570. And even a larger reduction than that?—Not in very many cases. I think the Crofters Commission average was rather above that.

5571. We have been hearing that the reductions which the large farmers have got is even larger, in the case of the larger farmers?—Well, I daresay they would require that, because their rents were increased when the crofters' rents were reduced.

5572. So that, after all the reduction they got, you think they paid a competitive rent for this farm, don't you?—The usual way is to advertise the farm when it is out of lease.

5573. But you are a skilled man; do you think this was as high as a competitive rent,—the rent that was imposed upon the crofters?—It was a rent fixed by me, and the crofters were willing to pay it.

5574. But you think it is just as much as it would fetch in the market?—No, I think certainly not. I daresay if Macleod had put it into the market, he would have got the old rent.

5575. So you fixed it lower than the real value of it?—We fixed it at what we thought the ground was worth; but that is not a competitive rent at all.

5576. But you told me some time ago that it would be very difficult to let it at all without a house?—No, I did not say anything of the kind.

5577. Then you think it would have been easily let without a house?—It would depend very much upon who took it. If a tenant took it who did not require a house, then it would be easily enough let.

5578. But just tell me definitely whether you think it would be let at a higher or a lower rate if it were offered without a house in the market at the time?—Further, the tenant that had it when they were there made no use of the house, and lived in another house. It is quite possible that the same thing might have been repeated. It might have been let to a man who had another farm, and a house to live in already.

5579. You don't think it likely?—Quite likely.

5580. Was the farmer that had it willing to take it at the old rent?—I don't know anything about that.

5581. You don't know whether he was asking a reduction or not?—I cannot say at all.

5582. But you think it would be dear enough if it were to be continued as part of Scobie's farm?—We thought it dear enough for the crofters at £80.

5583. And as part of a large farm, dear enough?—It was not valued at £80.

5584. But do you think it was?—Well, apparently not; it was £120 previously.

5585. But rents are changing; what is your own opinion, really, at the time whether it was a fair rent as part of a large holding then?—Well, I suppose the tenant must have considered it so.

5586. And you think he was quite content to go on paying £120?—I don't know if he was content or not.

5587. But do you think it would be a profit for him to have it at £120?—I really cannot say.

5588. But you are a valuator; surely you must have some opinion as to that. Would it be a profit?—Well, one man will make a profit out of a place where another man will make a loss.

5589. But I am asking the value of it to a man of ordinary intelligence?—We regard the value of it as £80.

5590. That is the real value of it to a farmer or to crofters?—That is the value we fixed upon it for crofting purposes.

5591. And would you regard that as too low if it were to be part of a farm? Would a farmer give more for it?—The farmer was giving more.

5592. But would he be content to give more, and should he give more?—I don't know if he was content to pay the high rent or not.

5593. But would it be a greater value than £80 to the farmer, yes or no?—It was worth £120 to the farmer, I hold, because he was paying the rent for it.

5594. That is your only reason for supposing it,—because he was paying it?—The man who paid the rent would be the best judge.

5595. No. I should think the valuator should be. Then you are quite prepared to value it to crofters, but you are not prepared to value it to a farmer?—I am quite prepared to value it to a farmer.

5596. Very well, what do you think the value of it at the time to a farmer was?—We reduced it £40 to the crofters, and I suppose had it been in the market to a farmer, it would very likely have been reduced in the same way.

5597. *Mr Macleod.*—You are not a native of Skye, Mr Taylor?—No.

5598. How long is it since you have come to this island?—Some nine or ten years.

5599. And you think that during these nine or ten years you have made yourself thoroughly acquainted with the whole situation so far as it relates to the question of holding land?—I don't know that I have.

5600. You have, however, been employed considerably in regard to the surveying of land?—Yes, both in Skye and the other islands.

5601. Were you employed by the proprietors in this district?—Yes.

5602. And you have a farm, have you not, upon the estate of the property whose tenants we have been hearing here to-day?—I have.

5603. Would you consider your own farm let at a fair rent, if I might put that question as a means of getting at the value?—I can make a comparison with the evidence that has been given to-day, if you like.

5604. I will be glad to hear anything that you have to say?—The Glendale crofters, in their evidence to-day, said that a fair rent for the croft that will carry 6 cows, 1 horse, and 70 sheep is from £5 to £7. If you convert the cows and the horse into sheep—there is a certain proportion, you will understand—you will find it is something like 150 sheep, for which they are willing to pay £5 to £7. That is a little less than 1s. per sheep.

5605. Yes?—Well, I pay 4s. 6d., so you can compare the two. Yet they are quite willing to take Macleod's farms at the present rent.

5606. You pay 4s. 6d. per head for your stock?—Yes. These are the farms that they are willing to give the same rent for now.

5607. May I ask what is the total of your ewe stock?—It varies from 700 to 800.

5608. And for that you pay a rent of——?—£180.

5609. And do you consider that your farm is better or worse than the average?—I think it is a good average farm.

5610. Then you mentioned 40 acres of arable?—I believe the exact number is 38.

5611. That refers probably to the extent that you are cropping?—I brought in about the half of that since I went there, and fenced it.

5612. That 38 acres does not refer to the old arable land?—No, just what I keep under rotation.

5613. Naturally there will be a number of small townships upon the farm of Ebost?—There are two townships on it now.

5614. May I ask the names of these townships?—Garrymore and Ebost.

5615. Is it at Ebost that the farm-house is?—Yes.

5616. About this question of the rental of Vatten. Was not this Vatten part of Mr Scobie's farm just under the one tack?—Yes, I think it was.

5617. And entered as one total in the Valuation Roll?—I think so.

5618. How did you discover that there was £120 or £130 paid for it by the tacksman if he was paying a lump sum?—They were let separately.

5619. I thought you said just now they were let as one subject?—They were let separately, even before Mr Scobie went there. I am informed by the estate management that the rent was £120.

5620. But we don't want anything but a direct statement. You don't know, of your own knowledge?—In speaking to us so positively of the rent as £120 or £130, you, as a matter of fact, did not know what the rent really was?—I am told by Macleod's representatives that the rent was £120.

5621. You did not say that before?—I have no reason to doubt his word.

5622. But you have no direct knowledge?—I think that is pretty direct.

5623. You don't know yourself?—I know nothing about it: I don't act for the estate.

5624. And in fixing this rent of £80 you thought you fixed a fair valuation for the crofters?—That was our intention at the time.

5625. *The Chairman.*—I wish to correct your statement. The valuation of Vatten House,—William F. Porteous, I think, is the name of the tenant,—is put down as £12?—That is house and land. The tenant is here; he will be able to say.

5626. The house and land, £12?—Yes.

5627. How many acres of land?—Three or four; the best land in the farm, I think it is.

5628. *Mr Myles Macinnes.*—What is the highest price that, as an average, the tacksmen got for their stot stirks: you say they were getting double what the

crofters got?—I am sorry to say that the highest price is a very small one just now, perhaps about £5.

5629. Are you aware that some of the crofters still get £5?—I am not aware of it.

5630. What is the next highest price for tacksmen's cattle that you know of?—I think they are going from £4 to £7, good ones.

5631. Are you not aware of any crofters' in Skye that are sold for £9 or £10?—I don't think they will fetch more than 50s. You may have one prize bullock yourself which is worth more than the average.

5632. You say you pay rent at the rate of 4s. 6d. per ewe. I would like to know if your farm is fully stocked according to the number of ewes kept on similar ground by crofters?—My farm was advertised in the paper to carry 800 ewes, and the rent is £180; and it is a mere matter of calculation to see that it amounts to 4s. 6d.

5633. How many ewes does it keep?—There are 700 on the farm now.

5634. How many acres do you give for every ewe?—There are 2600 acres on the farm, and there are 800 sheep advertised by Macleod that it is to carry: so you can calculate it.

5635. I cannot go into the calculation now?—It is just about 3¼ acres to each sheep.

5636. But you are aware that some crofters have about half that?—I know some are overstocked, but a great number would have none at all.

[Adjourned.]

SEVENTH SITTING.

DUNVEGAN, SKYE, MAY 6, 1893.

Present:—

David Brand, Esq., Advocate, Sheriff of Ayr, and Chairman of the Crofters Commission, *Chairman.*
Angus Sutherland, Esq., M.P.
James Noel Muller Forsyth, Esq.
George Gordon, Esq.
Rev. Malcolm Maccallum.
John Macleod, Esq.
Henry Munro, Esq.
William Mackenzie, Esq., *Secretary.*

Macleod of Macleod (80)—*examined.*

5637. *The Chairman.*—Macleod, have you any statement to place before the Commission?—I had intended, my lord, to address this Commission in the form of a speech, but I found there were so many points to be adverted to, that I thought it better to put my observations in the form of a statement, which I beg leave to read:—

As the Royal Commissioners, recently appointed, have been authorised to examine farms and forests in the Highlands of Scotland, I think it is important they should know how my land was held in ancient times, and I therefore put in writing, for their information, a brief statement derived from papers in my possession, showing the tenure of the land on the estates belonging to the chief of the Macleod family upwards of 200 years ago. These estates consisted of the six baronies of Duirinish, Waternish, Bracadale, and Minginish, in the Isle of Skye; the Herries (now called Harris), and Glenelg, on the mainland, all in the county of Inverness. On the 27th of July 1724, after the long minority of Norman Macleod, 19th Baron of that ilk, there was commenced a 'judicial inquiry' as to the rentals of these six baronies, each tenant stating on oath the particulars of the rent he or his predecessor had paid from the year 1664. The result of this inquiry showed that the whole of the lands in these six baronies had been let to single tenants in good-sized farms. Of these there were in Duirinish, 19; Waternish, 18; Bracadale, 15; Minginish, 17; the Herries, 22; Glenelg, 27. The tenants had leases of 19 years, and paid partly in money (Scots) and partly in kind. The stock consisted almost entirely of cattle. Oats and bere were largely grown for their winter use, giving employment to a number of workpeople on each farm. These workpeople, many of them brought to the island from the south, were paid partly in money and meal, and partly by having allotments of ground for growing potatoes and oats for their own use. In course of time, however, it was found that sheep paid better than cattle. The result was less work for the farm labourers, and many of them were obliged to leave. Some of those who remained became virtually sub-tenants, and got work where they could. The change was unfortunate for them but really unavoidable, and was, in fact, precisely what has since occurred in England, where farm labourers have been thrown out of work and have sought employment elsewhere, just as the sub-tenants on Highland farms were compelled to do in days gone by. These occurrences took place before my time, but I do not believe that any of these sub-tenants were evicted as Mr Duncan Mackinnon's statement at Struan might lead people to suppose. But even if they were pressed to leave, it seems quite likely that the tacksmen thought they were entitled to send away their farm servants when they had no work for them to do. In all probability summonses were used in those days, as they are now, to enforce the fulfilment of obligations. I find that in the present day Highlanders keep their sporrans very tightly closed when rent is asked for, and that it is necessary to threaten the intervention of the law even in cases where 'fair rents' have been fixed by very high authority. In most other countries when a man engages to pay rent and fails to do it, he is turned out without pity or remorse. I have often observed it myself. In the Highlands here we have I hope more humanity. I have myself scored out the arrears in hundreds of cases when I knew the tenant was too poor to pay; but when I have reason to believe that he can pay, but won't, I appeal to the law to aid me, and I must say that I do not think it is the province of this Commission to listen to charges against the management of this estate, brought forward by men who are not personally interested, but whose vocation it appears to be to set class against class, and to stir up ill-will and bad passions.

5638. Do you think, Macleod, that that sentence, as to the province of the Commission, is in good taste?—That is merely an opinion that occurred to me, but I would withdraw it. A great man once said, 'If you go forth upon a mission to demoralise the people by teaching them to make the property of their neighbours the object of their covetous desires, it does not require superhuman gifts to find a number of followers or adherents for a doctrine such as that.' That great man to whom I refer was Mr Gladstone.

5639. Macleod, do you think that quotation is a quotation that should be submitted to us? Do you suggest that we are on a mission to demoralise the people?—Oh no, I did not think so, indeed: I was thinking of certain persons who go about the country here demoralising the people.

5640. I think the quotation is a little unfortunate, as addressed to us.—It is a quotation from Mr Gladstone, and I thought it came in very *a propos* as regards those who go about this country here trying to raise up evil passions; but what shall I do, sir? I can withdraw it if you like. Statements are often now made in abuse of myself which are entirely untrue, and which I will not condescend to notice. Many statements of that sort have been made against me at Struan and other places, and I distinctly deny the truth of those statements; but, as I say, I will not condescend to notice them.

I now return to my narrative. During a period of

Dunvegan, Skye.
Macleod of Macleod.

my grandfather's life, between the years 1772 and 1800 no change occurred in the tenure of land, but towards the end of the century large divisions of the family estates were sold. The whole barony of Herries in 1779; the whole barony of Waternish in 1797; in Bracadale, Loch Snizort side, and Lynedale in 1781; in Duirinish, Glendale, Husabost, Colbost, Skiniden, and Orbost in 1799; and, finally, Glenelg in 1810. I cannot of my own knowledge give after these periods the details of changes of tenancy or tenure that may have subsequently occurred, but up to the time of those sales there were no tenants in those six baronies (except in Glenelg from the year 1792) who could be called crofters as that appellation is understood in the present day. The farms were all tacks, and the tacksmen of a superior class occupying good houses and noted for Highland hospitality.

I have now described how the land was held to the end of the 18th century; but there was, as is well known, a large population who lived as cottars on these farms, occupying small houses, but no land. It has been often asserted that these people held crofts and lived in comfort. It has even been alleged by persons who can know nothing of the matter that happiness and contentment prevailed, and that in the course of time these supposed crofters were deprived of the land which they cultivated, and on which they were said to live in the midst of plenty. But I can find no evidence of this either in written or unwritten records. The general condition of the country during the whole of the period from the earliest year I have mentioned up to the end of the 18th century, and even later, may be thus described. A large population forced to live within their own circle, and having very little communication with the outer world. The men built their own black houses of stones and turf, some worked as drystone masons, others as weavers, tailors, and shoemakers, the women spinning and knitting, all the clothes (what a contrast to the present day!) being made at home. For unskilled labour, I believe there was very little demand, except, perhaps, for peats in spring and field-work in autumn. I have been told, and I believe, that some of the cottars on the different farms were allowed to turn over on what was called 'half-foot' patches of land; and what favours this view is, that in all sorts of out-of-the-way places pieces of ground are still to be seen which have been cultivated in lazy bed form, worked, no doubt, by the 'caschrom' or crooked spade. The kind of crop usually grown was either bere or the small black oats, both more hardy than the large seed now used, but yielding less meal. There were mills in many central points, so that those who had corn could get it ground; but I fear the general population, consisting of the cottar class, had little corn to grind, and that they must have suffered at times great privation, especially in winter and spring. We have to remember that there was no regular work for cottars and no means of locomotion to find it, no roads anywhere, no carriages of any kind. In 1773, Dr Johnson rode a pony over a rough mountain path to reach his destination; and in 1810 my mother, on her first visit to Skye, landed from an open boat at Vatten, and rode over the moor to Dunvegan. That shows the state of things in those days. The raising of a regiment by my grandfather about the year 1780 was the first considerable outlet or opening for the young men of Skye. There was, I believe, some very natural reluctance to leave home for foreign service; but they enlisted under favourable circumstances, their chief being in command, and the rest of the officers men they knew as the tacksmen of the farms. These recruits became first-rate soldiers, and distinguished themselves greatly, as is well known. But military ardour has not descended to the present generation of Highlanders, although the service is more attractive now than it was in those early days. I think this is much to be regretted. The next opening for employment was the business of kelp-making, for many years a source of income for the proprietor and of employment for the people; and it was this industry which led to the first establishment of crofter townships on the Macleod estates still remaining unsold. In the year 1811, the farms of Fernilea, Carbost, and Merkadale, in Minginish, were divided into crofts, and the same was done in the farms of Harlosh, Roag, and Kilmuir in the Barony of Duirinish. Kelp-making continued up to the year 1833, and although not yielding in the latter years such large profits as at first, was still useful in bringing money into the country, and giving work to the people. Between the years 1811 and 1826 my father expended, in making roads and bridges on the estate, upwards of £20,000, £12,000 of which was out of his own pocket. It may easily be conceived how the country was opened up by this important outlay, and how it prepared the way to enable the people to take advantage of the advent of steamers which some years later, and always more and more, brought the Isle of Skye into communication with the rest of the world.

Dunvegan, Skye.
Macleod of Macleod.

In the year 1835, when I inherited the Macleod estates, I thought they might be made more valuable than they then were, and for 12 years I resided mostly at Dunvegan superintending various works. I took several farms into my own hands, and employed a very large number of men in making roads, building fences, and reclaiming and draining land, arable as well as moor. I hoped, by growing turnips and other roots extensively, to winter our lambs at home, and save them from death by braxy. At that time the wages for unskilled labour were for men 1s. a day, for women 6d., and as there were plenty of people glad to work on those terms, my experiments were carried out under the most favourable circumstances for testing the soil and climate of Skye. But the soil and climate of Skye do not lend themselves to success in agricultural pursuits. Wheat never ripened; oats were often harvested late, the grain always inferior to what had been sown; turnips generally very good, but land too wet to be fed off properly. I had borrowed a considerable sum of money under the Drainage Act, and spent it in hill drainage. Even that was not successful, as it dried up the grasses, so necessary for sheep in spring. Looking back, I am sorry to say that nearly all the money I laid out on the land was money lost. Then at last came the terrible potato famine of 1847–8, from which all classes suffered so seriously, a whole population being brought literally to starvation point. The people appear now to have forgotten all about it; and let us hope such a misfortune may never again occur. I naturally remember well the scenes I then witnessed; and all the more because, as they were my people, it was my duty to assist them, and thus the famine, so far as I was concerned, severed my personal connection with the Macleod estates for many years, and changed the whole course of my life, I think it may be allowed to me, in view of ignorant statements in regard to my alleged want of interest in my people, to refer to the sacrifices I thought it right to make when the whole population were starving, and there was no one but myself to help them. I shall now refer to the experiments I have myself made in breaking up sheep farms and dividing them into crofter holdings. I have done this on three occasions. The first was in 1845. It had always been my wish to encourage deep-sea fishing, and when in that year the lease of the farm of Glendale expired, I considered that a favourable opportunity had presented itself. Glendale had been sold in 1799, but a considerable portion of it had been bought back by my father, and at the time of his death was let at a rent of £525. I had the land valued and divided into crofts, forming the townships of Upper and Lower Milivaig, Holmisdale, Ramasaig, and Lowergill; the whole of these lands, with the exception of Lowergill, being near the Bay of Pooltiel, and in close proximity to the Minch. As this property is no longer mine, having been sold after the famine, I am unwilling to make any lengthened observations on the result of the experiment, but I think, as regards the crofting, it was very unsuccessful, and, in fact, a mistake. The crofts were mostly small, because the people were poor and could not stock larger ones. The fishing has not indeed realised my hopes and expectations, but it is gratifying to know that a profitable industry has been developed which provides remunerative employ-

Dunvegan, Skye.

Macleod of Macleod.

ment for a considerable number of people. As regards population it will have been observed that the delegate from Glendale complained much yesterday of congestions. I desire to point out that this congestion has entirely arisen since the year 1845, when I gave every cottar on the farm a croft. The second farm on which I placed crofters was Ullinish, in Bracadale. It is let in common to five tenants, one of whom has two shares. Being men of considerable means, they were able, on entering, to build good houses for themselves, and to purchase, with some assistance from me, the stock of excellent Cheviot sheep bred on the farm and left by the previous tenant. I have a high opinion of these tenants. They have had this farm for eight years, but I am afraid they have not done as well as I had hoped. The rent of £200, which they accepted as fair and moderate, was soon reduced to £150, and in the last year they asked for a further reduction to £100, finally expressing a wish to give up the lands altogether. I had advanced about £1000 at the beginning to give them a helping hand, and hoped this sum would have been gradually repaid, but it has only been very little reduced. The times have certainly been very bad, but I think a single skilled farmer with some capital would have done better than these tenants, both for himself and me. The last conversion of a farm into crofts was carried out in order to relieve congestion in the township of Roag by the transfer of eight of the tenants to the neighbouring lands of Vatten. I had the arable land carefully laid out by a competent authority into eight equal crofts of about 10 acres each. In the hope of obviating any future dissatisfaction, the new tenants were required to examine those crofts themselves. They did so, and then drew lots. These precautions were, however, of no avail. One of the tenants was dissatisfied, and appealed to the Crofter Commissioners, who, while agreeing that the gross rent was fair, put the lots at different values. Thinking they were mistaken, I appealed four years ago on behalf of two of the tenants; but the Commission has been unable, from press of work elsewhere, to decide the appeal, and I have therefore withdrawn it. These tenants ought to do well. Besides their arable land, well fenced by me, they have a large extent of hill pasture. They were assisted by myself and others to purchase the sheep stock. The rent of £70 I consider under the real value of the farm. I cannot, however, say that I have any hope of them. Like all other crofters, they exhaust the land, and sheep deteriorate in their hands. There are already considerable arrears, and the object I had in view in relieving congestion at Roag has been unfortunately defeated, the vacant crofts being immediately filled by other claimants, so I did, in that respect, no good. I should here mention that besides the crofters who occupy Ullinish and Vatten, I have in these last few years converted cottars into crofters by allotting land to them in the following localities:—In Bracadale—Struanmore, 18 tenants; Garrymore, 5 tenants; Ose, 10 tenants. In Duirinish—Roskhill, 8 tenants. With respect to all my crofter townships, great and small, numbering 15, it will be found that nothing can be more unsatisfactory than the agricultural condition of the land and the treatment it receives. Whether there are 10 acres or 2 the arable land of the croft is scourged by consecutive crops of corn. It is always full of weeds, with the result that one boll of oats seldom yields more than two or at most three of inferior grain. (See the crofter evidence before Lord Napier's Commission.) I am talking generally of the crofters here in this country: there may be exceptions,—I believe there are exceptions; there are certain men who understand rotation, but they are very very few. The land cannot be said to receive any proper manure at all; sea-ware is the principal stimulant in use: it brings a crop of potatoes, but it leaves no permanent manure in the soil; and when it is completely exhausted, there comes the cry for 'more land.' Then there is the universal but objectionable custom that as soon as the corn is cut and carried, the whole of the cattle have the run of the township, so that no crofter can have any permanent fence to protect turnips, cabbages, or sown grasses. I am perhaps going too much into detail.

5641. Oh no, it is very important.—As the declared object of the Royal Commission is to consider the extension of the crofter system, and to report if it can be advantageously extended, I presume the general idea in contemplation is to convert the present crofters and cottars on the estate into small farms. This, however, can only be accomplished by seizing and appropriating the large farms as leases fall in. But let us inquire first how the owner of the estate would fare. It is an undisputed fact that the best of the arable land which the crofters covet (not excepting that already occupied by them) has been reclaimed either by the proprietor himself or by his tacksmen tenants. My father and I laid out many thousand pounds in the reclamation and fencing of moorland on several of the farms. Would it be just to take these arable lands in which we have invested so much money out of our management, and let it to people we might not approve of at rents fixed by a Commission with fixity of tenure?

There is another grave question. I cannot quite say, but it can be easily ascertained, what the owners of these estates have spent in the erection of farm-houses and steadings, in stone dykes, and in the making of main and district roads. These outlays were so much money invested, and if small holdings were to displace farms, it would be lost, as a Commission would value the land alone.

But the most serious loss of all would be in the sheep stocks. The extension of the crofter system would, of course, drive away all the tacksmen farmers, and their capital along with them. But I am bound under all my leases to take over at valuation the respective sheep stocks, the result of careful breeding, each sheep stock being well known at the character market at Inverness. It is, of course, thoroughly understood in this country—I do not know, my lord, whether you are aware of the circumstances connected with the farms, but you will allow me to state that an incoming tenant has to pay a large difference between the value of a made stock and the market price of the same if forcibly sold in block. Well, my lord, am I to bear that enormous loss? If the Government are desirous of trying further experiments with my land, and if they choose to listen to the suggestions of agitators who are most virtuous and liberal when other people's property is in question (I am speaking, sir, of those who are going about now persuading the people to do this, that, and the other), let these experiments be made at the national risk and not at mine. Let the land be bought at the expense of the nation, if the nation is foolish enough to invest public money in such a scheme. I should certainly be sorry to lose what my family has possessed for nearly seven hundred years; but if inexorable fate wills it I must submit.

Let us now consider what would be the probable result of these propositions, if adopted, to the crofters themselves. I think it must be generally admitted that this island cannot boast much either as to its soil or its climate, there being very little good land and an unfair allowance of rain, and yet this poor country is at this moment in the keenest competition with the richest soils and best of climates in the whole world in precisely the only articles we can produce. Of corn it is idle to talk, as meal can be bought much cheaper than it can be grown, and we only grow it for the cattle in winter. Beef, mutton, and wool are our only saleable products, but they must be good to be saleable. It is contrary to all experience that the tenants of a small holding can breed good sheep or cattle. A single bad year is almost ruinous to him. If he has nothing to sell how can he live? How get even the bare necessaries of life, to say nothing about tobacco and tea, which have become almost necessaries now? The question is whether the occupier of a small holding can fulfil his various obligations, and maintain himself and family. Take into account on the one hand the rent (if any), the rates, the interest on money borrowed, and the labour of the tenant and his family, calculated on the present wages of labour, which fortunately are very good at present, and on the other hand the produce, depending on uncertain climate, inferior soil, and agri-

Dunvegan, Skye.

Macleod of Macleod.

Dunvegan, Skye.

Macleod of Macleod.

cultural inexperience, I can have no hesitation in expressing the opinion—I give my opinion only, of course—that the result would be, in fact, disastrous as well to the tenant himself as to the country generally.

There is another question which seriously affects the inquiry of this Commission, and to which I should like to direct their attention. The burdens on land have become very heavy. Previous to the passing of the Scotch Poor Law Act in 1845, the people maintained their own poor. I have often admired their self-denial and kindness to each other. These feelings, however, are now much changed, and in largely-peopled districts the rates for the poor have become immensely high, amounting this year in Duirinish to 4s. in the £1. In England it is held that the parish which has benefited by the labour of a man when he is young and strong should keep him when he is old and ailing. In Skye the strong workman goes to Glasgow or Peterhead or elsewhere in summer, and, returning to Skye as he does in winter, he never loses his settlement at home. Supposing any addition is made to the present small holdings, the bulk of the population would have pauper claims on their native parish (quite properly); and I am sure, when proprietors and large farmers disappear, the burdens of poor-rate, school-rate, road and county rates, will be more than the land can bear. While on this topic I must advert to the advice given by outside agitators, as I am afraid I must call them, who counsel the whole of the people, young as well as old, to decline all offers of assistance to better their condition by leaving this poor country for a better. I regret the advice, for it must lead to congestion, and in a bad year to appeals for charity, perhaps at no very distant day. Why should every member of a family remain at home? My three sons were sent away from their home to battle with the world. Why should the Government be asked—I use a very colloquial term, but I don't know whether I could better it—to molly-coddle specially our Highlanders, and treat them exceptionally? They are by nature a fine, independent, intelligent set of people. I know the people well, and I know that is a fair description of them. They have been well educated, and can hold their own wherever they go. Is it not pitiable that they demean themselves by asking the Government for land which belongs to other people, and not only that, but they think they must have, besides, money to build houses and to stock the ground. Who is to guarantee that if they get all these things they may not fail, and come in increasing numbers for doles of charity? Such things have happened before, and may happen again. I have never sought, and shall never seek, to influence men to leave this country; but I protest against an outside organised effort to prejudice the minds of the people against what is at all events inevitable for a great many, for you cannot provide for them all.

I think I ought, before I conclude what I am afraid has been a very lengthy statement, to make a few remarks on the question of supervision—that of the proprietor having been very much weakened by the action of the Crofters Commission, that of course it has been impossible to avoid. The habits of the people favour an increase of population. The number of cottars' houses on many crofts is evidence of this tendency. Nothing was easier or more common than to build a black-house, or to convert a byre into a dwelling: on my property that has often occurred. Such changes have been of late years held in check by estate rules and regulations, but it is impossible even now to prevent the accumulation of several families in any house where the necessary accommodation could be added. From this point of view the proposed extension of the crofter system cannot be regarded without the most serious misgiving.

I finish this paper by stating that in my experience good-sized farms, if managed well and at a fair and reasonable rent, will pay the holder. Small holdings will not, in my opinion, and if the crofter system is extended along with fixity of tenure and it fails, as I believe it will, the step can never be retraced.

(Signed) MACLEOD OF MACLEOD.

May 2, 1893.

I have signed this, my lord, and I shall hand it in with the alterations that you have indicated your wish to have.

Dunvegan, Skye.

Macleod of Macleod.

5642. Thank you. Does any Commissioner desire to put any questions on the paper read?

5643. *Mr Sutherland.*—I understand, Macleod, that your opinion regarding the crofter system is that it has been a failure, generally speaking?—Yes.

5644. Who do you consider is responsible for the crofting system?—I am not aware that any one is responsible. The people act upon old customs, and these old customs I consider prejudicial.

5645. Do you consider that the people who are now called crofters were at all times free agents as to what they might do themselves?—Oh, surely.

5646. They were not limited in any way by any other person?—No.

5647. Or law or institution?—No.

5648. You think not?—I think not.

5649. Then how do you account for the desire they have to get back upon the land, at the present time? How do you account for the fact that they wish to get back upon the land and cannot do so? I am directing my question as to their being free agents.—Yes, exactly. I employ my land in the manner that I think is best for myself; and necessarily if my land is let in large farms, I cannot give it to the crofters.

5650. Quite so. So then their free action in this matter is limited in several ways?—It is limited in this way, that there is no land that they can have.

5651. And you have no reason to suppose, have you, that the same influences were not at work in times past?—This property has always been let in large farms, and therefore the crofters—at least the cottars—could not get the land, and in that respect they have always been limited.

5652. Quite so. So that they cannot, therefore, be held to be responsible for the system that at present obtains with regard to the distribution of the land?—Well, I have no doubt that the cottars have always been limited, and in that respect they have not been able to do better than they have done.

5653. And that bears on the question of the responsibility of the parties who are responsible for the present state of things?—Well, undoubtedly, if a proprietor employs his land in letting it as it has always been let in large farms, it necessarily restricts people who desire, but cannot get, more land than they have.

5654. So that any responsibility the people called crofters may have is a very limited one,—are you prepared to admit that?—Limited by the amount of land they have.

5655. And by the institutions and laws of the country?—As long as private property in land exists, the man who possesses that property does the best he can by it.

5656. I think you will admit that in forming these holdings the crofter was very far from being a free agent?—He was certainly not a free agent so far as he could not get land he would have been very glad to get.

5657. I don't wish to enter into matters of history, except in so far as it was contained in your statement. Might I ask you to state generally what your opinion is as regards the position the ancient Highland clansmen occupied?—If you mean when he had any right to land, I say decidedly that he never had.

5658. That he never had. Now I have got here a statement which I will ask you for a moment to listen to. I am not saying that it is definite, but I wish to point out to you the belief that the people always had, and that this feeling they have regarding the land is not a recent one instigated by agitators. This is the Report of Lord Napier's Commission, and they give a quotation from the Earl of Selkirk, who wrote in the year 1805. He said, talking of the Highland people, 'They well know of how little avail was a piece of 'parchment and a lump of wax, under the old system 'of the Highlands. They reproach their landlord with 'ingratitude, and remind him that but for their fathers

Dunvegan, Skye.
Macleod of Macleod.

'he would have no estate. The permanent possession 'which they have always retained of their paternal 'farms they consider only as their just right for the 'share they had borne in the general defence, and can 'see no difference between the title of the chief and 'their own.' I simply point out that that was the expression conveyed by Lord Selkirk of the opinions of the people in the year 1805; and I direct it against the general agument you used about the people being influenced by outside agitators.—Of course, the people here may have considered, and I daresay do, that they had some feudal right or claim; but I can go back for more than 200 years to show that the land was used precisely in the manner I have described; that is to say, that the cottars or crofters, or sub-tenants rather, I should say, were always in possession of certain lands, and generally very small ones; very small portions, allotments merely.

5659. Well, I have no wish to press the question beyond the point that you, being a Highland chief, would be able to give us some information regarding the relations that existed between the chief and the clansmen in old times,—I have no doubt you have such information?—I really could not answer you: I think it is very possible that there may be such an opinion amongst the people, but it must descend from very ancient days.

5660. But you are aware, no doubt, that the legislation that has been already passed is founded upon historical reasons?—Do you mean with reference to the fixing of rents?

5661. Particularly as to fixity of tenure?—I really do not know what the object of the legislature was in interfering between me and my crofters; I can only regret it very sincerely, for I think it is very bad for them as well as for me.

5662. You also made an interesting statement regarding a regiment that was raised in the Island of Skye. I am not aware that the conditions of enlistment were the same in the Island of Skye as they were in the other parts of the country, but you will be able to inform me. I quote shortly from the report of Lord Napier's Commission:—'It is difficult to deny that a 'Macdonald, a Macleod, a Mackenzie, a Mackay, or a 'Cameron, who gave his son to his landlord eighty 'years ago to fill up the ranks of a Highland regiment, 'did morally acquire tenure in his holding more sacred 'than the stipulations of a written covenant.' This is one of the general arguments of a historical nature upon which Parliament granted security of tenure. Were there any such stipulations, may I ask, upon this estate?—I am not aware of them.

5663. A word or two with regard to the taking over of stock. You asked a question whether you were to be subjected to the loss of taking over this stock?—Precisely.

5664. But would you not admit that that is not a compact that is enforced by law or imposed by law?—Well, it is the custom of the country. I am bound by my leases to take the stock over at valuation. The stock, we must remember, is a stock made for a particular place, and it is important for the holder of the farm that he should have a stock which will remain on the ground and have a name. Well, if you change that stock and take it away, it loses its character; and therefore the incoming tenant will pay a considerable sum more than the market value of the stock, in order to have that sheep stock on the ground. Well, if a place is divided into crofts, of course those sheep must be sold off at market price, and the difference is very considerable. Many people state it at a half.

5665. I quite understand the position and the difficulty of it; but what I wished to point out was that it is not by legal enactment, though I admit that a lease is just as binding upon you?—It would affect me the same.

5666. It is not the act of the legislature?—Oh, no.

5667. Then I gather that your opinion is that if the Government is going to interfere further between landlord and tenant in the Highlands, they should do so by acquiring the land once and for all?—I see no other way: they cannot ask me to sacrifice sums of money in building houses and in providing stock for people. I have endeavoured to do so in two cases, as I have mentioned, but I could not do so farther.

Dunvegan, Skye.
Macleod of Macleod.

5668. In other words, you think that it would be necessary to nationalise the land before proceeding to do so?—Well, I have said that I should be very sorry if it was done: but, of course, what the legislature determine upon must be carried out.

5669. But you think that would be a better basis for further proceedings by the legislature,—looking at it from the landlord's point of view?—Well, I should be very sorry: but if it must be, it must be.

5670. Now, a word or two upon emigration. I think you stated that outside organised agitation was carried on against emigration. I presume you have heard of the scheme of giving £150,000 for emigrating people to Manitoba?—I have.

5671. Are you aware who the parties were who advocated that system of emigration?—No, I am not.

5672. Would you be surprised to know that it was a commercial company in London?—Yes; but if it had the object of enabling people who are in congestion here to remove to a better country, would it signify who had started the scheme?

5673. Certainly not; but I am directing the question to your statement that it was outside organised agitation that prevented the people going. My point is that it was outside organised agitation that advocated emigration?—Well, but I am afraid there are persons here who do advise the people here on no account to leave the country. As I pointed out, I don't wish the people to leave the country, except those who ought not to remain, and who are perfectly able to go. Why do bees swarm? They swarm because they cannot all live in the same hive. Why should everybody here remain, old and young, and everybody, when there is a better country for them to go to?

5674. I presume there are very few people who do so. But with regard to this organised agitation against emigration, you and I, and a great number more, no doubt, are of one mind as regards the fact of emigration being at a certain point necessary, but we differ as to the time when the necessity arises, and the means by which it ought to be done, because you expressed the opinion that you did not wish emigration *per se*?—I don't wish people here to emigrate, except with their perfect goodwill.

5675. Thank you: that is all.

5676. *Mr Forsyth.*—With reference to the taking over of sheep from your tenants by valuation, according to the custom of the country, did you not make your agreement with your tenants in the belief that your possession of your land would remain unaltered by any fresh legislation?—Undoubtedly.

5677. And certainly that you would feel, should legislation alter or in any way modify the ownership of land, you would thereby be injured by fresh legislation?—Immensely.

5678. *Mr Maccallum.*—I don't wish to trouble you, Macleod, except with a very few questions, and I put them simply for this reason, because of the importance that you attach to your opinions, on account of the position which you hold. I may assume that you take a great interest in this question, the question before the Commission, both as proprietor of the lands and as chief of the clan?—I have been 58 years in possession of this property, and naturally I feel a very great interest in all the people here; and the opinion I have given is really in consideration as well of my own position as of the position of the people here.

5679. And you think that the true chief is father of the clan?—Undoubtedly.

5680. That is the meaning of clan, that the chief has duties as head of a family?—Yes, I accept all those duties.

5681. And that the true chief always acts in a fatherly way towards his people?—I am not aware of any unkind action.

5682. I don't mean at all to insinuate that. But because of your position, therefore, you keep yourself in

Dunvegan, Skye.

Macleod of Macleod.

touch with the feelings and sentiments of the people?—I hope so.

5683. And do not delegate your functions to a factor?—The factor has instructions from me, and acts upon them, and I know that he does so.

5684. Then, as you are cognisant of their position and their sentiments, I suppose you will admit that there is a strong desire on their part to be resettled on the land in medium-sized holdings?—Pray, sir, don't say 're-settled,' because they were never settled there at all. That is a delusion that a great many people adopt now, where they say that they want to be 're-settled'; it is no such thing; they never, on this estate (I only speak of this estate), they never were settled there before.

5685. I do not wish to enter into the historical question, because we have very little to do with that, I think, as a Commission, and it would take a long time to enter into it. You admit, however, that there is a strong and genuine desire on the part of the people there to be settled?—They have a great desire now to obtain more land.

5686. And you being in touch with them, and their chief, don't you think that everything should be done to enable this desire to be gratified?—I am of opinion, as I have expressed in the statement, that these people would ultimately come into a very unhappy position. Look at Glendale, which I settled in the year 1845. The people there are in a state of congestion, as was stated to you yesterday. Don't you think that if you fill this whole island with crofters, those people would rapidly increase in numbers, and would ultimately be obliged really to go away from this country altogether, many of them?

5687. Yes, but they hold here that they would succeed on medium-sized holdings, and they also say that they have no desire to sub-divide: they are against sub-division, and do they not also hold that this congestion has arisen from people being taken to their townships from other parts?—Not so. You found upon what they say at Glendale. But at Glendale, as I say in my statement, the people have increased, since the year 1845, to such an extent that they are now congested; and I firmly believe that they would be similarly congested elsewhere, and perhaps in a short time, if the crofting system were adopted.

5688. We have heard a good deal of evidence, and you are aware that there is a good deal of evidence before the Napier Commission, to the effect that the congestion arose from this that I referred to, from their being lifted from other parts and placed in these townships?—But I deny that altogether. I gave a croft to every man in that farm. There is one part of it to which others went, and that was Lowergill, a very fine glen and a splendid grazing: there was not a man on the farm of Glendale who could have taken in one of these £12 lots.

5689. Might I ask why you think they would not succeed on fair-sized holdings. You say you hold a high opinion of their intelligence, their ability to work, and willingness to learn. How would they not succeed?—Because I think that in this country, in its present condition, competition with other nations would prevent the possibility of their making anything out of the land. I don't say that there are not, perhaps, a few—well, there must be very few—who are so hard-working and so industrious that they might succeed; but I think really it would be only by getting wages away from their own croft.

5690. It is gratifying to find that experiments were made by yourself in this direction, and that, for instance, land was given to the cottars at Struanmore. Now, we had evidence with regard to that, and they stated that it was a great mercy that they got land. Now, don't you think, further, that in view of those statements, your experiment was a success?—I do not.

5691. They are well pleased themselves, are they not,—they said so?—They owe an immense amount of rent.

5692. At Struanmore?—At Struanmore.

5693. However, I remember a statement made by the delegate appointed by themselves, that they found it a great advantage to have got the land?—What occurred was this. When the tenant of that farm died, those poor people came as labourers into my hands: they had allotments, and they came as labourers into my hands. I thought that a cow was a very important thing for a man to have. Those people had no cow. I therefore gave them land to enable each man to have a cow, and they have benefited so far: but they are not contented; they want to have an extension of land.

5694. Yes, they want to have more land?—More land.

5695. But they are satisfied that the cattle they got have been of great advantage to them?—Certainly it has.

5696. They admit that?—Oh, yes.

5697. And they think that if they had got more, and if they would now get more, they would be still more satisfied?—But how can we give them more; unless we break up the neighbouring farm, which I hold to be a mistake.

5698. Then with regard to the position which you take up on the historical point, which I do not wish to enter upon largely at all, except with reference to this particular thing which we see with our eyes. In visiting the townships which the crofters allege to have been crofting townships, we find not only evidence of cultivation, but we find stack-yards. Would servants, if they were simply servants, have such large stack-yards as we see, for instance, in these old ruins?—They might have, undoubtedly; they were allowed, many of them perhaps an acre and a half, or two, or perhaps three occasionally. A good servant would be allowed a large allotment. But might not those large stack-yards that you mention—I am not speaking from my own knowledge, but only suggesting that they might—have been the stack-yards of the large tenants or tacksmen.

5699. Well, we saw them just in the neighbourhood of the dwellings, just beside the dwelling-house, and signs of comfortable houses also: we noticed fairly good-sized houses?—They all had fair-sized houses; I don't think they were ever stone and lime there, but what we call black houses.

5700. Then with regard to the fear which you have of the rates getting up. Have not the rates got up rather since the big farms came to be the fashion?—Oh dear, no. Why, the farms have been the same size ever since I can remember; they go back, in fact, more than two hundred years.

5701. However, a high pauper rate exists alongside with the large farming system?—Yes, but it would be much higher with the other.

5702. Would they not help each other from the kindly feeling which they have towards each other?—I am afraid, and I am sorry to say it, that there is not now the same kindly feeling that there used to be.

5703. Then with regard to the great loss which you think might accrue to the landlord if small holdings were made,—do not the landlords find a good deal of trouble with their large farms just now?—Rents are not so high as they were, but in no other respect.

5704. Are they not asking reductions?—Certainly.

5705. Constantly?—Well, last year was, I suppose, the worst year for the Highlands that we ever had, and, of course, if the prices of cattle and sheep are so low that the people can hardly get anything for them, naturally the tenant comes to the landlord to ask for assistance.

5706. I don't wish to put this question with regard to your own particular estate: but is it not the fact that some landlords are giving reductions to their large farmers which do not appear in the valuation roll?—I am not aware. My reductions do appear in the valuation roll.

5707. Yes, all reductions granted to them appear in the valuation roll?—Yes, mine do. Perhaps you will allow me to say something about a farm which is in my own hands, Glenbrittle. No doubt a good many years ago this farm was rented much higher, but I may mention that that farm, which remains in my hands, pays me very well. I receive from that farm a larger sum than I could get from a tenant, which shows that

Dunvegan, Skye.

Macleod of Macleod.

Dunvegan, Skye. — Macleod of Macleod.

although the years are so bad as they have been the last year or two, still you can make a large farm pay.

5708. And do you think, then, that in these years the large farmers are occupying their lands to profit?—I think so; but the rent must be reduced in bad years. I don't mean to say that in the case of a man who has a lease of 14 or 19 years,—he takes the average, and therefore the rent always remains the same unless in a very exceptional year; but, on the whole, I think that a large farmer can pay where a small one could not. And the evil in the case of small holdings is this, that they cannot hold on. A bad year really injures them to such an extent that they cease to be able to go on at all: they cannot pay.

5709. Is there not a general agreement that the large farms have not been paying for several years back?—Oh, they have been paying their rent.

5710. They might have been paying their rent, but have they been paying it out of profits?—Oh, surely; I believe so. I judge from my own case; I have been carrying on at a certain rent, at a profit.

5711. And do you think that your large farmers, for instance, are content with the rents that they have just now,—that they think they have good bargains? I don't want to press the question?—I really hardly can answer that.

5712. *The Chairman.*—That point is not before us.

5713. *Mr Maccallum.*—I do not wish to press it. The point is, that it appears to me that there is a general complaint among large farmers that they are not able to farm to profit with the present low price of wool.—Undoubtedly, the low prices affect people immensely. But then a tenant farmer always hopes the prices will improve: last year was a very bad one, but next year may be a very good one, who knows?

5714. Then you speak of agitators trying to persuade the people in the Highlands to ask for land that belongs to other people. But don't you think that the chief holds the land in trust for the people?—No, I don't think so.

5715. That he has no duty to perform, through having got land and being head of the clan?—Well, I believe that I perform all the duties that the chief owes to his people; but when they come to me and ask me for lands which have been in the hands of large tenants for hundreds of years, and when they say that they could make them pay in the present times when everything is against them in the shape of the price of produce, then, I say, they are mistaken; and I think it would be a very unkind act on my part to encourage them. I don't know where in the world they would find money to do it. I think it would be very unwise and very unpaternal to accept their propositions, and I do not think it would be advantageous to them to have these crofts.

5716. Then, as to the hardship which you seem to think it is that the people should be settled on the lands,—that it would be virtually taking the land from the chiefs; have not many of the chiefs sold their land?—Certainly.

5717. And would not that be a much greater matter of regret than that the lands should be peopled; is it not much more regrettable, from the chieftain's point of view, to sell them than to have his lands peopled?—I don't want to sell; and if the Government decides that they are going to cover these lands here with crofters—which I think a very foolish scheme—they had better take my land at once.

5718. But the chiefs had not such a very strong love for their land that they did not sell it?—They sold it because they could not help themselves. They sold it because they wanted the money, and could not get on without it. Remember, sir, how matters were. I don't know whether you know the Island of Harris. My grandfather sold Harris, because he had been left in difficult circumstances. That island, which has since been sold for £250,000, was, at the end of last century, sold for £15,000.

5719. *Mr Macleod.*—I have one or two questions to ask, but if you feel at all fatigued, or if you feel that you have already answered sufficiently, I will not press them.—Oh, not at all: I am quite ready and willing to reply.

Dunvegan, Skye. — Macleod of Macleod.

5720. It is more as a matter of history; I wish to ask whether your view of the old position of the Highland clansman is that he was simply a cottar?—I believe he was simply a cottar.

5721. Simply a cottar; and that all the halo of romance that has grown up around him in the minds of the people has been entirely mistaken; he was simply a farm labourer?—There were two sets of people: there were the labourers who were employed upon the different farms, and there were cottars who had no land. I don't know what halo there might be, except that the chief naturally considered his people as persons in whom he took an interest. Moreover, I daresay you know the people were really very valuable for the defence of the country, and they were, so to speak, under the chief, who was very glad to have a number; unfortunately now it is not so.

5722. Then you think, where the ancient Highland clansman was not a cottar, he was kept as a fighting man?—Well, I don't say that, because he was not called upon to fight; except upon occasions when the nation required his services.

5723. Not that the chief required him to defend his land?—Well, I believe it often happened in those days,—but that is really very ancient history,—that there were clan fights. I could show you a good many cairns on this estate where battles were fought between the Macdonalds and the Macleods, and where sometimes we were victorious, and at other times sustained defeat. I think it is very likely that in those days the chief looked upon his men as very valuable people.

5724. Then it is not because these cottars and labourers paid no rent directly to the chief that you say that they had no claim to the land?—In those days it was quite customary for a man to leave one part of the country and go to another. They were perfectly free to do what they pleased. That is, of course, when a vacancy occurred where they thought they could better themselves—but I am talking of really very old days.

5725. You must confess that you raised the historical aspect of this question yourself?—Oh, surely. I wish you to know everything I can tell you.

5726. Then, seeing that the ancient Highland clansman was either a farm labourer or a cottar, I take it that the chiefs purchased their lands from the State, and that they did not have it by conquest on the part of themselves or their clansmen?—Well, with regard to these estates I may say this. Somebody, the other day, questioned whether I had any right to these estates. These estates really came into my family through a marriage: an ancestor of mine married the daughter of a Norwegian knight who possessed them—I am talking now of several hundred years ago—and it was thus they came into the family.

5727. Then, as I understand it, the tenure that you presently hold under is the feudal tenure?—I hold by charter from the Crown.

5728. And do you think that that tenure always obtained in the Highlands, at least within historical times?—Well, I know this, that in olden times there was an ancestor of mine, called Rory More, who felt so independent on the matter of property, that he refused to acknowledge the King of Scotland; upon which these estates were confiscated, but nobody ventured to come here to take them!

5729. Then it was held by the tenure of Rory More in those days?—By the tenure of Rory More.

5730. *Mr Munro.*—Macleod, you have favoured the Commission with an exceedingly interesting, and, from your point of view, very able statement. Now there are one or two questions that I have to put to you, rather to amplify the information you have given us; but if you are in the slightest degree tired, I will refrain from putting them?—Not the least.

5731. You have started the subject of land purchase, and in doing so you are certainly within your rights. Now, might I ask if you have ever considered what might be deemed fair terms of purchase, if such a project were entertained; and before you answer the ques-

Dunvegan, Skye.

Macleod of Macleod.

tion, I may remind you that one of the witnesses here, yesterday, stated that he considered from eighteen to twenty years' purchase would be a fair basis of settlement?—I think he was entirely mistaken in making such a statement. Some years ago, when rents were higher, I could have had forty years' purchase for land here.

5732. I quite agree with you; but, taking into consideration the past history of the land question, and the present and what you may call the future of it, do you not consider that even eighteen to twenty years' purchase would be rather an extravagant rate of purchase to pay at present?—I have not considered that subject, but I certainly should be very unwilling to give my property at eighteen years' purchase.

5733. But supposing, now, that the crofter were put in possession of a croft, and that he were asked to pay up the principal sum paid for the croft, with interest, spread over a long period of years, do you consider that he would be likely to accomplish the liquidation of the debt?—Well, I think not.

5734. You think not?—No. I have advanced money to crofters here, and I don't get it back again. Eight years have elapsed, and my £1000 lent is very little reduced.

5735. Do you not consider that it would be a strong incentive to any man to make an effort to pay off such a debt if he had the prospect of becoming absolute owner of it himself, on the expiry of a certain period?—There might be an exception or two, but I cannot think that our Highlanders, as a rule, would ever accomplish such a result, considering that we are placed in a most unfortunate position as regards the value of produce.

5736. Then you consider the crofting system, under almost any conditions, hopeless?—I do; honestly, I do.

5737. You stated, in the course of your paper, that there was a tendency to molly-coddle the crofter, and that he rather sought charity. Is that your opinion?—Well, almost every year there have been—principally, I think, from the Lews, but from this country also—claims sent in by the clergymen of the parish and others, intimating that destitution prevails. Why, it happens almost every year that there is some claim made, and I regret very much that it should continue to be so, because I don't wish our Highlanders, who are fine independent people, to go to the people of England and always seek for some money, or some grain, or some assistance. I think it is discreditable to them.

5738. I quite agree with you. The question has been repeatedly put to witnesses before this Commission whether they, in any degree, expected or sought for charity, and they warmly repudiated the suggestion. Do you consider they were sincere?—Certainly, I think they would say so; but would circumstances admit of their doing otherwise? As I understand it, they have always told this Commission here that they have not got the means of building houses, and they are quite correct. With few exceptions, they are unable to do that, and they are now applying to the Government for assistance. I cannot see how in the world they can take crofts, unless they get assistance to do it.

5739. What they stated to the Commission was, that it was not charity they wanted but fairplay.—That is true: charity, I daresay, they don't want, but can they help appealing for charity?

5740. *The Chairman.*—What do you say is the value of your land under farms, as compared with the value of land under crofters at present?—Is it the total amount that I have obtained from farms, against the total amount I obtain from crofts?

5741. Take it so.

5742. *Mr Reginald Macleod.*—I think what your Lordship wishes to know is, whether in any given farm or given piece of land Macleod thinks he could get more from a large tenant or from crofters.

5743. *The Chairman.*—That is a subsequent question.—*Witness.* The question is, what I get from farms and what I get from crofters.

5744. Per acre, or in a general way?—It is somewhat difficult to answer that question. For example, there are the Cuillin Hills, in the farm of Glenbrittle: I suppose in the stony places they are not worth a halfpenny an acre.

5745. Would you say that you have scarcely the materials before you to enable you to answer that question?—I think I should like to consider it.

5746. Very well. My next question is this. Suppose one or more of your farms to be put under crofters, would you expect to derive as much from crofters on self-sustaining holdings as from the large farm from which they were formed?—Well, I don't set myself at all against crofters taking farms; but I should look to their paying me as much as a farmer-tenant would pay me. But I think very few of them have the skill.

5747. Leaving the skill out of view?—Yes.

5748. Do you think you might fairly ask such a rent, say from six crofters occupying a large farm (leaving the buildings out of view), as you had asked from the sole tenant?—Well, I think it would be somewhat hard upon a proprietor to expect that he would take less from one man than he would from another.

5749. And you think you might ask as much from the six as you had from the one?—I think so.

5750. I understand you to concede that the present crofting system—the system of small crofts—on your estate is in an undesirable condition?—I think so, sir.

5751. How would you remedy the present undesirable state of matters, leaving recent legislation and prospective proposals out of view?—That is very hard to say; I can give no remedy.

5752. You can give no remedy?—I can suggest no remedy. I would say this that a question of that sort must be left to be dealt with as it would be dealt with in other countries. I can suggest no remedy.

5753. But you observe—I do not wish to press you unduly—you observe your admission of the existence of a very undesirable state of matters upon your estate, therefore a system to be remedied, if a legitimate remedy can be obtained. Are you able to suggest such a remedy?—Well, I am not. The crofters here have certain customs which you cannot break through, and which you could not break through, without a very large outlay of money.

5754. Now, leaving out of view any claim which you might have—and I am not raising any question upon that—don't you think that an extension of the crofters' system to larger holdings would operate as a remedy to a certain degree?—I think that there are so many objections—increase of population, uncertainty of times, difficulties of competition—I do not think that it would ever answer.

5755. Then you think it is preferable to allow the present state of matters to continue rather than adopt a system of larger holdings?—Well, my lord, I think that any of our people here would do better with the crofts they have, which do not require a great deal of labour upon their part, coupled with the wages, which, now-a-days, are certainly fair. With those wages I believe they would live better, and that they do live better than they would if they had crofts which obliged them to devote their whole time to the cultivation of land, and prevented their getting a more remunerative labour elsewhere.

5756. In other words, you think this present undesirable system is preferable to the extension of their holdings?—I see no better system than the present. I cannot see that there would be any improvement in placing those men upon larger holdings, looking at all the circumstances that I have alluded to in my statement.

5757. Do you think it reasonable to exact a rent from a man which, confessedly, he does not derive from his holding?—I think that you can hardly separate the two. A labourer in England has a small allotment; our people have a large allotment, so to speak. That man in England who has his allotment pays for it out of his labour, which he has to give elsewhere. These people are in exactly that position.

5758. You are in favour of that course?—Well, I see

Dunvegan, Skye.

Macleod of Macleod.

no other. You know the Crofters Commission have settled that the crofters here ought to pay for a certain amount of land a certain sum. Well, let them pay it as they can. It is land which they have taken. The rent must be paid, at least it ought to be paid.

5759. I am not sure if I have made my question quite intelligible. Do you think it right to exact a rent from a man which, confessedly, he does not derive from his holding?—I really think that if a man has some land and a house he ought to pay the rent.

5760. Quite so. That is an answer. Now, I have been requested to put this question to you, and I have no objection to do so, although it is one I had no desire to enter into. I have been desired to ask you whether you removed from Bracadale to Glendale certain crofters, in view of the sale of the Glendale estate?—No; certainly not, certainly not. The Glendale estate was sold after the famine, and it was sold by my creditors, and I could not avoid its being sold; deeply did I grieve that it ever had to be sold. I am very much obliged to you, my lord, for asking that question.

5761. Now I wish to invite your attention to certain documents, which purport to be original documents, dated in 1792–93, exactly a hundred years ago. They were printed in the *Scottish Highlander* of Inverness, on the 15th of March 1888, and through that channel they reached the public. First, the instructions to a sheriff officer in executing the several summonses of removal, at the instance of Colonel Macleod of Macleod and his factor against his tenants. The second document is a form of an execution of summons of removing, Colonel Macleod of Macleod and his factor against his tenants, 1792; and the third document is a list of tenants to be removed from Macleod's estate at Whitsunday 1792; and then follows a list of the baronies, being the baronies of Duirinish, Waternish, Bracadale, and Minginish. These documents purport to set forth proceedings for removal by the Macleod of the day taken before the Sheriff of Inverness. Part of these removals were removals of yearly tenants. Another part was removal of persons holding under leases for terms of years in respect of military services by members of the families. The first class of proceedings would appear to have terminated before the Sheriff of the County; the latter class of proceedings seem to have found their way to the Court of Session, where a decree of removing, applicable to 1793 instead of 1792, was pronounced by Lord Swinton, one of the Lords Ordinary of the day. Do you know anything of these documents?—Nothing. I never heard before what you state. I know that in 1792 the leases of farms came to an end, but I know nothing about removals, and I am not aware that what you have read just now does indicate that there were removals. There might have been summonses but no removals, because it was very often the custom to issue a summons as a threat in order to obtain payment.

5762. And do you say that if these proceedings did take place they did not result in removals, but only resulted in enforcing payment of the rent?—That is what I imagine. It has been always the case. As I say in my statement, they have rather a dislike in this country to pay rent, even when they have got the money, and we are obliged to appeal to the law. I do not say that generally, but there are some with whom that is necessary. I know nothing of any of what people call 'evictions' upon this estate.

5763. If such documents exist, you dispute their historical accuracy?—I dispute it so far. I never heard of this statement, but I dispute the accuracy of the inference that may be drawn from the fact of there having been summonses of removal.

5764. How do you account for the feeling which prevails so largely, of a wish on the part of crofters to be re-settled in lands from which they imagine they have been evicted?—My lord, I dispute altogether that question of eviction resettlement.

5765. Pardon me. My question is—how do you account for the existence of the feeling?—Oh, the existence of the feeling.

5766. Is it a delusion?—It is a delusion, but that it exists with some I have very little doubt, and I have observed in various parts of the country that it is asserted and asserted again by people who, I think, can know nothing whatever on the subject.

Dunvegan, Skye.

Macleod of Macleod.

5767. But we find that feeling existing among the people here?—Oh, I daresay. It is conveyed by persons who have certain objects in view.

5768. And do you think it has no historical basis?—I think not, so far as I can tell.

5769. *Mr Reginald Macleod.*—Upon that point, my lord, that you raised, might I ask if there is any evidence quoted in the *Scottish Highlander*, to the effect that these decrees, although granted, had been actually extracted?

5770. *The Chairman.*—Perhaps you will kindly allow me to finish my questions.

5771. *Mr Reginald Macleod.*—I beg your pardon. I thought it was *a propos* of your previous questions.

5772. *The Chairman.*—You occupy the farm of Glenbrittle yourself?—*Witness.* Yes.

5773. In the statement you made, did you debit the farm which you say you occupy to profit with a rent?—I charge myself with the rent, which appears in the County Roll, and that rent is higher than I have as yet been able to get from a tenant. But the reason of that is that it requires so very large a sum of money to stock the farm that there are very few tenants who have been able to take it. That is the difficulty, or else I would be very glad to let the farm; and in smaller-sized farms, as they were in fact before.

5774. If you are willing to answer, I would put the question to you also, at what rate you borrowed the money for drainage?—I think it was 6½ per cent., spread over a certain number of years.

5775. *Mr Gordon.*—Was it under the Enclosure Commissioners?—Yes, under the Drainage Act.

5776. *The Chairman.*—And I suppose I may take it, it was repaid?—It was repaid.

5777. *Mr Sutherland.*—May I ask if it was repaid by annual instalments covering principal and interest?—Yes.

5778. And it became extinguished in how many years?—Twenty-five, I suppose. It was extinguished, and I was very glad when it was so.

5779. *The Chairman.*—May I ask you this question also, Macleod. Do you disapprove of the Crofters Act?—Very much.

5780. *The Chairman* (to Mr Reginald Macleod).—Now, Mr Macleod, you suggested a question.

5781. *Mr Reginald Macleod.*—I asked whether there was any statement in the *Scottish Highlander* newspaper to the effect that these decrees upon which they found were actually extracted, without which they could not have been put in force?

5782. *The Chairman.*—What they state is this, that no less than 150 families, or about 900 souls, were evicted by legal process from the Macleod's estates, but I accept the statement which has been made by Macleod himself in answer to the question.

5783. *Mr Gordon.*—I have just one or two questions to ask you. In calculating the profits of Glenbrittle farm, you would first charge yourself with the rent entered in the Valuation Roll?—I do.

5784. Well, in answer to the Chairman, you stated that you naturally expected the same rent would be paid to you by crofters as by the tacksman, in the event of the farm being given over?—I did.

5785. Do you expect,—would you naturally expect,—that if such a farm as Claigean was given over to crofters? That farm was mentioned by several of the witnesses yesterday, and in answer to a question put by me one very intelligent witness proposed to allocate it to 40 holdings. Now, suppose these 40 people with their families were placed on the farm of Claigean under a condition of matters that would render them and their families self-supporting; do you expect that these 40 families, after supporting themselves, would be able to pay as much rent for the farm as the present tenant pays?—Certainly not.

5786. Now, would you mind, if you have it in your mind, telling us how much less they would pay—would

Dunvegan, Skye. — Macleod of Macleod.

they be able to pay much more than half?—I should think perhaps more than a half, but not much; but the evil that I should anticipate would be that in some years they would not pay at all.

5787. But, even supposing a valuator was to go upon the ground to fix the rent of these forty families, and his instructions were that he was to fix the rent at such a sum as would leave them in the position of being self-supporting, do you think that that man would put on £580, spread over these 40 families, or would it not be more likely to be at the rate, which the witness stated, of £10 each, making £400?—It would depend, of course, on the crofts,—I suppose some of the crofts would be more valuable than others.

5788. Well, I am taking them on an average?—At an average of £10, that would make £400. I think it would be less than that probably. I think the difference between the present rent and the crofters' rent would be considerably less than that. For the farm of Vatten, which I let to small tenants, the tacksman had been paying £130, and I let it at £70. But then that was an experiment that I wished to make to ascertain whether they could live upon it, and now, of course, they are there in arrear like everybody else.

5789. But your opinion is that the crofters would not be able, after maintaining their families, to pay as much rent for the farm as the present tacksman pays?—I certainly think that that is so. There is one subject, my lord, that I should like to mention, and that is that I am happy to say that the people here now live a great deal more comfortably than they used to do. I am glad of it, because it is satisfactory that they should be more comfortable than they used to be. But, of course, that being so, they cannot possibly afford to pay the rent that they used to do, and live as they do now. For example, I daresay your lordship may have observed that their clothing is very good and comfortable and so forth, and the women indulge, as I would wish they should, in good bonnets and comfortable things, and the like. I think that all that tells against the possibility of their being able really to keep themselves with the necessaries of life so well in the hereafter as they have hitherto done. They have been contented, in short, with the absolute necessaries of life, and really perhaps on a very poor scale; now they certainly live very much better, and I rejoice that it is so.

5790. *The Chairman.*—Have there been a number of new houses built by the crofters within recent years?—There are a few.

5791. Now, do not you think the building of these houses, and the general increase in comfort, is in some degree at least due to the security of tenure which they have under the Crofters Act?—Well, I do not think I can quite admit that. I think that it arises from the higher wages they get for labour.

5792. You think these houses would have been built if the Act had not become law?—Yes, I think so.

5793. You think so?—Yes.

5794. And you think therefore the present advantageous condition in which they are, in so far as it is an improvement on the past, is in no degree due to recent legislation?—Well, I confess I do not think that the fixing of fair rents, and the granting of fixity of tenure, have been, or will be of any advantage to the people. The Crofters Commission was sent here in order to fix fair rents, and I have nothing in the world to say about that, except that I think the fixing of fair rents does tie the people to the land in a manner that, I think, is prejudicial to themselves. I think, moreover, that where you fix fair rents, the rents may perhaps become quite unfair in the course of the following year, so that it is extremely difficult to go and deal with such a law as has been established by the Government. I do not object to it myself the least in the world, but still I think there are those objections which I have mentioned. You asked me, and therefore I have answered.

5795. Quite so; I am very much obliged to you for your answer.

5796. *Mr Sutherland.*—One question, if you please, with regard to this point of the comparison of value of the area devoted to crofters and large farmers respectively. You state as your general opinion, I understand, that the large farmer pays more per acre for the ground occupied by him than the crofter does?—Well, I did not answer that question, because I do not feel quite sure about it.

Dunvegan, Skye. — Macleod of Macleod.

5797. What I wish to know is, that your impression is not at the present moment an authoritative one?—No.

5798. It is founded on general impressions?—Yes.

5799. Mr Macpherson, a witness before us yesterday, stated that he believed that the crofters paid more?—I am certain that is not so.

5800. So that his statement might probably also rest upon a general impression?—Yes.

5801. In fact the point is not to be taken as decided yet?—No.

5802. *Mr John Macpherson.*—May I ask a question, my lord.

5803. *The Chairman.*—What is the question?

5804. *Mr Macpherson.*—Are there more people in Skye to-day than there were fifty years ago?

5805. *The Chairman.*—You say in Skye, but the witness is only giving evidence in regard to his own estate.

5806. *Mr Macpherson.*—Well, I will ask if there are more people in Glendale than there were fifty years ago?

5807. *The Chairman.*—The question is, are there more people in Glendale at present than there were fifty years ago?—*Witness.* I believe there are, and I think Mr Macpherson himself stated that they were in a congested state.

5808. *Mr Macpherson.*—Macleod of Macleod, may I ask how many families of outsiders you sent to Glendale in 1845?—Very well, John, but did I not send them to a place that none of them could take otherwise. I sent them to Lowergill. You were only seven years old at the time when I gave your father a croft there. I remember that perfectly well. You tell me that there are more people—for I do not know it myself—you tell me that there are more people in that country than there used to be. How is that? It is just that the population has increased.

5809. I would like to know how many families you sent to Glendale in 1845 from other parts of the estate?—What has that to do with the increase of population since the year 1845?

5810. *The Chairman.*—The question put is this—did you send families to Glendale in 1845, and if so, how many?—I sent families to Glendale in 1845 to a place called Lowergill, and so anxious was I about the fishery for the people that I took from Captain Macdonald's estate men who were good fishermen, in order that they might give fishing a fair trial, and I placed them in another vacant place called Ramasaig.

5811. Well, the other branch of the question is, how many families did you send?—That I cannot say exactly; I should think about fourteen or fifteen.

5812. *Mr Macpherson.*—How many families to Upper Millovaig alone?—I think four or five.

5813. I will prove that there were fifteen—which would be more profitable to the country at large and also to the revenue—a number of well-to-do crofters in Claggan, or one man?—I think most decidedly one man, John.

ALEXANDER MACKENZIE, Boreraig (58).
(Examined in Gaelic through an Interpreter.)

5814. *The Chairman.*—Your holding, I see, extends to 4 acres 2 roods 33 poles of arable, 4 acres 1 rood 34 poles of outrun, a share of 167 acres township pasture divided into tenths, and a share of 793 acres hill grazing divided by 32⅛. The former rent was £5, and the fair rent is £3, 5s. Have you a written statement?—Yes.

5815. With the view of abbreviating the proceedings, we propose to take your statement as for the whole three Husabost tenants, whose names we have got, and to examine you alone. Do you consent to that?—I have no authority to speak, except for Boreraig.

Dunvegan, Skye.

Alexander Mackenzie.

5816. Will you kindly read the statement?—

Unto the Honourable the Royal Commission, 1892.

The statement of the people of the crofting township of Boreraig, on the estate of Mr Nicol Martin, in the parish of Duirinish.

Present population of the township.

The above-mentioned township suffers from congestion of population. To put the township into anything like a comfortable position, two-thirds of its tenants would be required to be removed.

NUMBER OF CROFTERS, COTTARS, &c., IN TOWNSHIP OF BORERAIG.

Number of Crofters.	Cottars.	Number of Crofters it would keep comfortably.
27	2	12

The late proprietor has enlarged the home-farm, Husabost, by curtailing the township of Boreraig. Mr Nicol Martin, the new proprietor, has also the large farm of Claigean, which he rents at £600 from Macleod of Macleod. In this farm over 20 acres are under cultivation, but there are over 200 acres of old arable land in it, and a considerable amount of land that crofters would reclaim, besides excellent pasture. This farm, if given to the people, would settle the land question for a good many of the people on Mr Nicol Martin's estate.

(Signed) MALCOLM MACKENZIE, Crofter, Boreraig.
JOHN MACLEOD, ,, ,,
RODERICK M'KENZIE, ,, ,,
WILLIAM MACNEIL, ,, ,,
× MALCOLM MACLEAN, ,, ,,
MURDO MACLEOD, ,, ,,
KENNETH MATHESON, ,, ,,
MURDOCH MATHESON, ,, ,,
× NORMAN CAMPBELL, ,, ,,
ALEXANDER MACKENZIE, Jr., ,, ,,
KENNETH MACASKILL, ,, ,,
× JOHN MACLEAN, ,, ,,
WILLIAM M'LEOD, ,, ,,
× JOHN M'LEOD, ,, ,,
× NEIL MACINNES, ,, ,,

5817. Where are the lands to which you think certain of the tenants in question might be transferred?—Claigean and the entire parish of Bracadale.

5818. You heard the evidence, or a portion of the evidence, yesterday?—I heard a good portion of it.

5819. And does it convey your views upon the matter generally?—There are some parts of it that I was not agreeing with.

5820. But does it convey your views generally?—Yes, for the most part.

5821. Do you wish to make any addition to this statement?—There is one thing that I do not agree with, and that was the sum that was stated as the cost of erecting crofters' houses.

5822. What do you wish to say upon that?—I think any man who had to build a house, say on a 15 acre croft, could build a comfortable enough house for £30.

5823. Do you wish to make any other statement?—Nothing else.

5824. *Mr Nicol Martin.*—Do you claim the parks at Boreraig as belonging to the township of Boreraig, as you have said in your statement?—They want these parks back.

5825. Had they ever the parks in the state they are in to-day?—Not in the state they are in to-day.

5826. Have not those parks been all drained and trenched at the expense of my uncle, who was the late proprietor?—Yes, when the crofters were put out.

5827. What crofters were put out of these parks?—Four were put out, and where they were cutting their peats the parks are now laid out.

5828. So the parks are just made out of peaty ground?—The most part of them.

NEIL MACKINNON, Cottar, Ferrinvicquire (58)—*examined.*

Dunvegan, Skye.

Neil Mackinnon.

5829. *The Chairman.*—Are you a crofter?—No, I am a cottar.

5830. Do you pay rent?—No.

5831. How much land have you?—Not the breadth of my foot.

5832. Have you any stock?—I have one cow.

5833. Where does it feed?—On the hill.

5834. Whose hill?—On the crofters' hill.

5835. And do you pay anything for that?—Yes.

5836. What do you pay?—A very small sum; it is the price of the grass, 6s.

5837. Are there other cottars at Ferrinvicquire?—Not one.

5838. You are the only one?—I am the only one.

5839. How long have you been there?—I was born there.

5840. You wish another holding?—Yes.

5841. Where do you think it could be obtained?—Anywhere within my reach. There is not much agricultural ground in Mr Martin's estate, I would say, except a place for three or four at Scorr.

5842. You think there is land there for three or four?—For three or four I would think; there is a good deal of hill pasture, but there is no arable ground.

5843. Do you wish to make any further statement?—No, I agree with the previous witness.

5844. You would take a holding if you got the offer of one?—Yes, willingly.

5845. How large?—I would say from £5 to £10.

5846. Of rent?—Yes.

5847. You think you could make a rent of £10?—Yes.

5848. With average chances?—Yes.

5849. And without assistance?—Without assistance.

5850. *Mr Nicol Martin* (Proprietor of Ferrinvicquire).—I should like to know this. You say there is ground which is suitable for three tenants on Scorr?—Yes.

5851. Are there any three who could pay for the stock, the present stock on the hill?—Well, I do not know as to that stock, but I know that there are three, and more than three I believe, who could pay for a good-sized croft.

5852. I quite agree; but if part of the place is taken, the rest is useless for me. You know that. So I want to know if there are any three that could pay for the stock on the hill ground just now?—I cannot say for that.

5853. *The Chairman.*—You mean your own stock?

5854. *Mr Martin.*—I mean my own stock presently on the hill ground. He says it is a place fit for three, and I want to know if there are any three who could take it?

5855. *The Chairman.*—What is your answer to the question?—I say that I do not know.

5856. *Mr Martin.*—You heard yesterday evidence given here that for 100 sheep, 6 cows, and 1 horse, a fair rent would be about £5 or £6?—That was equal to the man that said it would cost £450 to start a crofter.

5857. I am not talking of what it would cost. I ask if a croft with the stock I have named would be fairly rented at £5 or £6. You do not consider it too dear, I am sure?—No, I do not consider it too dear.

5858. Do you consider it what you would call a fair rent?—Well, I will leave the fixing of the rent to better judges.

5859. You have an opinion, surely—when you want land you know the value of it. There is no man who wants land but surely can give an opinion?—But do you think the country is going to take my opinion of the price of land?

5860. No, I am not asking the country to take it, but I will take it?—There are better judges than I or maybe you, Mr Martin.

5861. I would like you to answer the question whether that would be a fair rent? Do you think it is about the thing?—Well, I believe it is on the cheap side, I would say.

Dunvegan, Skye. — Neil Mackinnon.

5862. I quite agree with you myself. Now, at £5, that would be about 7½d. per sheep. Now, on Scorr I have just now between 500 and 600 sheep, which would make a rent of about £17, 10s. for Scorr. Would you consider that a fair rent for the hill?—I am not a valuator.

5863. Well, I have erected fences, as you know?—I know.

5864. You know that the people of the township marked the march where I should put up the fence, and you also know that they promised to pay half the interest on the cost?—I had nothing to do with that; I was in no way connected with that.

5865. But I suppose you got instructions to come here to-day?—Nothing in regard to the fences.

5866. Well, it is a fact all the same?—Oh, I don't deny the fact.

5867. I asked if you knew that I erected a fence between my crofters and myself?—You did.

5868. I ask if you know that they promised to pay half the interest on that fence as far as it went along their land?—I took no interest in that subject; I had nothing to do with it myself.

5869. *The Chairman.*—Do you know that they promised to make that payment, or do you not know?—No.

5870. You do not know?—No.

5871. Very well, that is enough?—I do not say but that it is true for all that.

5872. Personally you had nothing to do with it?—No.

5873. *Mr Martin.*—But he is here for the people, and that is why I put it. (To Witness.) Do you consider £17, 10s. a fair rent for Scorr, while I pay £26 a year for the interest of the fences? Do you consider it fair that I should let Scorr for £17, 10s. to crofters and pay £26 myself for the fencing of that ground?—Do you fix the rent?

5874. I fix it according to the statement of delegates here yesterday, and I only ask if you would consider it a fair thing?—Well, I heard of 30 or 40 sheep, and 5 or 6 cows, and a horse for £6 or £7.

5875. Well, at £6 or £7 it will not make more than I say, £17 or so. Would you think that I could possibly give my hill ground for £17, while I have to pay £26, 10s. of interest for the fencing of that ground?—Oh, I cannot say, but I believe———

5876. *The Chairman.*—What were you going to say you believe?—I believe by his statement he could not do that. It would be at the rate he mentions all expenses.

5877. You would not expect him to take a rent of £17, 10s. in respect of a property which was fenced at a yearly interest of £26?—No, it would be impossible, I think.

5878. *Mr Martin.*—I want you also to answer me this one question. Would you think it fair that I should take from my tenants a rent of 7½d. per sheep while I pay to another proprietor for the grazing over 5s. per sheep?—I would think not.

Donald Maclean.

DONALD MACLEAN, Crofter, Galtrigill—*examined.*

5879. *The Chairman.*—Are you a crofter?—Yes.

5880. I see your holding extends to 2 acres 3 poles arable, 2 acres 3 roods 14 poles outrun, and grazing the same as the last witness. Your former rent was £3, 10s., and your fair rent is £2, 2s.?—Yes.

5881. Did you hear the evidence yesterday?—Yes.

5882. And does it generally set forth your views?—Yes.

5883. Would you like to make any addition to it?—There is a written statement here.

5884. Kindly read that statement.

Unto the Honourable Royal Commission 1892.

The statement of the people of the crofting township of Galtrigill, on the estate of Mr Nicol Martin, in the parish of Duirinish.

The above named township is too thickly populated. To put the township into an orderly and comfortable position, one-half of its crofters ought to be removed. Dunvegan, Skye. — Donald Maclean.

NUMBER OF CROFTERS, COTTARS, &c., IN TOWNSHIP OF GALTRIGILL.

No. of Crofters.	No. of Cottars.	No. of Crofters it would keep comfortably.
10	2	5

A former proprietor, Mr Malcolm Nicolson, has curtailed the township of Galtrigill by depriving the crofters of two-thirds of the township for a sheep-run, which is used by the now proprietor, Mr Nicol Martin, for the same purpose. By adding the deprived part to Galtrigill, after the migration, the remaining crofters will be in a more comfortable position. On Mr Nicol Martin's estate there is only land for about one-third of its crofters, but there is plenty of land on Macleod of Macleod's estate which we would be glad to get.

(Signed) JOHN MACLEAN, Crofter, Galtrigill.
DONALD M'LEAN, „ „
JOHN CAMPBELL, sen., „ „
ALEXANDER CAMPBELL, „ „
JOHN CAMPBELL, jun., „ „
CHARLES CAMPBELL, „ „
ALEXANDER M'LEAN, „ „
Mrs KENNETH M'LEAN, „ „
JOHN M'LEAN, „ „

5885. *Mr Nicol Martin.*—Would you promise to pay a fair rent for this hill that you want—I understand you ask for the hill of Galtrigill?—Certainly, we promise to pay a fair rent.

5886. When did you yourself get your present croft?—About ten or eleven years ago.

5887. At May 1882, was it not?—(No answer).

5888. Did you not, at that time, write a statement saying that you would pay a yearly rent of £3, 10s. for that croft, and send it up by Mr William Macneil, postmaster?—It might be true enough.

5889. That is not an answer; did you?—I believe I did.

5890. Is it not a fact that from 1882 till November 1888 you only paid in all £1, 10s. 3d.?—It is a fact.

5891. Can I judge, then, from that fact that the hill ground will be paid in the same way?—I did not come here to speak for myself personally. I came here to represent the people of the township, and I cannot say much about them as regards that question.

5892. *Mr Sutherland.*—Did the Crofters Commission find that that amount of £3, 10s. was too high?—They did.

5893. And they reduced it to £2, 2s.?—That is right.

5894. And you did not pay it because you were unable to do it, having too high a rent to pay?—It was not for being too high altogether, but I was not very successful in the fishing. I was fishing on the East Coast, and I was forced to come home. My wife was unwell for a year or two, and I could not pay the rent at that time.

5895. So it is out of the fishing you were paying the rent, and not out of the holding?—Certainly out of the fishing; I could not pay it out of the croft.

DONALD SHAW, Crofter, Edinbane (69). Donald Sh
(Examined in Gaelic through an Interpreter.)

5896. *The Chairman.*—You are a crofter at Edinbane?—Yes.

5897. I see your holding is 2 acres 2 roods 9 poles arable, and 2 roods 11 poles outrun; grazing 2110

Dunvegan, Skye.

Donald Shaw.

acres, divided into 28 shares, and you hold half a share. Your old rent was £4, and it has been reduced to £2, 15s.?—Yes.

5898. Have you a written statement?—Yes.

5899. Would you kindly read it?

Statement on behalf of the crofters of Edinbane, on the Greshornish estate.

We, the crofters of Edinbane, on the Greshornish estate, beg to make the following statement regarding the sheep-tack on this estate. The tack was formed over forty years ago, and three townships were cleared for that purpose, namely, Coishletter, from which ten families were evicted; Lower Glen, Greshornish, from which six families were evicted; and Dubeck, from which five families were evicted. Several of the evicted families were placed in Edinbane, which had already been sufficiently occupied, thus causing the present congestion. The township was also curtailed by taking from it the districts of Kerrol and Blackhill, on the latter of which were placed cottars. This curtailment was made without any reduction of rent. While we consider the above-mentioned sheep farm as suitable for crofts, we would state that without a loan of money we would be unable to stock them or build houses on them in the event of them being formed.

(Signed) Donald × Shaw. his mark.

" Kenneth Macaskill.

Dugald Maclachlan, *Witness.*

5900. Do you wish to say anything more, Mr Shaw?—No.

Kenneth Macaskill.

Kenneth Macaskill, 18 and 19 Edinbane (70). (Examined in Gaelic through an Interpreter.)

5901. *The Chairman.*—Is yours a joint-tenancy in name of Kenneth and Donald Macaskill?—Yes.

5902. Then I see you hold half a croft, the area being 8 acres 3 roods 31 poles arable, 6 acres 1 rood 1 pole outrun, common pasture 2110 acres, divided into 28 shares. The former rent £12, now reduced to £8, 10s.?—Yes.

5903. Have you a written statement?—No, I am from the same township as the previous witness.

5904. Would you sign the statement given in by Shaw?—Yes.

5905. What has become of the place called Caroll? is it occupied now?—The innkeeper has one-half.

5906. What is the name of the innkeeper?—Neil Campbell.

5907. Do you know what rent Neil Campbell pays?—I could not say, indeed.

5908. Who has got the other half?—John Macdonald.

5909. Who is John Macdonald?—He was a servant of Mr Macleod.

5910. Then do you wish to say anything further?—A widow has another piece of it.

5911. What is the name of the widow; is it Mrs Mackay?—Yes.

5912. Then who has got Blackhill?—The poor people that were on Greshornish and Coishletter are settled there. They are cottars entirely.

5913. *Mr Macleod.*—How long is it since the farm of Greshornish was cleared?—Forty years since Coishletter was cleared. I cannot tell how long since the rest of the estate was cleared, for I was born and brought up at Husabost, and I am now paying a rent to five landlords.

5914. *Mr Shaw.*—It is thirty-eight years since Coishletter was cleared.

[Mr John Robertson, Orbost, transmitted the following statements with reference to Edinbane and Coishletter:—

Edinbane.

5914A. This township contains about 200 acres arable and 2000 acres hill pasture.

There are 28 crofts in the township, the rent of which was, in 1836, £280, 4s. 6d. It was reduced in 1866 to £218, 1s., and in 1889 by the Crofters Commission and proprietor to £160.

Dunvegan Skye.

Kenneth Macaskill.

The crofters have got a joint stock of sheep in number of all classes near to 600, and it has been managed as a club farm from 1866 to the present date. A shepherd has charge of the sheep, and there are two managers appointed annually to make all sales and pay all expenses in connection with the farm; and at Martinmas of each year the profits are divided amongst the crofters. The result of this club farm management for the past twenty-six years has been satisfactory, and I am of opinion that all crofter townships should be managed in this way, and made compulsory, and a limited number of dogs only allowed to be kept in the township.

The sheep are all under one mark, and there are rules and regulations for the management.

The souming of cattle is four cows for each croft and two for each half croft, but a number of the crofters keep horses, for which there is no grass; and though the owners pay to the joint stock a small sum for their grazing, I think that for each horse kept on a croft the souming should be reduced to two cows and one horse, instead of four cows, as the large number of cows and horses kept on the grazings are destroying the sheep run and injuring the sheep stock.

Considering the extent of arable land and hill pasture attached to the crofts, and which enables them to keep many cattle, I certainly think they are in a fairly satisfactory position, and probably better than with additional lands that they could not stock nor pay the additional rent.

John Robertson.

Orbost, *5th May* 1893.

Coishletter.

This township contains about 60 acres arable and 2000 acres hill pasture.

The rent is £95 per annum; the arable land is required for hay or corn to feed the cattle kept on Coishletter and Greshornish; the parks of Greshornish and the green lands on this farm being of a very limited quantity, and not sufficient for the small herd of cattle kept on Greshornish, without the assistance of the crop grown on Coishletter.

Besides, there is a large and valuable stock of sheep on Coishletter, numbering some 600 sheep of all classes, and I am satisfied none of the crofters on Edinbane could take over these sheep by valuation, as is the custom over all Skye.

I maintain that no township should be divided. If given at all to the crofters, it should be wholly given, and the stock of sheep should be taken over by valuation in the usual way.

I know it is said that the valuations of sheep are usually above the market value and unfair. I maintain sheep bred on the farm should be above, and very considerably above market value, and that the valuations are not unfair in this respect. To clear off sheep from a farm would be a very serious loss to the owner, and to restock the farm with strange sheep would be a greater loss to the incoming tenant or tenants.

My experience is that valuations are carefully and anxiously considered for all interested.

John Robertson.]

Orbost, *5th May* 1893.

Fergus Ferguson

Fergus Ferguson, Dunhallin, Waternish (74) —*examined.*

5915. *The Chairman.*—I observe that your holding extends to 3 acres 1 rood 20 poles arable, 1 acre 2 roods 31 poles outrun, 97 acres township grazing divided into 11 shares, and 317 acres divided into 22 shares. The

Dunvegan, Skye.

Fergus Ferguson.

former rent of your holding was £3, 10s., and the fair rent is £2, 15s. Have you a written statement?—No.

5916. Do you wish to get a new holding?—Yes.

5917. Where?—It would be natural to say that we would expect to be re-settled where we and our fathers and grandfathers were.

5918. Where was that?—Trumpan More, in Waternish.

5919. Are there any other old townships thereabout?—Yes.

5920. What are their names?—Unish, Lower Hallistra, Bay.

5921. Any more?—There are only small townships in which there were two or three tenants each, Forsa Chreggan and Forsa Brieb. That is all.

5922. You think the lands where these townships were placed are suitable for new holdings?—Yes.

5923. How many crofters are in Dunhallin?—Twenty-three were settled there when we were put there first.

5924. When was that?—Twenty-eight years ago.

5925. How many are there now?—Three of these crofts became vacant, and were given to tenants who do not come under the Crofters Act.

5926. How many families are there now under the Crofters Act?—Twenty, I think.

5927. How many cottars?—Not many cottars; eight or nine women were on the Poors Roll. They are not altogether in our township. Some of them are in the township below us, Hallin Park, but all those women cut their peats on our pasture.

5928. Is the township congested?—Yes, there are three times more than there ought to be.

5929. And is the land exhausted?—Yes, so much so that we have not got anything out of the ground for the past two years; it would not sow itself back.

5930. Then would your idea be to take away two-thirds of the people and leave the remaining third?—It would need that.

5931. *Mr Forsyth.*—Can you build and pay for stock if you get a holding?—No, we are run out; we are come to poverty.

5932. You would need assistance?—Yes.

Donald M. Macleod.

DONALD M. MACLEOD, Geary, Waternish (21)—*examined.*

5933. *The Chairman.*—Do you appear here instead of your father?—I appear for the township along with two other delegates.

5934. But have you a croft yourself?—No, I appear for my father.

5935. What is your father's name?—Alexander Macleod.

5936. What is his age?—I am not very sure, 46 or 47, at any rate.

5937. Why is he not here; is he away from home?—No, but he is unwell.

5938. I see his holding extends to 3 acres 1 rood 33 poles arable, 1 acre 3 roods 22 poles outrun; 298 acres common pasture, divided into shares; and 277 acres hill pasture; also 21 acres between crofts and shore. What is it you want to say?—I have a statement.

5939. Kindly read it.

In the township of Geary there are three crofters and two cottars. The holdings are very small, and the condition of the people is miserable indeed; owing to the township being situated on a high elevation of rocks, seaware, which is used for manure, is almost impossible to get. Hence, by overcropping and want of manure, the small patches they possess are next to being useless.

In 1664 the township contained only 10 crofters, paying an annual rental of £15, 16s. 6d. Though the Land Court reduced the rental by 40 per cent., the present rent is four times or nearly five times the rental in 1664. Twenty-two crofters and two cottars are willing to migrate to Trumpan or Unish, or to any of the desolate townships on the estate formerly occupied by crofters. A few of them could stock their new holdings, but the most of them could not. If the Government will grant pecuniary assistance, I confidently assert the instalments would be regularly paid. A crofter, in my opinion, would require 15 acres arable land to make a living out of it. The most part of the Waternish estate consists of good arable land, but any part worth having of it is in the hands of the proprietor, and under sheep, or used for sporting purposes, while the poor people are huddled together on the bare rocks, and left to live or perish.

Dunvegan, Skye.

Donald Macleod.

These are the names of desolate townships:—

Unish, cleared 47 years ago, then containing 24 families.

Scorehoran, which contained 18 families, not sure of date of clearance.

Forsabrieb, which contained 6 families.

Rasherburgh, which contained 4 families.

Ascrib Islands, which contained 8 families.

Isle Isay, which contained 18 families.

Besides these there are Trumpan Beg and Trumpan Mor, Halistra, Fasach, and Frien Parks, which not long ago contained a numerous and contented tenantry, but the exact number I have not been able to ascertain. These facts are all on the authority of old men who remember the time perfectly well. The ruined homesteads, yet visible, are the most eloquent witnesses to the devastations wrought in these days.

There are some young married men in this township of Geary who would gladly take land should they get it. As the land is there, why shouldn't they? If the land was compulsorily distributed among the people, Waternish would keep its entire population without a soul moving out of it. Presently, they earn their living by labouring in the south, and also at the fishing. The present state of the Highlands is a disgrace to civilisation, and ought not to be tolerated. As far as Waternish is concerned, I have amply demonstrated the fact that—

> 'The sons of warriors are despised,
> Their fields are ploughed no more,
> On every hill are sheep and deer,
> Where heroes dwelt before.'

Signed on behalf of 32 crofters,

DONALD M. MACLEOD.

5940. Did you write that out yourself?—Yes.

5941. And it represents the views of those on whose behalf you appear?—Exactly.

5942. *Captain Macdonald.*—Do you ever do any fishing in your quarter?—Certainly.

5943. Have you been fishing this year?—I have.

5944. How long?—I have been out and in all winter fishing, some days out and some days in. I cannot give you the exact number of days, as weather permitted.

5945. What amount of fish did you take to each boat?—I did not weigh it.

5946. Did you sell it without weighing it?—Some of it the family consumed, and some of it was sold.

5947. I wish to know if you sold any?—Yes, the long line fishing was sold.

5948. How much?—Something between £2 and £3, but I cannot give you the exact figure, say £2, 10s.

5949. In what space of time did you make that?—About six weeks.

5950. Was there any quantity of fish sold by the people in the township?—There has been, and there is every year a quantity of fish sold; if there were not, the people would starve for all the land is doing.

5951. Anybody would starve who is idle. About the townships you spoke of—Unish, and Scorehoran, and Forsabrieb—were the people removed from there against their will?—They were removed, as far as I have been able to ascertain, against their will; compulsorily evicted.

5952. On what authority do you state that?—On the authority of one man certainly.

5953. Are there any of them here?—There was a man that has been in Trumpan, Mr Ferguson.

5954. Are any of those that were at Unish, or at Scorr, on Forsabreib, here?—I believe there is. (*Mr*

Dunvegan, Skye. Donald M. Macleod.

Shaw.—I am one.) I was speaking to one of them the other evening, but he could not walk. Were the evidence taken at Stein he would appear, but fourteen miles is too much for a man of eighty years to travel, so I have been deputed to give this statement, and I believe it is a fact.

5955. When were the crofters sent to Unish?—I am not aware.

5956. When were these crofters placed in Unish?—I cannot say, but they were placed there by your father, Major Macdonald.

5957. Do you know if there were any crofters in Unish previous to the time at which my father planted crofters there?—I do not know.

5958. Did you ever hear that there were any?—I never asked. I asked about the time they were removed from Unish.

5959. Do you know if the crofters from Gillen were removed against their will from Scorr now on Gillen?—I cannot say, but if they were not we will take it back of our own free will. We will take Scorr back. It is a desolate place anyhow.

5960. Were you at Scorr?—I was.

5961. Had your father lands there at Scorr?—No. The townships are desolate, and they can be seen by the Commissioners there, the ruined tenements which are a disgrace to the system.

5962. *The Chairman.*—Please wait a moment. Is your township of Geary largely a fishing township?—No, it cannot be; for I explain in the written statement that it is situated on a high elevation of rock, which bars them from fishing regularly.

5963. But you go to the fishing a good deal yourself?—Fishing or labouring, whatever I can get; I am a Jack of all trades.

5964. Do any others in the township go to the fishing besides yourself?—Yes.

5965. How many?—The whole male population that are fit to fish. They are half fishermen and half crofters.

5966. And do they pay their rents out of the land or out of the sea?—Out of the sea mostly.

5967. Could they live if it were not for the sea?—They could not by any means.

5968. Are their holdings too small?—Certainly they are.

5969. Is the land exhausted?—It is.

5970. Would some persons there, who take to fishing partly, be willing to settle as fishermen, and derive their livelihood from the sea entirely?—We would prefer the land; we want to see the estate populated first, and then the surplus population can fish.

5971. You want self-sustaining holdings?—Yes.

5972. And to give up the sea?—Well, I do not know; I do not think that the Legislature would compel us to give up the sea.

5973. But I mean give up the sea, in the sense that you did not require to go to the sea for a livelihood?—That is what we want, to get a livelihood out of the land.

5974. Where is there accommodation within easy distance for all the crofters of the township?—Waternish could maintain its population without a soul moving out of it—the present population, if the land was fairly distributed.

5975. Arable and grazing?—Arable and grazing.

5976. Do you know it well?—Yes, I have travelled it all over.

5977. I think you said there are two crofters on the township?—That is a fact.

5978. *Mr Sutherland.*—Have you lived in Geary all your lifetime; been brought up there?—I was.

5979. So you know the whole country well?—Yes, I know the whole country perfectly well.

5980. You said that fishing was carried on there, too, on a large extent?—That is so.

5981. How many boats are there?—The boats are small.

5982. How many?—Four.

5983. Can you tell me the size of the boats, length of keel?—Twenty-two feet of a keel.

5984. And you have also stated that the country round about there is precipitous, the shore?—Yes. Dunvegan, Skye.

5985. Have you any beach at all near you?—No, just the small landing places that we make ourselves; and we are often in danger of our lives going out,—in fact, with a north wind we cannot go out at all. Donald M. Macleod.

5986. So you are at a very great disadvantage there?—Yes, we are at a very great disadvantage.

5987. What is done with the fish you sell?—Some of them send it south.

5988. You smoke it first, and then send it south?—We dry it first and send it south. Some of them sell to local curers.

5989. Do you get any market at all for fish?—We get 5½d. for cod and 7½d. for ling.

5990. Where is that fish sent?—To Glasgow, to the southern markets.

5991. What do you pay for freight?—I cannot say exactly, about £1 a ton.

5992. You very seldom have a ton to send?—Not from one boat.

5993. The rates are higher, are they not, if you only send a fraction of a ton?—I believe that is a fact.

5994. Have you ever known the fish sent to the south not pay the carriage?—I cannot answer the question.

5995. If you had a market for your fish near you, you could dispose of it to a greater advantage?—Yes.

5996. But at present you have not got that market, and you have not got the access to the sea?—No. With your Lordship's permission I may be allowed to state that we have no ready communication to this township. The District Committee wished to construct a road, but they were vetoed by Captain Macdonald from doing so, on what grounds I cannot say.

5997. *The Chairman.*—A road from where to where?—From the schoolhouse down to Knockbreck, through the township of Geary to the other end.

5998. How far is that?—About a mile and a half.

5999. A road through what kind of land?—Our own land, the crofters arable land.

6000. Arable or grazing do you mean?—Arable. Part of it is grazing.

6001. Did you unanimously resolve to make that road if allowed?—Yes, and we have been agitating for a considerable time now for it.

6002. Did you apply to the landlord?—Yes, often.

6003. In writing?—By deputation.

6004. And what answer did you receive?—He replied that if we would promise that we would not agitate for more land he would allow the road to go through the village.

6005. Did you hear him give that answer?—No. I have been told by the deputation, and I have reported the deputation's answer to the public prints, to the *Oban Times;* some of the Commissioners might have noticed it.

6006. Never mind that. Was that report brought back by the deputation to the township generally?—Yes, it was.

6007. Did you hear the report when it was brought back?—I did.

6008. How do children get at present from the township of Geary to the school?—They cannot get very well at all, and there are great complaints about the irregularity of the attendance, and School Board persecutions.

6009. Prosecutions you mean, not persecutions?—Persecutions I may be allowed to say.

6010. Pardon me. Is that the only school for the township of Geary?—It is the only school.

6011. How many children are in the habit of attending in good weather?—Well, I cannot tell you the exact number, but there are thirty-four families in the township, and about three scholars from each family on an average.

6012. There will be from 80 to 100?—About 100 or nearly 100.

6013. Tell me this. Do you say, speaking seriously, that the irregularity of attendance is in some degree due to the want of a road?—I emphatically maintain that.

Dunvegan, Skye.

Donald M. Macleod.

6014. Were you at that school when you were young?—I was.

6015. And you had no road?—No.

6016. Were you also at school in the south?—No, never.

6017. But were you in employment in the south?—I have been labouring in the south.

6018. Did the township undertake to maintain that road entirely at its own expense, or did they ask the landlord to pay for it in part?—The District Committee was going to construct it, and we got a Government grant for the road, but still he would not withdraw his opposition.

6019. What was the amount of the grant?—£3000 was granted for county roads, and a special condition was that the Geary road was proceeded with. We have the authority of the Secretary for Scotland for that.

6020. My colleague tells me that a special sum was allocated for the construction of this road. Do you know the amount of it?—I am not aware of the amount, but the road has not been constructed yet.

6021. For the reason that you have stated?—I do not know if the opposition is withdrawn now. The proprietor is there himself, and he can tell you whether he withdrew his opposition.

6022. *Mr Sutherland.*—I was asking you some questions about the fishing, because the point was raised; otherwise I would not have troubled you. But with regard to the fishing, I take it that generally you think it is a good thing that the rent of the land should be paid out of the fishing?—Certainly not.

6023. You do not think it just?—Not by any means.

6024. You think that every herring should hang by its own head?—Yes, certainly.

6025. That the amount that is payable by the land ought to be taken out of the land?—It ought, certainly.

6026. And you think that if the people of your township had an opportunity of forming new holdings in the place you have mentioned they would do so, paying the rent regularly under the conditions that possibly you may have heard yesterday?—I was not present yesterday; but I may mention that there are little or no arrears in this township on the Commission's fair rent, which shows that if the people had enlarged holdings they would do their best to pay.

6027. *Mr Macleod.*—In your statement you said that in 1664 the township contained only ten crofters, paying an annual amount of £15, 15s. 6d. What authority have you for this statement?—I have as my authority the pamphlet by Skeabost, entitled *The Past and Present Condition of the Skye Crofters.*

6028. *Mr Gordon.*—You have said that the people do not pay their rents out of their crops. Were not the rents fixed as fair rents by the Crofters Commission?—That is so.

6029. Well, I do not suppose that after living on the croft you would have much to spare; but you must have benefited by the use of your croft to the extent of having your cows' keep and getting milk; and if you had not the croft you would have to do without some useful things which you now possess?—Which useful things?

6030. Milk, butter, and poultry?—What milk can one cow give?

6031. Have you only one cow?—That is all.

6032. Have you any sheep?—None. We have no grazing.

6033. But then you speak for the whole township?—The souming is two cows.

6034. It is not fair, is it, to say that you get no good out of the croft?—I never said that.

6035. You say you do not pay the rent out of the croft?—No, we do not; we pay it by the fishing and by labour.

6036. But suppose you sell all the butter and milk from your cow, would that not pay the rent?—It would not pay a fraction of the rent.

6037. And you would get something for your stirk if you sold it?—But what is he going to get for his own labour?

Dunvegan, Skye.

Donald M Macleod.

6038. I quite agree with you that the whole produce of the croft might not be much after paying for your labour; but still the rent was considered a fair rent by the Crofters Commission?—Yes, we will pay that rent. There is little or no arrears on the township.

6039. *The Chairman.*—It is only fair to say, Captain Macdonald, with reference to these latter matters which I have brought out myself, that if you desire to put further questions to the witness you have an opportunity of doing so.

6040. *Captain Macdonald.*—I have only to state, my lord, that what he said was a deliberate falsehood as regards my saying that they would not get the road if they asked for more land. I never said anything of the sort to any deputation.

6041. *The Chairman.*—Would you kindly tell us what you did say?

6042. *Captain Macdonald.*—I just remarked,—'You are asking for land from one end of the township 'to the other, cutting through the centre of your arable 'land, while you say the arable ground is already too 'small.' That is all I said.

6043. *The Chairman.*—It would be better, I think, if you tender yourself as a witness, and give evidence yourself, rather than contradict the witnesses as they come forward; we will give you an opportunity of making any statement you desire with reference to this matter.

6044. *Captain Macdonald.*—Very well.

6045. *Mr Myles Macinnes.*—I should like to have an opportunity of saying, as one of the councillors who had to do with Captain Macdonald, that he actually refused to give us the road, and we had actually to apply to Sir George Trevelyan. We sent a deputation from Portree, and then he agreed to give a footpath.

6046. *Captain Macdonald.*—Nothing of the sort; I refuse to give the road still.

6047. *Mr Macinnes.*—I understood you agreed to give a footpath.

6048. *Captain Macdonald.*—I have done that all along.

JOHN MARTIN, Jun., Geary, Waternish (39)—*examined.*

John Martin

6049. *The Chairman.*—I see from the Blue-Book that your holding extends to 5 acres 34 poles arable, 1 acre 3 roods 35 poles outrun, 298 acres common pasture, and 277 acres hill pasture, as before; the old rent was £4, 5s. 6d., and the present amount £2, 18s. Have you a written statement?—No, I am supporting that statement of Macleod's.

6050. You concur in the statement given in by Macleod?—Yes.

6051. And I suppose it pretty fully sets forth the views of the township with regard to additional land and new crofts?—Yes.

6052. Do you know about the proposal to make a road from Geary to the schoolhouse?—Yes.

6053. What do you know about it?—We were wanting that road the last twenty years.

6054. Were you one of the deputation?—No. There were five of a deputation sent up to him last winter.

6055. Who did the deputation consist of?—Donald Bain, Alexander Beaton, Malcolm Mackinnon, Murdo Macswan, and Donald Campbell, jun.

6056. Did you hear what they reported when they came back; did they say what they had to say in your hearing?—Yes.

6057. What did they say?—They said he told them if they would not ask for more land, they could start to the work to-morrow: if they would not ask more land, they could go on with the work at once.

6058. He wanted to make it a condition of his allowing the road to be made, that they should not ask for more land?—Yes.

6059. Was that a road to the end of the township or through the township?—Through the township.

6060. And were you prepared to make it without

assistance from him?—Yes, the County Council was going to make it.

6061. Without any aid from the landlord?—Yes.

6062. When did the deputation last wait upon Captain Macdonald?—About January of this year.

6063. Do you wish to add anything to what has been said about vacant lands available for new crofts, or do you think the statement made already sufficiently explained the views of the township and your own views?—I support everything that was said in the statement: it is true.

6064. And you think it is sufficiently full and complete?—I think so.

6065. *Captain Macdonald.*—What amount of fishing was done in the township this year—cod and ling?—I calculate it gave from £2 to £2, 9s. or £2, 11s. or £2, 16s. to each man.

6066. To each man in the township?—To each man in the township.

6067. What time would they take to make that?—From five to six weeks, or from four to six weeks.

6068. What is the largest quantity of fish you have known to go from Geary at any time by steamer?—The largest quantity of cod and ling—from the three townships of Gillen, and Geary, and Knockbreck—was 11 tons, and that is a long time ago; Captain Macdonald was the curer at that time.

6069. That was cod and ling fish?—Yes.

6070. And what is the largest quantity of herring that you have known sent by steamer to Glasgow from the people of the township?—That is more than I could say.

6071. I want to know from you what is the largest amount of herring sent in any one year that you know of, from the township to Glasgow by steamer?—This year there was not a hundred herring; last year there was not half a barrel.

6072. I do not want to know what it was this year or last year. I want to know what was the largest quantity sent at any time?—I know perfectly well there were over 200 barrels some years since, but there was Waternish and Duirinish putting in, and it was all put in in name of Geary.

6073. Were there people coming from Duirinish to fish in Geary?—Yes.

6074. Well, it says a good deal for Geary that they would come from Duirinish to fish there. But what is the largest quantity that you have known sent by the township of Geary alone?—I mind when there were seven boats out of Geary, but there are only four now. I have been fishing for the last twenty-four years, and the highest take I should say would be about forty barrels per boat. That is only for a year or two.

6075. Forty barrels per boat, and how many boats?—There were seven at that time.

6076. That is 280 barrels?—But that was only for a year or two. The only saving port that we had in a north-east gale of wind was Port-a'-chirein, and you know what came of it,—Port-a'-chirein in Scorrhoran: you shut it up with stones, and that was the only place that we had to save our lives in a north-easterly storm. Many is the day since it was closed up that I was very nearly swamped coming in in a gale. There was no other place in Waternish that I could save my life except that; and it was closed, so that a seagull could not shove her head into it.

6077. There is a port at Scorrhoran, and there has been from time immemorial, which every one has had liberty to go to when the weather is boisterous?—Where is it?

6078. Where it has been from time immemorial—at the storehouse at Scorrhoran?—There are people here who were living at Scorrhoran, when there were men at Scorrhoran, and they will not say that. I have lived at Geary since ever I was born, and I have been a fisherman for the last twenty-four years, and have been fishing every winter out of Geary during that time, and I know the best port as well as the worst one, for many is the stormy night that I have come ashore in.

6079. *The Chairman.*—Was the fishing good last year?—No.

6080. Neither white fish nor herring?—No.

Dunvegan, Skye. John Martin.

6081. Was it good the year before?—No.

6082. Was it good three years ago?—It is seven years since we had anything worth speaking about at all; we have not been making a living during the last seven years.

6083. Do you say that for the last seven years there has been no profitable fishing at Geary?—No, indeed. It would not pay the lines, and it would not pay the gear or anything like it. And more than that, we have over 300 feet of plumb rocks to go down every night and day, and then we have to draw up the boats maybe two or three times a day to be out of reach of the waves.

6084. Do you go away as a hired hand elsewhere when the fishing is not good at home?—Yes.

6085. Where do you go to?—I have been all over Scotland.

6086. Where were you last year?—In England, at Shields.

6087. Is it common for the grown-up men in the township to go away as hired hands?—Yes. They are away already for this year.

6088. *Mr Sutherland.*—Can you tell us when you had the 11 tons of white fish gathered from all the townships?—Twenty-four years ago.

6089. And had you anything like that since?—Nothing like it. We had seven tons some years, but five was the highest that I remember, and there were three townships making that.

6090. How long does the fishing last?—The white fishing will only last about a month or six weeks, owing to the want of bait mostly.

6091. So that anything you can get from the fishing only extends over these few weeks?—That is all.

6092. You made a remarkable statement with regard to a harbour; was there any reason ascribed for having done that? Did the landlord say why he closed up this harbour in this way?—No.

6093. Tell us in a little more detail how it was done?—Oh, I cannot say how it was done, only that he got men and filled it up. He paid the men for the work, and they filled up the port that saved our lives.

6094. Were you in the habit of using this harbour?—I was; I was going out different times when I could not earn a copper in the township. I could go out there and may be earn a shilling to myself and my family.

6095. But were the others using it also?—Yes, everyone in the three townships.

6096. Would you use it in preference to the harbour you have now?—Yes, in coarse weather.

6097. So that you have used it as a harbour of refuge?—Yes, when the wind came from the north-east we used it for safety.

6098. *Mr Maccallum.*—Have you been getting any help from the proprietor in prosecuting the fishing? Has he given you any help or encouragement in the way of getting boats?—He does not help us in any way.

6099. And I suppose it was not to help the fishing that that harbour was closed?—No, it was not to help the fishing; it seems so.

6100. *Mr Munro.*—Did you ever ask Captain Macdonald what his reason was for closing up this harbour against you?—Not me alone, but I think they are in the house who did ask him. I myself never asked him.

6101. Can you tell us what reason he assigned to them for closing it up?—He said they were passing through his grazing in Scorr; they were tramping his grazing.

6102. That was the reason for closing up the harbour?—That was the only excuse.

6103. Then were your lives put in peril through the closing of this harbour?—Certainly they were, and mine was.

6104. You have given us some interesting information regarding the fishing of Geary, and I understand it might be made productive with proper facilities. Now, if you had light railways in Skye would that help you

Dunvegan Skye. John Martin.

to develop the fishing?—Oh, yes; it would help. We would get the first market daily.

6105. And proper harbour accommodation?—Only that carriage is very dear going to London.

6106. *Mr Gordon.*—What is the price of a ton of dried cod or ling when you sell it?—Sometimes we get 13s. a ton.

6107. The cwt.?—Ay, the cwt.

6108. £13 a ton?—Yes. Sometimes 12s. and sometimes 18s. the cwt.

6109. What will the expenses be of that?—There is a good deal of expense and a good deal of labour. They have to cure it and dry it, and get salt from Glasgow which costs them £3 a ton; it will cost £1 per ton to get the fish to Glasgow.

6110. *Mr Macleod.*—You said that this year there were sold of cod and ling during the five or six weeks fish to the value of between £2, 8s. and £2, 11s. to each man. Could you give us any idea of how much it cost you to catch that value of fish?—It cost me more than the double of that

6111. It cost you more than the value of the fish in boat and gear?—In boat and gear.

6112. Not to say anything of your own labour?—No, it cost me more than the value of it.

6113. *Captain Macdonald.*—I wish to ask you with regard to this port, if it is on your own shore or on the shore of lands belonging to me?—Belonging to you.

6114. So this port which you refer to was there previous to tenants occupying Scorr whom my father sent there?—I think it was, but there are older men than myself here; at least they helped to make it.

6115. Did I give the tenants of Geary any addition to their land after I got the lands into my own hands?—Yes, you gave them a bit of ground where the cows were drowned—a bit of boggy ground that cows and beasts could not live on.

6116. Would you take more of that boggy ground?—No; there is no more of it in Waternish.

6117. What extent did you get of this boggy ground?—I have lost a cow in it last year.

6118. *The Chairman.*—What is the extent of it? Attend to the question, if you please.—It will be about 15 or 20 acres, hardly so much.

6119. *Captain Macdonald.*—I have a statement here, my lord, by Mr Taylor, the surveyor, who measured it, and he makes it 212 acres.

6120. *The Chairman.*—You had better take that from Mr Taylor himself; you can call him as a witness, if you deem it necessary; we must confine ourselves to the evidence of this witness in the meantime.

6121. *The Witness.*—We have not that amount altogether.

6122. *The Chairman.*—Did you give some evidence before the Crofters Commission about this harbour?—Yes.

6123. I think that was in 1889?—Yes.

6124. Now, was there a path from your township and other townships to a harbour on Captain Macdonald's lands?—Yes.

6125. Was there anything done to that path?—Yes, it was broken up so that no human being could cross it.

6126. It was practically shut up?—Yes. He cut it fair through the middle so as no human being or four-footed beast could cross it.

6127. Is there no access by road to that harbour now?—Yes; there is a private road that he uses for himself; likely none of the crofters would be allowed to use it.

6128. But is there any access for the crofters unless by that private road?—There is another kind of footpath besides that.

John Macaskill.

JOHN MACASKILL, Geary, Waternish (35)—*examined.*

6129. *The Chairman.*—I see your holding is 4 acres 1 rood 3 poles arable, 3 acres 34 poles outrun, and pasture the same as before. The old rent was £3, and the fair rent £1, 18s.?—Yes.

6130. Do you hold as a joint-tenant with your mother?—Yes. Dunvegan, Skye. John Macaskill.

6131. Are you desirous of obtaining a new holding?—Yes.

6132. And can you show us land available for the purpose when we go to the ground?—Yes. If not we will speak about it again. There is plenty of land there if the crofters could get it.

6133. And the sites of old townships?—Yes.

6134. Do you wish to add anything to the statements that have been made already on behalf of the township?—I wish to support it; it is quite true.

6135. You concur in the evidence?—Yes.

6136. Do you wish to make any additional statement, or do you think your case is sufficiently presented by what has been already submitted to us?—As far as I remember it was mentioned in the statement, the townships that are empty just now, which were once peopled, that is Unish, Trumpan Mor, Trumpan Beag, Halistra, Losait, Achabeag, Scorrhoran, Trian, Forsabrieb, and Forsachreggan.

6137. We have got all these places down; they have been already mentioned.—All these places are fit enough for crofters yet, if they were put there.

6138. That is what has been said, and what we will look to when we go to the ground. We are anxious to get on, and probably you may be satisfied with what has already been stated on behalf of the township?—Yes; but I wish to explain to you that this port, which was closed by the proprietor, was the only saving place we had in bad weather, especially in a north-east wind, a wind from north to north-east. This was the only shelter we had, and I have seen myself from five to twelve boats beached there when they could not get ashore any other place; and I have often seen our nets out at anchor there about 200 yards from the shore where we used to beach our boats, and we could not get out to them; and if we got out we could not get in again, since that port was closed.

6139. Do you remember the date of the closing?—It was in 1886 or 1888, I am not sure which.

6140. Do you know what circumstances led to the closing?—No, except that he was trying to keep the fishermen away from Scorrhoran.

6141. Why?—He holds that they were tramping his lands by going to the shore, and there was a road going to that place.

6142. Did you see the closing take place?—Yes; I did not see them filling it with big stones, but I visited the place again and saw it.

6143. You could not get into it?—Not at all. There are big stones as big as the pulpit, rolled in with big bars; and worse than that, we reported in the newspaper that it was closed, and Captain Macdonald holds out that he never closed the port. This was three times worse, because it was a shelter to every fisherman round northward or eastward of us; it was their only saving place when they came from Lord Macdonald's estate, and from Uig and from Bernisdale. They used to beach their boats there as well as ourselves, and if they were here to-day they would bear witness as well as I.

6144. Has the port been rendered quite useless by this process?—Oh, yes. Perhaps there will be some sea-weed growing on the stones, that is all I know about it; and we are prevented from cutting the sea-ware as it is. That is what we have against him, but perhaps we were wrong ourselves when we made the application for fair rent. It is in the Act, as far as I can go through it, that the Commissioners had power to give us the privilege of cutting sea-ware and rushes for thatching our houses, and heather for making ropes to keep on the thatch.

6145. *Mr Munro.*—With reference to the closing of this harbour, did it ever occur to you to complain to the authorities?—We applied to the Commissioners at the time when they were about other farms.

6146. But did it never occur to you to submit your case to the Board of Trade or the Trinity House?—No.

6147. *Captain Macdonald.*—I merely want to state that I never denied shutting this port.

6148. *The Chairman.*—The statement would come in more effectively, and in better order, if you offer yourself

Dunvegan, Skye. John Macaskill.

as a witness afterwards. You can speak to that when you put yourself forward to make any statement you think desirable. (*To Witness.*) Did you hear what the previous witness said with regard to the closing up of a road?—Is it the road to this port, or to the township of Geary?

6149. I mean the road to the port. Do you know about that?—Yes, I have heard something.

6150. Do you know about it yourself?—Yes.

6151. What do you know about it?—I know there was a road. I don't know how it was made, but there was a road going down to this place, Scorrhoran, or anyhow to the top of the rocks, and I think it was the Captain himself who made the road down to Scorrhoran. But there was a road to the top of the rocks long ago, and everybody had the privilege to go on that road, and then the Captain cut this old road,—he just cut it right across, made it deep, 3 or 4 feet by 2½ broad or so. He cut this road here, and he made a new road at the back of it again, and keeps this road for himself as a private road.

Peter Macnab.

PETER MACNAB, Gillen, Waternish (72)—*examined.*

6152. *The Chairman.*—I see your holding has 5 acres 3 roods 9 poles arable, 3 acres 2 roods outrun; 97 acres common pasture, divided into 11 shares; and 317 acres hill pasture, divided into 22 shares. Do you represent the township of Gillen?—Yes.

6153. How many crofters are in Gillen?—Eleven.

6154. Any cottars?—No.

6155. You have heard all the previous evidence?—Yes.

6156. Do you concur in it?—What was it that was said?

6157. I think we will not trouble you any more. You have not a written statement, have you?—No. We were thinking if we could get Scorr we would try it.

Alexander Macleod.

ALEXANDER MACLEOD, Gillen, Waternish (68)—*examined.*

6158. *The Chairman.*—I see your holding has 5 acres 2 roods 14 poles arable, 2 acres 16 poles outrun, and pasture the same as the last witness. The former rent was £5, 10s., and the fair rent is £2, 15s. Did you hear the previous evidence?—Yes.

6159. Does it express your views on the matter?—Yes.

6160. How many families of crofters are in Gillen?—There were eleven families in it.

6161. How many are there now?—There are some of them who are not for more land: six of them are for more land.

6162. How many are there altogether in Gillen, that is my question?—Nine. The Captain himself has one of the crofts; and one of the members of the township, who was in possession of half a croft, got a whole croft in addition from the Captain.

6163. Are there any cottars?—No.

6164. You say that of the crofters six desire to have new holdings?—Yes.

6165. And do you think there is available land within easy access?—Yes.

6166. What is the name of the place?—Scorehoran, beside us.

Donald Macswan.

DONALD MACSWAN, Knockbreck, Waternish (48). (Examined in Gaelic through an Interpreter.)

6167. *The Chairman.*—Are you a crofter?—Yes. I see your croft has 2 acres 37 poles arable, 1 acre 1 rood 18 poles outrun; common pasture 298, hill pasture 277, and 21 acres between crofts and shore, with 52 acres 2 roods 26 poles divided into 6 shares. Your former rent was £2, 9s, your fair rent £1, 5s. What is it you wish to tell us about this matter; you have heard the previous evidence?—Yes.

6168. And do you concur in it, or do you not?—I support all I heard to-day. Dunvegan, Skye.

6169. Is it your opinion that there is available land within easy distance of where you are? The land that is available for our purpose is not very near us, but there is plenty of land for all that; it is not far away. Donald Macswan.

6170. How far?—The other side of the hill.

6171. What is the distance?—2 or 2½ or 3 miles.

6171*a*. *Mr Macleod.*—How many crofters are there in the township?—Seven.

6172. How many cottars?—Only two old women.

6173. How many of those desire new holdings?—When my father came there were only two.

6174. (*Question repeated*).—They are all wanting land.

6175. The whole seven?—Yes.

6176. How many could live comfortably, do you think, in Knockbreck—how many families?—It would be little enough for two, I think.

6177. Did the families go there, or were they put there?—They were put there.

6178. From where?—From all parts; from the other side.

6179. The other side of the hill?—When my father came there there were only two; he was the third.

6180. Where did he come from?—From Hallin Park.

JOHN MACLEOD, Knockbreck, Waternish (49)—*examined.* John Macleod

6181. *The Chairman.*—Are you a crofter?—Yes.

6182. I see you hold a croft of 2 acres 2 roods 26 poles arable, and 1 acre 28 poles outrun, with pasture the same as the last witness. The former rent was £2, 19s., and the fair rent is £1, 18s.?—Yes.

6183. Are you anxious to obtain a new holding?—Yes.

6184. And is there available land near?—Yes.

DONALD MACKINNON, Halistra, Waternish (60). (Examined in Gaelic through an Interpreter.) Donald Mackinnon.

6185. *The Chairman.*—Are you a crofter?—Yes.

6186. In Halistra?—I am in Upper Halistra now.

6187. I see your holding is 5 acres 2 roods 27 poles arable, and 3 acres 14 poles outrun, no common pasture. The former rent of £7, 10s. was reduced to £3, 15s.?—Yes.

6188. How many crofters have you in Halistra?—There are nine.

6189. And are there any cottars?—There are two old women on the poor's roll.

6190. Do you agree with the evidence we have heard already?—Yes.

6191. Do you wish to make any additional statement?—No. We are so scarce of cattle that we have to keep our cattle on tether.

6192. What cattle have you?—Two cows; but I am allowed to have five on my holding, though it will only support one in good condition. We keep two on tether.

6193. How happens it that you have no pasture?—We never got it since the land was taken from my father. My father and grandfather had hill pasture.

6194. It was taken from your father, and have you not had any pasture at all since then?—No; we were shut off from the pasture by a dyke.

6195. When did that happen?—It is about fifty-four years since it was taken from us.

6196. Have you applied for pasture since?—Yes, and we could not get it. The landlord promised us repeatedly, but he did not give it to us.

6197. Who was the landlord?—Captain Macdonald himself. We have applied to the Commission for the pasture.

6198. But the application is not disposed of?—No. There is just a dyke and the roadway between us and pasture that we are asking for.

Dunvegan, Skye.

Donald Mackinnon.

6199. Does not the pasture belong to a farm now, or form part of a farm?—It is in the hands of the landlord himself; he has sheep and cattle on it.

6200. And what is the name of the place?—Halistra.

6201. Is there a Halistra farm in the hands of the landlord?—No, it was just called Upper Halistra.

6202. And it is worked as a grazing in the hands of the proprietor?—Yes.

6203. Allan Macdonald, jun., is described as the tenant in the Valuation Roll, and the rent is £65.

John Finlayson.

JOHN FINLAYSON, Hallin Park, Waternish—*examined.*

6204. *The Chairman.*—I see your croft has 6 acres 7 poles arable, 3 acres 2 roods 39 poles outrun, no pasture; the former rent was £9, and the fair rent is £4 10s. Have you been attending to the evidence to-day?—Yes.

6205. And do you agree with it?—Quite.

6206. You are ill off for grazing, I think?—Just the same as Mr Mackinnon here.

6207. Did you lose the grazing fifty-four years ago?—Yes.

6208. But would you like some now?—Yes.

6209. Are you anxious to get a new holding?—We put in application for that two years ago.

6210. That is for enlargement?—Yes.

6211. Is your desire to get an enlarged holding, or a new holding altogether?—We desire to get an enlargement of holding, just grazing.

6212. If you had that, would you be satisfied?—Yes.

6213. You don't want to leave,—to flit?—No, except it would better me. If it would better me I would flit very fast, after my labour for thirty-two years. We put in an application for 350 acres a few years ago, but it has not been disposed of yet.

6214. It is before Mr Macintyre, I think?—Yes.

6215. How many crofters are in Hallin Park?—Eleven altogether, but only five of them applied for more land.

6216. Are there any cottars in Hallin Park?—There are two paupers.

6217. How many crofters would the township of Hallin Park accommodate?—I could not say; the land has been so much turned, over and over, since the memory of man.

6218. You don't think it is good for anything?—It might be good for something, but not for much.

6219. Are all the crofters anxious to get away from it?—I know nothing except about the five.

6220. Are they all anxious?—They are all anxious to get grazing for their cattle.

6221. They wish to stay where they are if they got additional grazing for their cattle?—They told me nothing else, I think.

6222. Is there fishing where you are?—Yes.

6223. Good fishing?—At times.

6224. Do you go to the fishing?—Not now, I am getting too old and stiff.

6225. But did you go?—Yes.

6226. How long is it since you went out to the fishing?—It is a good while since I was at the fishing.

6227. How far are you from the fishing grounds where your croft is?—About 3 miles.

6228. And when you went to the fishing, what size of boat did you use?—About 22 feet keel.

6229. How many boats are there in your township at present?—There are not many now; they are all laid up for want of fish. There were only three or four fishing last winter.

6230. How many boats are there just now in the township in the habit of being taken out?—I could not say; five or six I suppose, but they are not fishing.

6231. What sort of fishing had you last year?—Very poor; but I was not at it myself.

Dunvegan Skye.

Donald Beaton.

DONALD BEATON, Stein, Waternish (56). (Examined partly in English and partly in Gaelic through an Interpreter).

6232. *The Chairman.*—Are you a crofter?—No, a cottar.

6233. Do you pay any rent?—No rent; we rent a house in Stein.

6234. Who is 'we'?—There are eight of us who are wanting land near the shore—cottars and fishermen.

6235. Are there any crofters in Stein at all?—Oh, yes, there are crofters above Stein all the way, but we had no crofts; we only pay rent for the houses near the shore.

6236. You pay a house rent?—We pay £4, 12s. 6d. every year for house rent.

6237. To whom do you pay it?—To Mrs M'Innes in Edinburgh, who is still the owner of the houses.

6238. It belonged to the British Fisheries Society, did it?—Yes.

6239. Does each person pay that, or is that the whole rent?—It is the whole rent for the room I had; the others pay the same.

6240. Then of the eight people, each pays £4, 12s. 6d.?—No; only six, I think, stop in Stein who pay rent.

6241. Do you all pay the same rent?—Yes, but two of us out of Stein have a house to themselves.

6242. Are you all anxious to get a piece of land?—Near the shore, which would be handy for fishing.

6243. You want a fishing croft?—Yes.

6244. A small patch of land where you could build a house, and put up a boat?—Yes; between £3 and £4 of land.

6245. Your idea is to live by the sea?—Yes.

6246. Not by the land?—Not by the land. I had land before, and I lost it.

6247. How did you lose it?—By the Commissioners.

6248. Do you know anything about the Grazings Act?—There is a petition from our village.

John Macswan.

JOHN MACSWAN, Stein, Waternish—*examined.*

6249. *The Chairman*—Are you a cottar in Stein?—I am not living in Stein. I am living a little bit from it, not very far.

6250. What is the name of your place?—Brae-Lusta.

6251. You are a cottar?—Yes.

6252. Do you pay any rent?—No.

6253. Have you any land?—No.

6254. Would you like to get some?—Yes.

6255. Is there suitable land near you?—Yes, there is a bit suitable land near us that would answer for the eight of us, and to get £3 or £4 worth.

6256. There are eight of you altogether?—Yes.

6257. You are in much the same position as Donald Beaton?—Much about the same. I make my living by fishing.

6258. And is the holding you have in view a holding by the sea, to enable you to fish more easily, or a crofted land?—I would like to have £3 or £4 worth of land.

6259. You want a holding with a rent of £3 or £4?—Yes.

6260. Then, in that case, I suppose you would live by the sea?—Partly by the sea, and partly by the croft.

6261. Have you any cattle?—No.

6262. Or sheep?—No.

6263. I forgot to ask Beaton, has he any stock?—No.

6264. Have any of you stock?—Some of us have a little.

6265. Do you live close to each other?—Not very far from one another.

6266. We have received the following letter from certain tenants on Captain Macdonald's estate:—

LUSTA, 5*th May* 1893.

MY LORDS.—We, the undersigned for Captain Macdonald's, Waternish, do now wish to make application

Dunvegan, Skye. John Macswan.

for more land, and we trust you will take our case into consideration, suppose it is too late, and if in your power take evidence from one or two of us.

(Signed) Ronald Macphie.
" Donald Campbell.
" Donald Macphie.
" John Beaton.
" William Macleod.
" John Macleod.

6267. Are any of these applicants here?—

Ronald Macphie, Lusta, Waternish, (55). (Examined in Gaelic through an Interpreter.)

Ronald Macphie.

6268. *The Chairman.*—We should have been glad to get your name before, and we won't exclude you from giving your evidence now, but we propose to take your evidence as representing the whole of Lusta, are you agreeable to that?—Yes.

6269. Are you a joint-tenant?—Yes, with Donald Macphie.

6270. The arable land is 6 acres 16 poles, the outrun is 57 acres 2 roods 30 poles, the pasture 1802 acres, divided by 19¼. The former rent was £12, 5s. 6d., and the fair rent is £6, 10s. How many crofters are in Lusta?—Thirty-four or thirty-eight, I am not sure.

6271. Are there any cottars?—Yes, I think there are about eight cottars between Stein and Lusta.

6272. Is the township of Lusta congested—is it crowded?—Yes, very much. I am only taking interest on behalf of the six in Lusta who want to leave the place.

6273. Give us the names of the six?—They are in the letter I handed to you.

6274. Do all these, including yourself, wish to get new holdings?—Yes.

6275. What kind of holdings have you in view?—A croft in which I could keep about six cows and a horse and fifty sheep.

6276. And is that the view of the other five men whom you represent?—Yes.

6277. Is there land suitable in the vicinity?—Yes, marching with us.

6278. Then you could easily show us the land when we visit the place?—Yes.

6279. Can you give us its name?—Bay.

6280. How is the land occupied at present?—It is part of Claggan farm, in the hands of Mr Nicol Martin.

6281. Do any of the crofters in Lusta go to the fishing?—Yes.

6282. How many?—A great number of them.

6283. Most of them?—I believe most of them are going to the fishing.

6284. Is it in that way they are able to pay their rents?—Yes, indeed; and if it is not that it is not out of the ground. It is out of the fishing they take their feeding as well.

6285. How many boats are in Lusta?—Eight or nine.

6286. What keel?—Twenty-two feet.

6287. Have you a boat?—Yes.

6288. Have you a share of a boat?—Yes.

6289. What share?—A quarter.

6290. Are you the skipper?—Yes.

6291. Where did you go to the fishing last year?—I was in Portknockie last year, but I was hurt there and had to return.

6292. Now, during the last five or six years, has the fishing been good or bad, or one year good and another bad?—It was not very good.

6293. How much did you make by fishing last year yourself?—Nothing last year.

6294. Or the year before?—Very little.

6295. How much?—It would not pay the expense that we were at.

6296. What was the expense?—Considerable amount of expense in lines and nets.

Dunvegan, Skye.

6297. How much?—£14 or £15 some years, some other years down to £10, and other years again up to £20.

Ronald Macphie.

6298. Now, kindly understand before going away, that I take you as representing the whole of the six tenants whose names I read out, and I don't propose to examine any more. I think you have made a full statement, and we will come and see the land when we are in the vicinity.

Isabella Campbell, The Glebe, Duirinish (50). (Examined in Gaelic through an Interpreter.)

Isabella Campbell.

6299. *The Chairman.*—Is your house upon the Macleod estate?—On the glebe; on the foreshore of the glebe.

6300. How long have you been living there?—Eleven years.

6301. And paying no rent, I suppose?—Yes.

6302. What rent?—15s.

6303. To whom do you pay it?—Between the stones of the house and the bit of potato ground, to the minister. I pay the rent in work.

6304. The potato ground is not on the foreshore?—Yes, last year we got only four creels of potatoes out of it.

6305 You want another holding?—Yes. I desire very much to have a bit of ground, should it only be as much as would feed a cow.

6306. How much rent would you be able to give?—Any fair rent.

6307. *Mr Maccallum.*—Does the minister actually exact the rent?—I pay it in work.

6308. And he insists on your working for the privilege you have?—Oh yes, he does.

6309. *The Chairman.*—How many days' work do you give in a year for 15s.?—I am not sure of the exact number of days that I give, but I am helping him in work as he requires it of me.

6310. What kind of work?—All sorts of outdoor work, and field work.

6311. Does he keep up the house for you, does he keep it in repair?—No, I do.

6312. Are you a married woman?—No. I have two sisters who are at service.

6313. And how long have you been living near the minister?—Eleven years.

6314. *Mr Macleod.*—The minister is not proposing to remove you, is he?—Yes, he is threatening to remove us, and says that no one has any business to be living on the glebe at all. I am not telling a lie on him, he told me that himself.

Captain Allan Macdonald of Waternish (70)—*examined.*

Captain Allan Macdonald.

6315. *The Chairman.*—Do you wish, Captain Macdonald, to make any statement?—I merely wish to deny the statement about the port.

6316. Do you wish to make any general statement with regard to your estate? we shall be glad to hear it?—I am not prepared to make any statement at present, I will deny that about the port.

6317. You remember there was a witness examined, a youth of twenty, his name was Donald Macleod, I think, and you made a strong statement as to his veracity. Do you adhere to that statement?—I do.

6318. What do you say was the deliberate falsehood he uttered?—He stated, as far as I understood, that I would not agree to the road that was wanted there, unless they would withdraw the claim for more land. I never made such a statement.

6319. What do you say was the statement you made?—I said that it was rather a remarkable thing that they should wish to reduce their arable land by making a road from one end of the township to the other, when they were applying for more land.

Dunvegan, Skye, — Captain Allan Macdonald.

6320. Don't you think it was a natural thing for them to wish to have a road, even at the expense of some part of their arable?—I did not think so, considering they thought it too small as it was.

6321. Don't you think it was of more advantage to them to have a road to the school than to be without it?—Well, they have a footpath, and I have no objection to the footpath being improved.

6322. They were not seeking to take your land: it was land in their own occupation they were wanting to make the road through?—But it was to be made with public money, which made it a public road, and took it out of my hands.

6323. But they had no road?—But if the road was made with public money, of course, that land would be lost to me.

6324. Was that your objection?—That was one objection. Many years ago I asked them if they would make a road, and I would get it maintained for them, and they would not do it.

6325. But when they applied to you to have the road made, or to be allowed to make the road, why should you have refused them?—Because they put it on the footing that they wanted this road to enable the children to attend school.

6326. Was not that a good footing?—It was, but then I thought a footpath would answer the same purpose.

6327. Don't you think they might fairly be made the judges of that?—I think I would be quite as capable of judging as they are.

6328. What access have children from Geary to the school just now?—A footpath in the district.

6329. But is that a sufficient road?—Well, there has been a school there for fifty or sixty years back, and that has been the road, and there was no complaint or application made for any other.

6330. Do you say there is no ground of complaint for the want of a road?—I heard of none up to the present.

6331. But do you say that no good ground of complaint exists for the want of a road?—Well, they have been offered what I think is quite sufficient.

6332. Namely?—The footpath improved and footbridges put on it, to enable the children to get to the school.

6333. Is there a footpath at present?—Only a very rough kind of footpath.

6334. Not a good footpath for children in winter?—No, but it could be very much improved.

6335. But don't you think the proper improvement was to have a road made in the form they desired?—Well, it would take away a lot of the arable land.

6336. But if they were willing to give it?—They complain of the place being too small already.

6337. No doubt their holdings are small: but don't you think they might fairly be left to judge whether they would give this arable in order to get the benefit of the road?—No, I think not: I could judge as wisely as they. Where there is a good fishing station, I think the less land they have the better.

6338. Of course, they would have less land if they had this road made?—But they don't expect that, as they have applied for more land.

6339. Are you of opinion that the question whether there ought to be a proper road to this school or not is one that rests with you solely and not with them?—I don't know that it is.

6340. With whom do you say it rests?—I don't see that land should be taken from anyone without compensation being given.

6341. Then you think you are in a position to refuse to allow this road to be made unless you are compensated?—I should like to be compensated.

6342. You think you are entitled to refuse to allow this road to be made unless you are compensated: Is that your view?—That is my view.

6343. Against whom do you take it you would have a claim for compensation?—Well, if it was made at the public expense, I would expect it to be paid by the public.

6344. Against whom would your right of action for compensation lie?—Against those who contributed towards the road.

6345. You mean the crofters?—The County Council, I fancy.

6346. Then do you think that if you gave your consent to the formation of this road, you would have a good action against the County Council for compensation: is that your view?—Certainly, if I did not acquiesce in it.

6347. Of course, if you consented and acquiesced, that would be a very different matter. At the time when they applied to you for leave to make the road, had they made an application to you for more land?—They did not apply to me for more land.

6348. Not at all?—No. (*A voice* 'Yes.') They did not apply to me at that time. I gave them more land previous to that,—what one of the delegates here calls bog.

6349. But was there not an application before you at the time when this question of the road came up, and your consent was asked,—an application for more land?—I understand that application was to the Commission.

6350. But, of course, they had applied to you first of all and been refused?—I don't think so.

6351. That is the provision of the Act?—I am not very positive about that.

6352. May it be the case that at the time when this matter of the road came up, they had applied to you for more land and been refused?—Well, I cannot remember that,—whether they applied to me or to the Commission.

6353. Suppose that statement to be made, are you able to contradict it?—I daresay I could contradict it if I only thought the matter out for some time. I may have some data at home.

6354. When was it that they applied to you for leave to make this road?—I cannot say positively.

6355. What year?—I think about two years ago.

6356. It is right to tell you that, according to our records, the application for more land was served upon you in December 1891,—that is about two years ago?—Well, I forget the circumstances, my lord.

6357. You may take that from me as the correct date. So that at the time when they applied to you for leave to make the road, there was an application for more land; may I take it so?—According to that.

6358. Was the matter of this application for more land an element in your mind in deciding to refuse consent to the making of the road?—Certainly not; never.

6359. Did you, at the time when you refused the consent, say anything to them about their application for more land?—I simply said that it was an extraordinary thing that they should want to reduce their arable land by making a road through the crofts from one end of the township to the other, while they were asking for more land.

6360. Then did you refuse your consent in their interest?—I refused my consent before then.

6361. In their interest?—Before then.

6362. Was it in their interest, because they had too little arable already, and you did not want it further cut down?—I refused it because there was no compensation given.

6363. *Mr Sutherland.*—You stated that the witness Macleod here told a deliberate falsehood. Now you have stated that he made a mis-statement. You fully appreciate the difference between the two charges,—you know what is implied in accusing a man of committing a falsehood?—I said that the statement was a falsehood.

6364. But you know the difference between a mis-statement and a falsehood. The one implies that the witness knew that he was stating what was wrong, while in the other case he might be stating it in ignorance of the real state of the case. You appreciate the difference, no doubt?—There is a difference, if put in that way.

6365. Did you wish to imply, on the part of the witness, an intention to tell the Commission what was wrong, knowing it to be wrong?—I knew perfectly well that the witness could not tell whether the statement was true or false as he did not form one of the deputation.

6366. But a deliberate falsehood implies a great deal more. What I wish to point out to you is that I think you might withdraw that statement and substitute mis-statement for it?—Well, if it is any satisfaction.

Dunvegan, Skye. Captain Allan Macdonald.

6367. It is not a satisfaction, it is a question for the Commission.—It was either wrong on his part, or wrong on the part of those who made the statement to him, for it is not true.

6368. Do I take it from you that you are willing to withdraw or modify the expression, that he told a deliberate falsehood to the Commission?—I am not aware that I said he told a deliberate falsehood. I said the statement made by him was a deliberate falsehood, whether it originated with him or the deputation I don't know.

6369. But it was in relation to his testimony?—If he got it from the deputation, it was.

6370. It is a matter for us entirely: do you wish to modify or withdraw the expression?—I simply want to say that it is not correct.

6371. You substitute that for 'deliberate falsehood'?—(No answer).

6372. *Mr Maccallum.*—Just one question with regard to the roads. Don't you think that these crofters ought to be the best judges themselves as to whether the road would benefit them or not?—I daresay they are, and I daresay these crofters would imagine there would be a benefit to them if they got a large slice of my land. But still if they got it without compensation given to me I would be the loser.

6373. But the land was in their occupation, and they were paying for it?—But if the road were made by public money it would become a public road.

6374. You wish to get compensation and rent also for the land? You were getting rent for it as it was, and you wish to get compensation over and above that?—Certainly not. If I get compensation for the land I have no further right to it.

6375. Supposing you got compensation, would you reduce their rents? If this place were to be used as a public road, would you allow a reduction on the common rent?—I do not see that I would have anything to do with it after that.

6376. Would you not be paid for it twice in that way if you got the full value of the land, the fair rent and also compensation for permitting it to be used as a public road? Would not that be getting paid for it twice over?—The Commission come round every seven years and value land. They have fixed the rent at so much now, and in the course of two or three years hence they will revalue it again, when they would naturally consider the damage done by this road through the crofts.

6377. And do you really anticipate that if this road were made the crofts would not be so valuable, and the Commission would probably take down the rents, because there was a road through the township; is that your deliberate opinion?—I certainly think so.

6378. That they would get a reduction at the next fixing of the rents?—Yes, I think so.

6379. Although they were unanimously of opinion that this road would benefit them?—Their opinion cannot be very strong about it, for I tell you that many years ago I offered to maintain this road, and see it maintained if they would make it; and they would not.

6380. Now, don't you think that is a way to foment discontent, when there is interference with them in carrying out what they consider improvements? You interfere with them in this improvement which they wish carried out; do you think that would tend now to a feeling of content and good feeling between proprietor and tenant?—I do not think so.

6381. And, of course, you would not like yourself any person or any authority interfering between you and any improvement that you wished to make on your own lands?—No.

6382. But you would not like them to have any power to improve the amenity of their crofts?—Well, I don't like to give my land away for nothing.

6383. You seem to object to this road being made because public money was to be applied to it; what grievance was that to you?—It then became public property; it was no more my land than it would be the land of any member of the public.

6384. But it was to improve the whole place; the intention of the public money was to improve the amenity of the whole place, and to improve your property?—As far as my experience of these things goes, there were no such roads permitted when we were road trustees; all roads of that kind were made by the people who required them. They are looked upon in the light of private roads—any roads made within the township—just in the same way that the roads which lead to my house I have to make and maintain at my own expense. I do not see why the crofters should be paid out of the public funds to maintain theirs, while I have to pay privately for mine out of my own pocket.

6385. May it not be looked at in this way, that you are putting yourself above the constituted authority. The District Committee, for instance, is the authority that has to do with the purpose to which public funds are to be applied. Don't you put yourself in opposition to the properly constituted authority by saying that you won't allow that road?—I don't think so.

6386. Did they not decide that it would be advantageous to have this road, and you obstructed the carrying out of that desire on their part?—But I think I am the best judge with regard to the management of my own property.

6387. You put yourself above the constituted authority therefore,—yes or no? You are a better judge?—I think so.

6388. Then, with regard to the actual use of this road, is it a fact that they have to take provisions from the village of Stein it may be to Geary occasionally?—I suppose they have, but there is a public road from the village of Stein to the boundary of Geary.—(*A voice* 'No').

6389. But assuming there is, are they not put to great inconvenience by not making this road on what they could take it to their homes?—It does not appear so.

6390. But does it not appear so when they ask it?—Yes.

6391. How do you think they are to carry these provisions—big things that cannot be carried on their backs—without a road, along a footpath?—There is no objection to their making a road; I object to the public making a road. If they require a road I do not object to their making it.

6392. But it is public money that you would not allow to be so used?—I object to the public making a road.

6393. May I ask, then, did you apply for compensation?—No.

6394. You did not put that before?—Yes; I stated so by letter.

6395. An actual application for compensation?—I did not make an application for compensation, but I stated in my letter to the agents for the District Committee that I thought it was wrong to take lands in that way without compensation.

6396. *Mr Macleod.*—You said, I think, that you had no objection to them making a footpath?—Yes.

6397. You have always been quite willing that they should make a footpath?—Quite willing.

6398. And you were quite willing that they should even apply some public money to that purpose?—Yes.

6399. You have also, I presume, been a road trustee?—I have.

6400. I daresay you are aware of the provisions of the Roads and Bridges Act, which prohibit the use of public money for footpaths?—I don't think there is any prohibition now.

6401. Oh, yes?—Well it is applied in places—it was so, but I don't think it is now.

6402. I may explain that the reason why it has been necessary to give a special grant to the Highland counties at the present time for footpaths, is because it is not in the power of the County Councils or the District Committees to spend money upon footpaths; there must be a road constructed that would carry a wheeled vehicle. The only object that I can possibly have in putting any question to you is that public communication might be improved; and I would just mention that fact, that it is out of the power of the public authorities to spend the money on footpaths, although they could make a road.—Yes, but there has been a grant made since which enables them to make footpaths.

Dunvegan, Skye.

Captain Allan Macdonald.

6403. And you are quite willing now that that foot-path should be made?—I have always been willing.

6404. I have no doubt it has suggested itself to your mind that if the amenities of the crofts were improved it might have the effect of increasing the value of the holdings, and therefore increasing the rent; don't you think that would occur?—I don't think there is any tendency that way.

6405. You don't think that a croft in Geary would be worth more if there was a road to it than it is at the present time when there is no road?—Not a road from one end of the township to the other, cutting through the arable land and reducing the agricultural value of each croft.

6406. It might be a convenience to them?—It might be a convenience, but it might also be a loss in corn and potatoes.

6407. But if it was a convenience, would it not be of money value?—To some it might be, but not to others.

6408. You take an interest in the fishing industry there?—Yes.

6409. And it would, no doubt, be more convenient for them to have this road for carrying the fish away?—Oh, no; they never would use the road for carrying the fish. The steamer calls there regularly for fish.

6410. *Mr Gordon.*—I see that this township of Geary, including Gillen, extends almost in an unbroken line for about two miles?—Yes, about that.

6411. Now, from the south end of Gillen, is there at present a road possible for carts to the township of Stein?—Yes; and there is besides a public road from the boundary of Geary and Knockbreck.

6412. Then there is a road from Stein to Knockbreck?—Yes.

6413. Can a cart go all that distance?—A cart can go to Knockbreck, to the bounds of it.

6414. Beyond Knockbreck there appear to be something like twenty or thirty houses shown on the map, to the north end of Geary?—More than that number.

6415. Do these people use meal at all?—I believe they do.

6416. How do they get it there; do they take it by boat, or by road, or on their backs?—It is taken by carts to the boundary, and from there to their dwellings.

6417. Surely it would be an improvement to the township to have a road made that would carry it to their doors?—Oh, yes, but a disadvantage in other respects by cutting up their crofts.

6418. There is nothing we look upon as being of greater importance for the country, after the improvement carried out in the earlier part of this century of making turnpike roads, than to get a railway; and I may say, as a man accustomed to land in the east country, that we never consider it any objection to taking any lands that may be necessary for making a road?—Mine is but a very small property, with a very large number of crofters on it; and if they are all going to have roads through their townships, it would take away an immense quantity of land. There are 119 crofter families I think.

6419. But this is the most populous part of the property, and a road there that would be quite sufficient for that township need not be more than 12 feet wide. That would only take away an acre or two, the whole length of it?—But the very fact of their not making a road when it was offered to them shows that they were not very anxious about it.

6420. But if you state your objection upon what I may call commercial principles, then I must say I don't see that there is much in it?—I don't know. I do not see my way to agree to give any land away without compensation.

6421. *Mr Munro.*—A rather startling statement was made here to-day by a fisherman from Geary to the effect that you closed up a harbour there, and that thereby their fishing facilities were prejudiced, and their lives put in peril. Is that the case?—Not the case; no.

6422. Did you close up the harbour against their using it?—I never interfered with the harbour in any way.

6423. Did you close up a natural harbour there at Scorrhoran—Port-a'-chirein?—The time that my father sent the crofters to Scorè they made this port, and when they removed from there to Port-o'-Gillen, it was not any longer required, and I shut it up.

Dunvegan, Skye.

Captain Allan Macdonald.

6424. You shut up the harbour of Port-a'-chirein?—Yes, the bit of shore cleared by the crofters when there. There are two townships between Geary and this port.

6425. What was your reason for closing up the harbour?—I did not want to make it a public place, because it was the best part of my grazing and wintering, and it is quite away from Geary or any other crofter township, as you will see from the map.

6426. But you will allow, I suppose, that the fishermen themselves are the best judges as to the harbour that suits them best?—Yes; but there is a harbour there now which anyone can use in stress of weather.

6427. But they themselves say that the harbour which you shut up is the one that suits them best?—But there are men quite as capable of judging as they. For many many years there was no harbour there; and the old harbour at Scorrhoran still exists.

6428. Did you contribute anything in the shape of labour or money to the making of the harbour at Port-a'-chirein?—Well, I have; but the pier was originally made by the Destitution Committee at the time of the destitution in Skye to give employment to the crofters in Scorrhoran.

6429. And what right had you to destroy a harbour which was made by the Destitution Committee?—No; I am talking of the other harbour. Port-a'-chirein harbour I have nothing to do with.

6430. It was a natural harbour?—No, it was made by the crofters my father placed there; and when they removed there was no further use for it, and it was shut up.

6431. You allow that you shut up the harbour?—Yes.

6432. A harbour which the crofters made?—It was no harbour at all; it was just some large stones cleared away on the shore, where the people pulled up their boats. It was no natural harbour at all. The gentlemen of the Commission can see the place when they are there.

6433. But surely you must allow that the fishermen themselves are the best judges as to what harbour suits them?—There are no fishermen there.

6434. The men who appeared here to-day said that their fishing interests were prejudiced?—You can see as to that when you go down.

6435. Then that statement is inaccurate, is it?—You can see what it is worth when you go there.

6436. Are you not aware that any fisherman or any mariner has a perfect right to run into any harbour in defence of his property or his life?—I tell you that there is a harbour within 150 or 200 yards of this where they can run in. Do you imagine that the Destitution Committee would have selected this latter harbour to build a pier there if they thought the other was the better harbour?

6437. I am not in a position to answer that question, but the people themselves have appeared here to-day, and have protested very strongly against this action of yours.—I can say no more until the Commission will see the place, when they will be able to judge for themselves.

JOHN TAYLOR, Land Surveyor, Ebost—*examined.* John Taylor.

6438. *The Chairman.*—I understand that you desire to appear before us to-day and submit a statement with reference to the farms on the Kilmuir Estate?—Yes.

9439. Has that statement been prepared by yourself?—Yes, and it is signed by me.

6440. Kindly read it.

Kilmuir Estate.

Detailed contents of the various farms on the Estate of Kilmuir, in the Island of Skye, as at present occupied.

The undernoted areas are not guaranteed to be absolutely correct, but a close approximation taken from the

Dunvegan, Skye.

John Taylor.

6-inch Ordnance Survey Plans, and sufficiently correct for all practical purposes. Islands attached to any of the farms are not included in the areas given.

Name of Farm.	Arable.	Old Arable.	Green Pasture.	Reclaimed from Loch.	Hill Pasture.	Total.
	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.
Duntulm, -	30	89	232	...	3306	3657
Flodigarry, -	...	87	96	...	1736	1919
Sartle, - -	18	19	...	...	3521	3558
Monkstadt, -	110	544	980	255	1857	3746
Uig, - - -	85	220	...	...	3214	3519
Cuidreach, -	50	30	57	...	2296	2433
Total,	293	989	1365	255	15,930	18,832

None of the farms on the estate, with perhaps the exception of Monkstadt, has a sufficiency of arable land in proportion to hill grazing, this being particularly the case with the farms of Sartle and Cuidrach. I do not, on the other hand, consider any of the hill pasture suitable for profitable cultivation. I am of opinion that none of those farms could be profitably occupied by crofters; the main reason being that on the six farms containing 18,832 acres there are only 293 acres of arable, or 1½ acres arable to each 100 acres grazing, which is not a suitable proportion even according to the crofters own views as expressed in their evidence at Portree and Struan.

Probably some more land on three of the farms could be cultivated, but not profitably, and certainly not in such quantities as to make a proportion suitable to the grazing land; and I may here mention that I consider every 100 acres of hill grazing would require at least 6 acres of arable land. That will be found to correspond with the statement given in to the Commission by Lord Macdonald's factor and me.

It will be observed that 900 or 1000 acres of land on those farms was formerly under cultivation, a very large proportion of which was on the farm of Monkstadt. A very cursory examination of the ground, however, will, I think, suffice to show that this land is not such as could be profitably cultivated, and points to this as having been at one time a congested district: otherwise such worthless land would never have been brought under cultivation, as the return for labouring such land must have been very meagre.

(Signed) JOHN TAYLOR,
Land Surveyor.

EBOST, SKYE,
24th April 1893.

N.B.—The fact that crofters or sub-tenants were in possession of certain land 50 or 100 years ago does not go far to prove that the land can at present be profitably cultivated, rather the reverse.

(Initialed) J. T.

6441. That statement is correct?—That is my statement.

6442. And you say it is correct?—I say it is correct.

6443. Were these figures the result of survey by yourself?—They are taken, as I have explained, from the 6-inch Ordnance Plans.

6444. *Mr Sutherland.*—May I ask by what method you arrived at the proportion between arable and pasture land, in the estimate you have made?—It is to be seen upon the ground.

6445. What are the marks by which you would know it on the ground?—Cultivated land is easily distinguished from pasture land.

6446. You mean land that has been cultivated before?—Yes.

6447. But are you not of opinion that some land that was cultivated before may be best suited for pasture and others for cultivation?—I am under the impression that a great deal of land has been cultivated formerly that would have been better under grazing all along.

Dunvegan Skye.

John Tay

6448. On the other hand, don't you think some land that was never before under cultivation might be now brought under cultivation?—Possibly; but I think upon the large farms you will find that the best land is under crofters now.

6449. And I think you have admitted that Monkstadt is the best farm upon the Kilmuir estate?—I do not think I said so.

6450. Is it not the highest rented?—Possibly the highest rented is not always the best.

6451. And has it not the greatest proportion of old arable land upon it of any other farm?—It has.

6452. That is what makes it valuable, is it not?—I don't know that.

6453. How do you reconcile the two statements?—Which statements?

6454. That you prove land to be good land by its being under cultivation now?—I think not.

6455. You said the best land was now under cultivation?—There are only 110 acres in Monkstadt under cultivation now: that is not a great proportion out of 3000.

6456. How much of that do you think is suitable for cultivation?—I said the best of it is now under cultivation. Formerly there was between 900 and 1000 acres under cultivation: it is for the Commission to say whether that land is suitable for cultivation or not.

6457. You gave your opinion. This survey of yours is not an independent survey,—it is made from sources to which we have access ourselves?—I have been over the whole of the estate, and inspected all the farms minutely.

6458. *Mr Macleod.*—I want to know your qualifications with regard to surveying. Are you a surveyor or a sheep farmer?—I am both.

6459. You stated yesterday, I think, that your experience of surveying was confined to surveying crofter holdings in this and other islands?—I was brought up in the office where Mr Gordon is now, by his predecessor, Mr Macbean.

6460. You are a bred surveyor?—I am a bred surveyor.

6461. But, of course, the extents of land stated by you in this report are taken from the Ordnance Survey Map?—They are.

6462. They are not actually surveyed?—No.

JOHN MACPHERSON, Glendale—*recalled.*

John Macphers

6463. *The Chairman.*—I am informed that you consider that a statement made by you here yesterday was somewhat misunderstood by the Commission, and that you wish to be allowed to amend it. I am not aware that any statement you made was misunderstood. To what statement do you refer?—Yesterday I mentioned two kinds of crofters: crofters at £6 to begin with and crofters at £10 to £15. I would like the two to be tried in Skye. By the former I meant crofters in a place where there was land of no use, as there is to be seen in Skye, though the same land in some places would be worth £12. I thought, by what was said yesterday by the Macleod of Macleod and Mr Reginald Macleod and the Commissioners, that they took me up wrong in thinking that I was taking the £6 croft as the regular kind of crofts throughout Skye. But I have mentioned the two.

6464. *Mr Maccallum.*—That is, you did not expect to get a 20 acre arable croft, with suitable stock, for £6?—No, not of proper land.

6465. *Mr Gordon.*—What you meant was a certain number of stock,—that is what you had in your mind?—Yes.

6466. It might be 6 acres in one place, while 3 acres would do in another?—Yes.

[ADJOURNED.]

EIGHTH SITTING.

BROADFORD, SKYE, MAY 19, 1893.

Present:—

DAVID BRAND, Esq., Advocate, Sheriff of Ayr, and Chairman of the Crofters Commission, *Chairman.*
MICHAEL HUGH SHAW STEWART, Esq., M.P.
ANGUS SUTHERLAND, Esq., M.P.
JAMES NOEL MULLER FORSYTH, Esq.
GEORGE GORDON, Esq.
REV. MALCOLM MACCALLUM.
JOHN MACLEOD, Esq.
HENRY MUNRO, Esq.
WILLIAM MACKENZIE, Esq., *Secretary.*

Donald Nicolson.

DONALD NICOLSON, Crofter, Torrin (40) —*examined.*

6467. *The Chairman.*—You are a crofter at Torrin?—I have half a croft—half of No. 7.

6468. I see your acreage is 4 acres 1 rood 20 poles arable, 1 rood 27 poles outrun, and 4370 acres grazing divided into eighteen shares; the old rent was £5, 16s. and the fair rent is £4, 5s. Have you a written statement?—Yes, I have it here.

6469. Kindly read it.—'Torrin is divided into eighteen crofts, and they are all subdivided except five; seven are in two halves, and six of them are in four halves. There are thirty-three families of crofters and eight families of cottars in the township, and if the crofters are to get more land the people of Torrin cannot miss getting their share of it, as they are surrounded by sheep farms. The farm of Corry is marching with the township of which we want a strip of the pasture at once; and the farm of Kilbride we want the three parks that are marching with the township. The third park, known as Robert's park, was taken from the township about thirty years ago. The farm of Kilbride and Killichro, connected as it is at present, is very suitable for crofters' holdings. There were crofters in Kilbride, before—ten crofts, and they were removed about sixty-seven or sixty-eight years ago, to make a sheep-run for the parish minister. Suisnish and Boreraig farms are very good for crofters. Both places were occupied by crofters before, but they were removed about forty or forty-one years ago to make a sheep-run of it (there were twelve crofts in Suisnish and ten in Boreraig). On the west side of the township is the farm of Kirkibost, and very suitable for crofters. There were twelve crofts in the township of Keppoch, and the people were cleared off it about thirty-seven or forty years ago, and it was added to the farm. Feaulin and Arinacreige were cleared at the same time. The last-named place belonged to the township of Torrin at one time, and the march dyke is quite visible yet. From Rhunerranich, a bit north from Broadford Pier, to the Point of Strathaird, a distance of about fifteen miles, the mark of cultivation is visible, and there is not a crofter township in the distance except Torrin. Elgol is on the west point of Strathaird. This statement is written by

DONALD NICOLSON,
one of the delegates for the township.

'TORRIN, *May* 9, 1893.'

6470. Is the statement signed?—Yes.

6471. Now, going back to the farm of Corry which you mentioned, tell us again the particular part of the farm which you specified in your statement as suitable for crofters?—All the farm is suitable for crofters. Broadford, Skye.

6472. I thought you mentioned a particular part of it?—That is the part in Kilbride; it is marching with the grazing of the Torrin township. Donald Nicolson.

6473. How many parks do you mention there?—Three.

6474. Are these under grass at present?—Under grass.

6475. And they march with your township of Torrin?—Yes. One of them was taken from the township of Torrin—the third park.

6476. You don't know the extent of them?—No.

6477. Can you tell us the extent of the farm altogether?—No.

6478. Or the rent?—No.

6479. You don't know the rent?—No.

6480. Who occupies the farm of Corry at present?—It is one Mr Murchison.

6481. You mentioned also the farm of Kilbride and Killichro?—Yes.

6482. I think you said there was land there suitable for occupation?—Yes.

6483. What kind of land is it—grazing land?—Arable and pasture land.

6484. Do you mean old arable, or land under cultivation?—There is part of it under cultivation just now.

6485. And the rest is grazing?—Yes, for sheep and cattle.

6486. And how many fields did you specify there?—There were ten crofts there before.

6487. But I think you specified some fields as what you had in view for enlargement of holding?—No; I did not specify that, except the three parks. They are suitable for cultivation; they were cultivated before.

6488. You also mentioned the township of Kirkibost: does it march with your township?—Yes, on the west side.

6489. And you say there is also tolerably good land there?—Yes.

6490. Do you mean grazing land or arable land, or both?—There is both.

6491. Both land under cultivation and land under sheep?—Yes.

6492. Are the old townships of Feaulin and Arinacreige on the farm of Kirkibost?—Yes.

6493. And they were formerly under crofters?—Yes, there was a crofter at Arinacreige and one at Feaulin.

6494. One in each?—One in each. At the time they were cleared there were three in each, but of course they sprang out of the same family.

6495. Are we right in taking the statement you have made as respecting the general feeling of the township of Torrin?—Certainly.

6496. You appear for the whole township?—Yes, along with two other delegates.

6497. Along with Mackenzie and Mackinnon?—Yes.

6498. Is it the wish of the Torrin people mainly to get additional grazing, or do they desire to get both arable and grazing?—Well, those who have plenty as they are wish to remain and get more grazing added to the township, more pasture land.

6499. But what I mean is, is the complaint of the township mainly for want of grazing, or do they feel that the arable they have is too narrow?—Certainly it is too narrow when one croft is divided into four. They run from 7 to 9 or 10 acres, and when that is divided into four parts, there is no arable land for four families.

6500. You say there are eight cottars in the township?—Yes.

6501. Do any of these pay a rent?—Well, they were charged 5s. for rent, but I don't know whether they paid it. I know some of them have paid it.

6502. To whom did they pay?—To the landlord.

6503. Have these cottars any stock?—No; I am

Broadford, Skye.

Donald Nicolson.

not aware of them having any. They might have a sheep or two, some of them.

6504. But they have no cattle?—No; well, I think, one of them has a cow.

6505. And they have potato patches, I suppose, which they get from the crofters?—Yes.

6506. And do work for them occasionally?—I don't know whether they work for it or not.

6507. Is there any fishing done about Torrin?—Yes.

6508. At Loch Slapin?—Yes.

6509. A good deal?—Yes, there has been a good deal of fishing for the last four or five years.

6510. Has each crofter there a boat, or the share of a boat?—The most of them.

6511. Do they go far afield to fish, or do they mostly fish round about their own township?—Round about the lochs—Loch Eishort, Loch Scavaig, and Loch Slapin.

6512. Do any Torrin crofters go away as hired hands to the fishing?—They used to go away, but the fishing was so slack in Ireland and the east coast for two years back that they do not go now.

6513. They have not been going for some time?—No, they were doing nothing there.

6514. Would you tell us what stock you have got?—Myself individually?

6515. Yourself individually.—I have 3 cows, 1 pony, 2 hoggs, and 1 sheep in common with the township.

6516. How many sheep altogether may there be held in common?—850 ewes, 270 hoggs.

6517. Any more?—And 20 tups.

6518. Is that a club stock?—Yes.

6519. Managed by a committee—a few appointed for the purpose?—Yes. There are three appointed every year to regulate it.

6520. Are you one of the three?—Well, I happened to be last year, and am still to the term.

6521. How long have you been carrying on this sheep farm as a club farm?—A good many years back; I cannot say exactly.

6522. But you are of opinion, I take it, that it is to the advantage of the Torrin crofters that it should be so managed?—Certainly.

6523. And you would be in favour of the extension of the club system to other townships?—Yes.

6524. Now just explain to the Commissioners where the advantage of it is, in your judgment?—There is an advantage; if people were to get more land and everybody looking after his own sheep, that would spoil it; everybody would be shoving in his own sheep, and the man with a strong family would——

6525. Have more sheep than the weaker man?—Yes, one must be at home, and as usual a man with a young family would have to go away and earn money somewhere else, and there would be nobody to look after the sheep, and he would lose them. If he had them at the beginning of the year he would come home and maybe never see them.

6526. For all that number of stock do you keep any set of books showing the stock belonging to each crofter?—They keep a kind of pass-book just for the year.

6527. And the people are satisfied with the management?—Yes; it is themselves that do it, and they must be satisfied.

6528. Is there any other club-farm near you, near Torrin?—No; Heast is the only other club-farm that I am aware of in the parish.

6529. It is a farm, is it?—It is a club-farm, the same as the township of Torrin.

6530. *Mr Shaw Stewart.* How do you manage about a shepherd for the club-farm; do you get one of yourselves or an outsider?—No, we keep two shepherds.

6531. Paying them regular wages?—Paying them yearly wages. Of course one of them is not an experienced shepherd.

6532. If such land as you were talking about were got, do you think that many of the people of Torrin would leave the place they are in now and go and occupy it?—Yes, some of them would.

6533. And others would prefer to remain behind?—Yes.

6534. Is there other land besides what you mentioned to the Chairman some time ago that is suitable for the purpose of making new holdings?—Yes, every farm is.

6535. Are you of opinion that wherever a large farm exists at present, crofters could also subsist by the soil?—Certainly.

6536. You see no reason why they should not?—No, because crofters were there before in every place.

6537. And under modern conditions you would have no fear either that they would occupy the land with as much advantage to themselves and others as the present farmers do; are you of that opinion?—Well, I cannot say that.

6538. But you think it would be a very great benefit to the people who are more congested?—Certainly, to get more land; that is what they want, and they have much need of it.

6539. *Mr Gordon.*—You say that one of these townships, Kilbride, was cleared about sixty years ago?—More than sixty-seven or sixty-eight years ago.

6540. And the townships of Suisnish and Boreraig, when were they cleared?—In 1840 or 1841.

6541. Were they cleared with the people's consent, or against their will?—Against their will.

6542. Was that so in Boreraig?—I think some of them. They were going about to get the people to go away to Australia. Some of them signed and others remained; and those who remained were shifted to other parts of the estate.

6543. But it is the case, is it not, that part of the people at Boreraig moved of their own account?—I am not aware of that.

6544. Is the land at Boreraig as good as at Suisnish?—No.

6545. How many crofts would you put down on Boreraig?—About three or four crofts, I should think, would be plenty for it.

6546. And how many in Suisnish?—You could not put more than five in Suisnish.

6547. Would you propose to keep these two townships together as one holding for the pasture?—I believe they would agree better to get it separately.

6548. How many sheep would you expect to keep on the hill?—One hundred sheep at least.

6549. To each township?—To each crofter.

6550. That would be 800 sheep altogether?—Yes, between Boreraig and Suisnish.

6551. Would that not be rather many, don't you think?—I don't know; not if they were selected, cheviots and blackfaced.

6552. How many sheep will there be on it just now?—I am not exactly sure; I think there should be 500 in each place.

6553. You would increase them from 500 to 800, and how many cattle would you put on?—Not more than 4 cows and 2 followers and 1 pony.

6554. That would mean for the eight crofts 48 cattle and 8 horses, with 800 sheep, where you have only 500 sheep at present?—Not at all.

6555. What do you make it to be?—I should think there will be about 500 sheep in each place, Boreraig and Suisnish.

6556. How many would you put on in Kilbride?—Just about the same number, about 500 blackfaced sheep.

6557. Do you think they would keep 500 and 300, that is 800 sheep, and all these horses and cattle on the two smaller places?—I think so; they have a good hill pasture.

6558. There is no green land, though, except the two townships?—No, but the crofts might not be so big. There were twelve crofts in Suisnish before.

6559. No doubt. In framing the arrangement in your own mind, do you propose that the crofters should subsist entirely upon their crofts, or that they should go away and work?—For part of the

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year they should go away and work; and they would fish, too, whenever they got the chance.

6560. But you don't mean to say that they could subsist on their crofts without fishing or working?—Maybe some of them would do it, others could not: I am sure about that.

6561. But they would require to go away and work, or to fish, before they could pay as much rent as a tacksman would pay?—Oh yes; it would not pay the crofters so well as one man.

6562. *Mr Macleod.*—How many crofts did you say were in Torrin—full crofts?—Five.

6563. How many families are there altogether?—Thirty-three crofters' families and eight cottars.

6564. That makes forty-one altogether?—There is a family of paupers.

6565. There are forty-one crofters on eighteen crofts?—Yes. Some of the cottars are not on the crofts.

6566. They are living on the township?—Yes.

6567. Then do you think that if the surplus of the families above the eighteen were migrated from there, the Torrin crofters—that is, the remainder—would be able to live comfortably?—Well, I think they would by reducing some of their stock.

6568. What portion of their stock?—The horses at first.

6569. What is the number of horses that are allowed for each?—There are two horses in each croft, and six cows.

6570. And you would reduce the number of horses to what?—To one for each croft.

6571. And the cows to what?—I would reduce them to four cows and a follower or two, and more sheep.

6572. Does any portion of your hill grazing march with the deer forest?—Yes, the west side of the township.

6573. And are you troubled with the deer coming down upon the hill grazing on to your arable ground from there?—Yes, they are coming on to the corn and eating it.

6574. Has there been any attempt made to keep them back?—There was a kind of fence erected two years ago.

6575. And is it not effective?—No, they can jump over it any time they like.

6576. And have you ever received any compensation for the damage done by the deer coming down upon your corn and eating it?—Well, they don't trouble me much, but there are five crofts above the road next the brae. The deer never come below the public road.

6577. So that it is not within your knowledge whether these five crofts above the road have received compensation for the damage done or not?—Well, I know that one of them, Mrs Mackinnon, No. 5, got compensation some time ago. I don't know whether she is still receiving it or not, but I know others did not get anything.

6578. Were the deer down last year?—They are down every year.

6579. And do you think that they could be kept up if there was a proper fence erected?—Certainly; if a proper fence was erected they would never get in.

6580. Then about club stock: you have always been able to get along amicably with regard to the arrangements for it?—Yes.

6581. You are one of the managers yourself, and perhaps you could tell us about it?—Yes, but I was not at home last year; my neighbours put me in my place during the time I was away.

6582. But you have sufficient knowledge possibly to give the Commission some information as to whether you think that a larger sheep stock, say in the township of Torrin, could be managed by such a small committee as three managers?—Yes.

6583. Do you think a larger stock could?—Yes, certainly.

6584. Well, suppose for a moment that the sheep stock on Torrin were doubled and the number of families remained the same, do you think there would be any difficulty arising from the large number who would be about the management?—No difficulty whatever; they would just manage it the same as they are doing just now—the very same way.

Broadford, Skye. — Donald Nicol- son.

6585. So that you don't think any difficulty would arise in that direction?—No.

6586. *Mr Maccallum.*—Are they Highland cattle you have?—Yes.

6587. Are they very much inferior, the cattle of the township to the cattle kept by the tacksman?—No.

6588. Not much inferior?—They are very near as good, and some better.

6589. Would it be quite inaccurate to say that the tacksman's cattle were twice as valuable?—Oh, they are not twice as valuable.

6590. Then as to the prices you get for them. Do you get for your stirks as good a price as the tacksmen do?—Well, maybe not; sometimes a few of the crofters would get more for a stirk.

6591. Get more than the tacksman?—But not on the average.

6592. Can you give me any idea now what is the difference, comparing your own township with the price the tacksmen get generally, is it very much lower than the price the tacksmen get for their stirks?—Well, indeed, I cannot answer the question very well, for I never saw a tacksman hereabout selling stirks.

6593. Don't they rear stirks?—Yes, but they don't sell them when they are a year old; they sell them at two years old and three years old.

6594. But you have seen your stirks and you have seen the stirks that are reared by tacksmen: are the stirks that are reared in your township much inferior to the stirks reared by the tacksmen?—Not very much.

6595. Since the passing of the Crofters Act have the crofters made improvements on houses?—Yes.

6596. How many houses have been improved since that time?—I think there are eight new houses built in Torrin since the passing of the Crofters Act. There were two built before that, making ten altogether. One of them is not roofed yet, and three of them are felt houses.

6597. With regard to the two that were built before the passing of the Crofters Act, did they get help from the proprietor?—No, not that I am aware of.

6598. And since the passing of the Act, I take it that they have got no help?—Not a farthing.

6599. Then with regard to the other houses, have they been improved—renewed in any way—those who have kept old houses?—No.

6600. They are just very much as they used to be?—Very much as they used to be. Everybody that can build a new house is trying to do it.

6601. Now with regard to your management of the land, is there any improvement in the method of cultivating the land since the passing of the Act?—Well, I cannot say there is much. Of course everybody is trying to improve the best way he can every year.

6602. You do not notice much improvement in their method of cultivation. Do they sow grass?—Yes, most of them do.

6603. Were they in the habit of doing that before the passing of the Crofters Act?—Some of them; but most of them do it now.

6604. So that in that case there is an improvement?—There is an improvement.

6605. Do you think that there is a marked improvement?—There is; there is a marked improvement in the building of the new houses.

6606. But in the cultivation of the land?—Yes.

6607. Then have they brought in any new land—have they brought under cultivation any new land, say from pasture?—In the township of Torrin they used to have grass pasture on each side of the town-

Broadford, Skye.

Donald Nicolson.

ship, and from old times they used to go to another place every year.

6608. What have they done now with regard to that: have they simply ploughed it, or have they removed the stones?—Of course they are clearing it and trenching it and ploughing it too.

6609. So that they are gradually in this way improving the pasture?—Of course they are.

6610. Then is it your opinion that if there were only eighteen crofters in the township they would be tolerably comfortable?—Certainly they will, by getting additional pasture to the township.

6611. Even eighteen would need additional pasture?—Yes. When the Crofters Commission were going round here they lost a good strip of the hill pasture: it was given to another township in the parish, and of course they would require a good bit of pasturage instead of that.

6612. Supposing they had their old pasture back would there be sufficient for the eighteen crofters?—I cannot say that. I don't think it would. I think there are about 500 acres.

6613. Well, if they got a good addition to the hill pastures, with the arable which they have at present, would the crofts then be self-supporting? would the people be able to get a living out of the croft?—Well, I think they should do it if they had them properly stocked, and the ponies were removed and the cattle, as I said before, I think they should.

6614. Would the others be willing to remove and leave eighteen there; would they be workable?—Well, that is what I cannot say.

6615. Is there a number of them?—I know there are some of them quite willing to remove if they get a good croft.

6616. Would you yourself remove if you got a suitable croft?—Yes, I would, if I got it in a suitable place near the sea; but I would not wish to go far from the sea, it is a great help to poor men.

6617. I suppose that those who have built new houses would like to remain after they have made these improvements?—Very likely.

6618. *Mr Munro.*—From the statement which you have submitted to us I gather that the great want with you and your neighbours is the acquisition of more land?—Certainly.

6619. And if you got more land no doubt you would be more comfortable?—Yes.

6620. Could you pursue a proper system of rotation if you got into a larger extent of land?—Certainly.

6621. You do not cultivate your land just now as you think it ought to be cultivated?—Of course we have been working it every year for the last eighty years. It yields no crop, for we work it every year.

6622. Now supposing the opportunity were offered to you and your neighbours of acquiring more land, how could you enter into possession of it? could you without any outside assistance take the land and stock it?—If we could get the land we would stock it the best way we could.

6623. Could you build your own houses too without any outside assistance?—We would try it, if we would get the land.

6624. Is it possible for a crofter with an increased croft, say from 15 to 25 acres, to maintain himself without any extra help in the way of labour or otherwise?—To maintain themselves?

6625. Yes, without any outside help in the way of labour or fishing?—I don't think they would pay the return of the grain in this part of the country with this stock, supposing they were working with a rotation.

6626. *Mr Shaw Stewart.*—You said just now you would be willing to remove to a better croft, but it must be near the sea?—Yes.

6627. Why do you say that?—Because I would not like to go far from the sea.

6628. Yes, but why?—Because I could go fishing to the loch or the place where I would be.

6629. Then you would rather have a croft near the sea where you could eke out some livelihood from the fishing as well, than a croft inland?—Not at all; it may be I could do both at times.

6630. Fishing and looking after the croft?—Yes.

6631. If you were near the sea?—The same as they are doing at present in the township.

6632. But you could not do that if you were inland?—Certainly, they are doing it just now.

6633. Some distance from the sea, I mean?—Well, when a body is some distance from the sea he cannot attend so well.

6634. But do you think a croft near the sea where there is fishing to be done at odd times would pay better than a croft inland, where the man working the croft could not get to any fishing to help him?—Yes, of course.

6635. That is your own view?—That is my own view.

6636. Do you think that is a general view among crofters generally?—I cannot say about others.

6637. You would make some money if you had the fishing as well as a croft?—Certainly.

6638. *Mr Munro.*—But have you ever known a crofter pursue the occupation of fishing and manage his croft properly at the same time?—Certainly, they are doing it at the township where I am in. There is plenty good fishing in the loch; herring fishing.

6639. And they still manage the crofts satisfactorily?—Yes.

6640. *Mr Alexander Macdonald,* Factor for Sir William Mackinnon.—You are a deer forester yourself, one of Mr. Winans's men?—Yes.

6641. You mentioned part of Kirkibost as a grateful addition to the Torrin people?—I said nothing of the kind.

6642. You said Kirkibost, did not you?—Yes.

6643. That is on Strathaird?—I say it is suitable for one crofter.

6644. Are these places, Feaulin and Arinacreige, that you Torrin people want, part of Sir William Mackinnon's estate of Strath, or on entirely different property?—Yes, but Arinacreige was Lord Macdonald's property about seventy-two years ago.

6645. *The Chairman.*—And was it sold by him to Macalister?—I cannot say: there was an agreement between them. It was taken from the Torrin township, and given to the Strath estate.

6646. *Mr Alexander Macdonald.*—Lord Macdonald and Macalister had an arbitration about it, and Lord Macdonald lost the arbitration, but he got a bit on the other side.

6647. *The Chairman.*—Then it was sold to Sir William Mackinnon?—Yes.

6648. *Mr Alexander Macdonald.*—Could I ask him, does he know anything about the Tenth Commandment?

6649. *The Chairman.*—No.

6650. *Mr Mackintosh,* Factor for Lord Macdonald.—How near to Kilbride House are the parks you say are fit for cultivation, and would be suitable as an addition to Torrin?—I should say about fifty yards.

6651. Do they not surround Kilbride House?—No.

6652. Is the part of Corry farm you spoke of so often as marching with Torrin fit for cultivation?—No, but for hill pasture.

6653. Is any of the arable land at Kilbride you described as fit for cultivation part of the glebe of Strathaird?—Not that I am aware of.

6654. Were the 270 hoggs at Torrin wintered at home?—Yes.

6655. Do you not consider it a very good sign of the pasture land at Torrin if you are able to winter 270 hoggs at home along with the stock you have on the ground?—We never send them to winter, never since the last eighty years.

6656. But is it not a good sign of the land that you are able to winter them at home?—Well, we are wintering them at home every year.

6657. Do you know what the cost of wintering hoggs in the mainland is?—Well, I know some of it.

6658. Had you ever any experience of it?—They

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cost from 5s. to 7s.; and about 3s. 6d. in Aberdeenshire.

6659. From 5s. to 7s., and you are able to winter 270 hoggs at home; and do you know what the gross rental of Torrin is? The fair rent of Torrin is £136, 14s.: and you have also got 850 ewes?—Yes.

6660. *The Chairman.*—What is your question, Mr. Mackintosh?

6661. *Mr Mackintosh.*—I mean to say that they have sufficient good land at present when they are able to accomplish all that at present.

6662. *The Chairman.*—Have you any further interrogation to put?

6663. *Mr Mackintosh.*—Are not the cattle stock of the crofters in Sleat and Strath much superior to the stock of the crofters in the north end of the island of Skye?—I believe they are better.

6664. They are much better?—I don't know about 'much' better, but I think they are better: I heard people say they were better.

6665. And is it not the case that the crofters' stock are the best in Sleat—certainly the best in Skye?—I believe that.

6666. And you admitted at the same time that they could not get the same prices as the tacksman does for his?—No, I don't know that I did.

6667. *The Chairman.*—What would you say on the average: do you get as good prices on the average as the tacksman, or not so good, or better?—Well, it was the young stirks that I was questioned about, and I have never seen farmers selling stirks.

6668. You are not, in fact, able to judge?—No.

6669. *Mr Mackintosh.*—Is it possible to land seaware on the shore of Suisnish?—Yes, in some parts of it.

6670. It has a stretch of about six miles, I suppose; how many places could you land seaware?—You can land them in about six places in Suisnish itself, and there is only a mile of it.

6671. In very favourable weather?—You could come to the north.

6672. Are you desirous of obtaining a new holding?—Yes.

6673. Would you leave Torrin if you got a new holding?—Yes.

6674. You know the good lands down in the forest on the mainland, Mr Winans's forest?—Yes.

6675. Would you like a holding there? would you rather have one at Torrin?—Yes, I would rather have a holding in my native place.

6676. *The Chairman.*—Now tell us what size of holding you have in view?—From 10 to 12 acres.

6677. Of arable?—Yes, of arable land.

6678. And what extent of grazing?—Just what would keep 100 sheep at least, and 4 cows and 2 followers, and 1 pony.

6679. Have the Torrin people got ponies mostly already?—Yes.

6680. Mostly each one has a pony?—Yes.

6681. Now suppose you had a holding of that size, would you expect to be able to live by it without any other assistance?—Well, I would do my best.

6682. Oh yes, of course. But as a man skilled in agriculture would you expect?—— I am not skilled in agriculture at all.

6683. Well, with such experience as you have, would you expect to be able to live by the holding without further aid?—If I had it properly stocked, and got good prices, maybe I would, according to the kind of arable land; it would give a good return may be on the whole.

6684. You said you would like to be near the sea?—Yes.

6685. Have you a boat?—I have a share of a boat.

6686. And you do not wish to have to give that up?—If I was removed to another place I would have.

6687. Would you be willing to give it up? What I mean to be at is this: is it your desire to get a holding large enough to enable you to live by the holding and away from the sea, or is it your desire to remain very much where you are and trust partly to the sea and partly to the land?—That is what I mean.

Broadford, Skye.

Donald Nicolson.

6688. Then you don't wish to leave the sea?—No.

6689. You wish to be able to gain a livelihood partly by the sea and partly by the holding?—Yes.

6690. And you have no idea of going into a holding to which you would have to devote your whole time?—No.

6691. *Mr. Macleod.*—About the sheep stock: did you sell your usual number of sheep last year?—No; we sold only the shot lambs and the wool last year.

6692. So that the stock you have in Torrin just now is very much above the usual stock?—(No answer.)

6693. *Mr Mackintosh.*—Still you were able to winter your hoggs at home.

6694. *The Chairman.*—Enough has been said on that point.

JOHN MACKINNON, Crofter, Torrin (59)—*examined.*

John Mac kinnon

6695. *The Chairman.*—You have heard Nicolson's evidence, I suppose?—Yes, the most of it.

6696. Do you wish to make any addition to it?——I concur in all that he said.

6697. You have one fourth of No. 10, Torrin?—Yes.

6698. The area of which is 1 acre 1 rood 12 poles arable, and 2 roods 26 poles outrun: the former rent was £2, 5s. 10d., and the fair rent £1, 18s.?—Yes.

6699. Would you like to make any addition to Nicolson's statement with regard to land?—I am not particular, unless your lordship be pleased to ask any questions. I will answer any questions as far as I can.

6700. I suppose you heard the statement which Nicolson read to us?—I have not seen it, but I have heard it all, and I agree with what is said in it.

6701. It was a pretty full and distinct statement, but if there is anything else you would like to tell us we shall be happy to hear it?—I know for instance that there are some in Torrin who would like to be removed to another suitable place, because people who only occupy one-fourth of a croft cannot be supposed to be content.

6702. I suppose the Torrin people trust mostly to the sheep stock and their cattle stock more than to the land?—Yes, they do.

6703. I see your arable is a very small patch extending to an acre and a quarter; but you are able to winter your hoggs upon your own ground?—We are able to keep them in life, my lord: some of them die and some live, that is all.

6704. But many crofters and farmers, too, are not able to winter their hoggs upon their own ground, you know?—No.

6705. Are you in the habit of doing so?—Yes, they have never been put away; we were not able to put them away. If they live they will live, and if they die they must.

6706. But you have low ground suitable for wintering?—We keep them on our crofts.

6707. Do you know what was the death-rate last winter?—No, but Nicolson would know about it.

6708. Can you tell us what did each crofter in Torrin get from the committee, for the management of the club farm last year?—Not a penny; they had to put in some on account of expenses.

6709. You had to put money into the common fund?—Yes.

6710. What expenses do you refer to?—Shepherds' wages and dip for the sheep and such things. We bought a bull last year at £40, and it had to be paid up.

6711. You were not able to meet those expenses out of the profits of the year?—No.

6712. And besides getting no profit, you had to

Broadford, Skye. — John Mackinnon.

pay money out of your pocket?—We had to pay in, some of us. My one-fourth share came to 10s. or 12s.

6713. What was the state of the account the year before?—Much better, but I cannot exactly tell.

6714. Did you get any?—Yes, we got some money.

6715. And you had nothing to pay in?—No.

6716. Some years, of course, it is very good?—About nine or ten years ago we were getting considerable sums.

6717. How much now, nine or ten years back?—As much as £12 and £14 each.

6718. Each whole croft?—Yes.

6719. How many shepherds do you keep?—We keep two.

6720. What wages do you pay them?—One of them is paid nothing but wages, the other one is paid partly in sheep grazing, partly in land; he has got a patch of land.

6721. One shepherd is paid in wages: how much is he paid?—£16.

6722. And the other, how much?—£7 in money, and the rest in land, and grazing for cows and sheep.

6723. And he is provided with a house?—Yes.

6724. Are these sheep you have black-faced sheep?—Black-faced sheep.

6725. Is there anything else you would like to add?—No.

6726. *Mr Shaw Stewart.*—Have you got a share in a boat?—Yes.

6727. And I suppose you agree with the other delegate that you would rather have your land, if you had any new holding, near the sea?—Yes, of course; yes.

6728. You are not paying much rent for the small bit you have now, but you would rather have a larger bit of land, even although you had to pay a larger rent?—Certainly.

6729. Well, these are bad times for farming now, for sheep and everything else; why do you think you would be able to pay the larger rent, even though the holding were larger?—I would help by the cultivating of any arable land I could get; it would help to maintain my family, and surely the rest of us would work for the rent, maybe, outside.

6730. Some of the family would work outside?—Yes.

6731. How many of a family have you?—I have four.

6732. Sons?—Two.

6733. And they would help to pay the rent of the new holding?—Likely; I was helping to pay my father's rent long before.

6734. Do you think any crofters would be able to cultivate any holding away from the sea without any help from fishing or outside labour?—It would depend on what kind of holding it was; if the holding was self-sustaining it would.

6735. Say, 15 acres of good land and a good bit of hill pasture inland, away from the sea?—I think a crofter would be able to maintain himself on that, if it were 15 acres of good land; but, of course, that alters with the times. Very often, in this country, the land does not yield such a good crop; there may be a bad year; of course, we must trust Providence for the like of that.

6736. But we must expect bad times as well as good?—Well, but I think a crofter would be able to sustain his family upon a 15-acre croft.

6737. You say, sustain his family, but would he have anything over?—I cannot exactly answer the question.

6738. I am only asking your opinion as a man who has cultivated the land?—I think he would need it all to sustain his family.

6739. *Mr Sutherland.*—You have proved that it is possible to make a sheep croft pay in Skye, without sending the sheep to winter in the Lowlands?—I don't know about the general rule, but we have been trying that experience for about eighteen years, anyway.

6740. You have made it pay, have you not?—Yes.

6741. Even last year?—Last year it did not pay us.

6742. Did not you add to your capital £40, the price of a good bull?—Yes, but it is not all paid yet.

6743. But you consider that, were it not for this expense, you would have a bigger dividend than you had the year before?—No, we would not.

6744. Would you have it equal to what it was before?—No, we would not. We sold nothing last year but the wool and the shot lambs.

6745. But do you think that if your holding were larger than it is now, your profit would increase in proportion?—I think it would.

6746. You think it would?—Certainly.

6747. And if your holding were made less in size than it is now, you think your profit would lessen, would it not?—My profit is very little, with the holding I have, supposing Lord Macdonald would make me a present of it. Supposing I had it for nothing, it would be very little to support my family.

6748. Is your desire to carry on the fishing influenced in any way by the fact that you have a boat just now?—I have a boat.

6749. Is it influenced in any degree by the fact that you have a share in a boat, and do not wish to part with it?—Oh yes.

6750. It is?—Yes.

6751. *Mr Gordon.*—You did not get any return from your sheep stock last year, mainly because you did not sell your wedder lambs?—That is it; we sold no wedder lambs.

6752. Did you sell any cast ewes?—No.

6753. You have them still?—Yes.

6754. *Mr Maccallum.*—Is it the practice with tacksmen to send the hoggs for wintering away from the island?—In general it is.

6755. But you have wintered them at home, as you say. Now is it because your pasture is superior to the pasture on the big farms?—No, because we were not able to pay for wintering; we would not be able to pay the expenses of the wintering, and we left them at home, so that it would be better for us if they would leave.

6756. Well, with regard to the tacksmen's land, do you think if they cultivated the arable land, they would be able to winter their hoggs at home? if the tacksmen cultivate the arable land in their holdings, would they be able to winter their hoggs at home?—Well, I believe they would be better able, anyway.

6757. They cultivate very little of the land?—Very little.

6758. But you have been improving your pasture, have you not?—Yes, by cultivating.

6759. And that helps to winter your hoggs?—It does, a good bit. We have some green land on both sides of the township, that we have been taking in, sometimes for five years, and sometimes for ten; a piece here, now and again, and we have finer grasses.

6760. And they have been cultivated?—Yes.

6761. *Mr Macleod.*—The fishing in Loch Slapin when the fish do come in there is particularly profitable, is it not?—Particularly.

6762. You get the fish close inshore, and with very little trouble, and close to your houses?—Yes, but we have bad access to the markets, and we always get low prices. If we could get good prices, we could live quite comfortably, sometimes.

6763. But you would not say that the fish could be got as easily in the average of places as it could be got in Loch Slapin, or at such a small expense in the way of material?—No, not for the last few years, anyway.

6764. *The Chairman.*—The Torrin crofters, as I take it from what you say, have always been accustomed to trust a good deal to the sea?—Yes, they have.

6765. And would they be reluctant to leave the sea-shore, do you think?—Well, I think they would; that is my opinion.

6766. You do not think that any of them would be willing to try a croft inland, and away from the

Broadford, Skye. John Mackinnon.

sea altogether?—I do not know; but I think it is the general feeling.

6767. What is the general feeling?—I think the general feeling is, that they would rather be near the sea.

6768. Taking their livelihood partly from the sea, and partly from their crofts?—Exactly.

6769. That is what they have been always accustomed to?—Exactly.

6770. Is it herring fishing or white fishing?—Mostly herring fishing; there is cod and ling fishing in the springtime.

6771. Is it generally good?—There are very few try it. I have been at it for the last thirty years mostly, trying it every year, but some years to very little profit.

6772. Are some of the Torrin crofters away at the herring fishing now?—No.

6773. Are they going?—I do not know. I was myself at the East Coast fishing for about thirty years, but for the last eight or nine years there was a great failure in it, and the men on the East Coast were going in crews themselves, and there was not so much demand for hired hands.

6774. They had no room for you?—No. They were going four or five themselves, into a crew.

Lachlan Mackinnon.

LACHLAN MACKINNON, Cottar, Torrin (60).
(Examined in Gaelic through an Interpreter.)

6775. *The Chairman.*—Do you pay any rent?—No.

6776. You are a cottar; are you situated on one of the crofters' holdings?—No, it is on the township grazing.

6777. How long have you been living there?—About thirty-three or thirty-four years.

6778. Have you any stock?—I have a cow and a stirk.

6779. And do you pay anything for the grazing of the cow and stirk?—I pay £1 a year.

6780. To whom?—To the township, and besides I pay for wintering nearly £3.

6781. Have you any sheep?—Three sheep.

6782. Are you desirous of obtaining a new holding, if it can be got?—Yes.

6783. Are you able to point us to any land that would be suitable?—I would like to remain near Torrin.

6784. Near the sea?—Yes.

6785. What sort of holding have you in view?—I would be for 6 acres of arable land.

6786. And what stock have you in view?—Two cows and 40 sheep.

6787. Is there suitable land near where you are, for such a holding?—Yes.

6788. Where?—Kilbride is the nearest place to me, or on the Strathaird estate.

6789. You mean near Kilbride House?—Yes.

6790. How far from it?—About quarter of a mile.

6791. Now, could you take such a holding and pay the fair rent without assistance from the outside?—If I could get time to stock it.

6792. How long?—In a year or two.

6793. I think there are eight cottars in the township, aren't there?—Yes.

6794. Did you use to go to the fishing when you were younger?—No.

6795. *Mr Shaw Stewart.*—You say that you might be able to stock a new holding in a year or two. I want to know if you would have to borrow the money for it?—No, I have a strong family, earning.

6796. Are they working away in the South—in the Lowlands?—Yes, one of them is in Glasgow, and the other is in England.

Neil Grant.

NEIL GRANT, Fisherman, Kilbride (50)—*examined.*

6797. *The Chairman.*—Are you a crofter?—No, a fisherman, styled so.

6798. Do you pay any rent where you live?—Well, I live upon a croft, but I am not directly a tenant, or a crofter. I live upon a croft in Torrin. Broadford Skye. Neil Grant.

6799. Whose croft do you live upon?—I live with my father-in-law.

6800. What is his name?—Charles Mackenzie.

6801. Do you pay him a rent?—No, not of any kind.

6802. But any assistance?—Yes.

6803. Can you tell us of any land near you available for new holdings?—Oh yes, plenty; plenty of land. Five townships have been cleared within my own memory, in the parish.

6804. What are their names?—Keppoch, Feaulin, Arinacreige, Suisnish, and Boreraig.

6805. They were all cleared in your recollection?—Yes, it was in my own memory.

6806. And do you say there are lands where these townships stood that would be suitable?—Yes, of course there are; they were inhabited before.

6807. And you think they might be inhabited again?—Certainly.

6808. To a profit?—Yes, to a profit.

6809. What kind of land is it now; is it grazing land?—Yes, grazing; pasture land, there is nothing else.

6810. What size of holding would you like to obtain?—We cannot look for equal holdings; it is a matter of taste.

6811. I am speaking of your own holding?—Well, I would say, 10 to 12 acres, or 10 acres arable.

6812. And what more?—Outrun for 4 cattle—4 cows.

6813. And followers?—I believe that is a misunderstood term among delegates here, because they do not know what it means.

6814. Any sheep?—Yes, between 60 and 70 sheep

6815. Could you pay the rent of a holding such as that?—Well, give us a chance first, and then we will look for the means; the means will provide themselves.

6816. But you have not the means at present; is that what you say?—Partly; we have some stock, and we would add to it, and they would increase.

6817. What stock have you got?—Three cows.

6818. And what more?—That is all.

6819. But could you put up the buildings and get the additional stock without some assistance?—Yes, we would; the question is, the getting it.

6820. Getting the land, you mean?—Yes.

6821. You describe yourself as a fisherman?—I do.

6822. Would you be unwilling to leave the seashore?—I would not.

6823. You would like to get away from it?—Yes, I am tired of it; sick tired of it.

6824. It is not paying?—No, it is very unremunerative business, now-a-days.

6825. Have you a share of a boat?—Yes.

6826. But you would be willing to give that up?—Yes.

6827. And devote yourself entirely to the cultivation of a croft?—Yes.

6828. *Mr Shaw Stewart.*—You say that in the townships you have named, those who lived there before were people who had crofts, and they might live there again?—Yes.

6829. How did they maintain themselves before—by sheep?—No, not by stock; it is by the produce of the land; it was a self-supporting country about a hundred years ago, until after the passing of the Corn Law, and the sheep-farming system played the mischief with the Highlands, and sent them away altogether out of their own country.

6830. But I want to know about the produce of the land. Why do you think they would be able to live on the produce of the land on these townships now, at present prices?—Yes.

6831. Why do you think so?—Because they would live upon the produce.

6832. They would live upon the produce?—Of course they would.

6833. But then they would have nothing over?—I cannot say. It depends on the markets.

6834. But as markets are now?—Well, you must assimilate the rent with the prices.

6835. That is to say, when prices are bad, there must be no rent?—When prices are bad, there will be a low rent, on that account.

6836. And in a good year, do you think the rent ought to go high?—No, unless you adopt the sliding scale for it.

6837. Do you think it should be?—Well, I think it should be.

6838. Do you think that would work?—Yes.

6839. But then, on a holding of the size you mention, there would not be much over?—No; well, they would be self-supporting; they would not be going to the poorhouse, as they are now. We are only rearing beggars and paupers—breeding pauperism.

6840. But you do not see any way in which they could pay for the land?—Pay for the land! Why not? It is the land that pays for itself, not the people that are on it.

6841. But to get on it at all—would they be able to pay any rent for it; supposing they had an advance from Government, would they be able to repay it?—They would be able easily to repay it.

6842. Why are you so sure of it, when you say that in bad times they would only be able to maintain themselves?—Interest comes down in bad times, the same as other things; the Government would have to assimilate their interest with the times.

6843. The interest on the loan would not go up and down with the times. It would be a fixed quantity?—Well, it seems the landlords have the laws of the Medes and Persians still.

6844. The landlords sometimes lower their rents in bad times?—Yes.

6845. But if you were dealing, not with a landlord, but with a sum of money advanced by the Government, you would not find the Government lowering the loan on account of bad times?—What is the Government, but the representatives of the nation?

6846. Well, a bargain is a bargain, and if you borrow the money from the Government, you would have to repay a part every year?—Do you think the Government would act the part of the unjust judge?

6847. I am afraid it would be a rather hard judge?—I would rather trust to the tender mercy of the Government than to the tender mercy of the landlords, for we know too much of them.

6848. *Mr Sutherland.*—What distance are you from the sea at the present time?—A quarter of a mile, or thereabout.

6849. And with regard to the question of the self-sustaining croft: do you expect that, in any circumstances, you would have anything over after supporting your family. For instance, you would not expect to eat all the sheep in one year, would you?—No, we would eat a few of them. We did not eat very much beef for a good many years past, only that we got some cast ewes last year, because stock was not saleable.

6850. With regard to this question of stock, do you think there would be a natural increase of stock by itself?—Yes, if the land was capable of holding it; the stock must be in proportion to the land.

6851. But you would have no fear that you would have been able to pay a fair rent fixed by an impartial tribunal and interest on money if you got money advanced to you?—Not the least. The produce would support us.

6852. And have you any idea as to the interest that the Government charges?—2½ or 3 per cent.

6853. About 3 per cent.?—Yes.

6854. So you think there would be a good prospect of repaying that in the event of you getting it, as well as a reasonable rent?—I have no doubt of it; it is my firm conviction.

6855. Have you any knowledge of money having been advanced to landlords to improve land before?—Yes.

6856. What do you know about it?—It was done here.

6857. And do you know the conditions upon which that money was advanced?—No, but I know conditions on which they dealt with their crofters.

6858. That is what I wish to know. The landlords were made the mediums through which the money was paid, and they made certain bargains with the tenants about it?—Yes.

6859. Do you know what these bargains were?—That they were to be paid for twenty-five years.

6860. Can you tell us what the rate of interest was?—I was too young at the time.

6861. Do you know if there is any difference between the rate the landlord charged and the rate the Government charged?—I think the landlords charged 5 per cent. to improve the land for themselves.

6862. I am afraid you are not referring to the same thing. You mean where the landlord advances his own money?—No, I know no instance of that.

6863. You know instances of where the landlord received money from Government and advanced that money to the tenants?—Yes.

6864. And are you sure he charged 5 per cent.?—I cannot give a definite answer to that question.

6865. *Mr Gordon.*—What rent would you be prepared to pay for a croft to keep 4 cows and their followers and 40 or 50 sheep?—How many acres arable of land?

6866. You said 10 yourself, I think.—I would say the arable land for 10s. per acre, and 10s. or 15s. for every cow.

6867. You would not charge yourself with a land rent and the cows too?—And 1s. 6d. for every sheep.

6868. I'm afraid you have rather a big bill. 10s. per acre comes to £5 and adding £6 comes to £11.—Yes.

6869. I am afraid that would be rather much?—Well, it depends on the rent; the rent must be according to the price of stock, or the price of produce.

6870. *Mr Munro.*—You have told us that fishing is very unremunerative?—Yes.

6871. How is it more unremunerative here than elsewhere? To what do you attribute the unremunerative nature of the fishing?—Just to supply and demand; the supply is in excess of the demand.

6872. I understand from that that you have not a ready outlet for your fish?—No ready market.

6873. If you had a ready market it would be remedied?—Yes, we send out fish to the South.

6874. In answer to Mr Shaw Stewart you stated that if the Government advanced you money you could repay it by easy instalments?—Yes.

6875. Did I also understand you to say that if you got more land you thought you would get on without any outside assistance?—Yes.

6876. Therefore, any question of loans in your case does not arise?—Yes.

6877. *The Chairman.*—Suppose you got a croft of the size you have been describing—10 acres arable and so forth—do you feel confident that you could take such a holding and meet the rent without assistance from somewhere else?—Well, I daresay.

6878. In average years?—Oh, well, we cannot speak for the future.

6879. What would you expect to be able to do in a series of average years—that you could take the holding and pay the rent, or would you require assistance from somewhere else?—The question is very difficult to answer.

6880. I would like you to endeavour to answer it?—Stock was unsaleable last year.

6881. But I am talking of the average year?—Oh, well, for the past you know——

6882. Never mind the past, I am speaking of average years in the future?—Well, if we are to assimilate the future with the past——

6883. I am asking you to take an average. You would expect to carry on such a holding without assistance?—Well, I don't know about the stocking.

6884. You think you might need assistance for the stocking?—Yes, assistance for the stocking.

6885. And what about the buildings?—The building would go on; plenty of lime and stone here.

6886. But you would require assistance?—Not the least.

6887. *Mr Alexander Macdonald.*—I would like to ask a question.

6888. *The Chairman.*—I thought you were representing Strathaird?

6889. *Mr Macdonald.*—But he is talking of Strathaird; he has been trespassing on my ground.

6890. *The Chairman.*—At least he has been referring to it.

6891. *Mr Macdonald* (to witness).—Did you say that you would have been able yourself to stock such a holding as you have described?—Well, give me the chance first to do it; break up the land.

6892. But do you say that you would be able yourself to stock such a holding or not—give a definite answer, please?—Yes?

6893. You have the money, have you?—That is no other man's business.

6894. You have come here to answer our questions, you have put yourself forward to answer questions?—If they are relevant I will answer them.

6895. *The Chairman.*—The relevancy will be decided by us; I think the question here is fair enough?—I would not be able to stock it without external aid.

6896. *Mr Macdonald.*—You would have to borrow the money?—Well, perhaps.

6897. *The Chairman.*—Would you, or would you not?—Part of it.

6898. *Mr Macdonald.*—Now you say that you have some money?—Well, I did not say that.

6899. You do not say it now?—Nor before.

6900. Do you say you have any money?—Yes, I have some money in my pocket here.

6901. Enough to buy the ground? You have set yourself forward as a delegate to answer. Have you got any money, have you got £10?

6902. *The Chairman.*—I think the fair question is, has he money to stock a holding suppose he got one?

6903. *Mr Macdonald.*—He said not. I asked if he had got £10; if it is not relevant, I won't press it. (To witness) But the money that you have got, is it by fishing that you made it?

6904. *The Chairman.*—I put the question in this shape; do you mainly subsist by means of fishing?—Yes, for the most part.

6905. *Mr Macdonald.*—Now, with reference to the Keppoch field and Arinacreige which you mentioned, are these on the property of Sir William Mackinnon, and not on the property of Lord Macdonald on which you live?—They are on the property of Sir William Mackinnon.

6906. Does Loch Slapin divide you from these places that you have mentioned? Does it lie between you and them?—Yes, it does.

6907. Are you of opinion that the people at Keppoch were living before, and that people could live there comfortably again?—Why not?

6908. *The Chairman.*—Were they living comfortably before, do you know?—Well, they were according to the times; but there was the failure of the potato crop.

6909. *Mr Macdonald.*—Are you aware that the people that were living at Keppoch completely failed to be able to live there, and at the same time pay their debts or rents? Are you aware that the people at Keppoch completely failed to live there and at the same time pay their debts; do you understand that?—No, they were put away from there.

6910. But are you aware?—I do not know of such a thing.

6911. Are you aware that at the time the people of Keppoch were living there the arrears were as follows:—Katherine Robertson, £4, 9s.; Norman Cameron, £22, 6s. 9d.; Ewen Macinnes, £39, 11s. 4d.; Norman Mackinnon, £6, 8s. 8d.; John Mackenzie, £1, 11s. 10d.; William Grant, £31, 14s. 3d.; and a large number besides in arrear with whose names I shall not trouble the Commission. They were years behind with their rent. Are you aware of that?—No, I did not know their liabilities.

6912. Therefore, don't you think it would be wiser for you to keep to the property to which you belong?

6913. *The Chairman.*—Stop a moment, that is an argument? That is not a question of fact.

6914. *Mr Macdonald.*—I will ask this question: are they casting their eyes across and coveting the Strathaird property?

6915. *The Chairman.*—I will not allow that question.

6916. *Mr Macdonald.*—Well, I will not use the word 'covet.' I will say, are they casting a longing eye?

6917. *The Chairman.*—I do not allow the phrase—'a longing eye.'

6918. *Mr Macdonald.*—I will put it any way you like.

6919. *The Chairman.*—Ask him with regard to matters of fact.

6920. *Mr Macdonald.*—The people of Torrin have already over and over again come across and in opposition to the remonstrances of Sir William Mackinnon and his factor and his tenants, taken away the seaware of the Strathaird estates.

6921. *The Chairman.*—We cannot go into a subject of that nature. A charge of theft cannot be prosecuted before this tribunal.

6922. *Mr Macdonald.*—Have not charges of theft been made by the Procurator Fiscal already?

6923. *The Chairman.*—I disallow that question.

6924. *Mr Mackintosh,* Factor for Lord Macdonald.—Have you any more information as to the state of the people of Suisnish and Boreraig that you have in regard to the people of Keppoch?

6925. *The Chairman.*—You had better put a specific question.

6926. *Mr Mackintosh.*—I am not going to ask unless he is better informed. He said there were so many tenants removed from Suisnish and Boreraig; does he know anything of their circumstances?

6927. *The Chairman* (to witness).—The question put to you is this. Do you know anything of the circumstances of the tenants of Suisnish and Boreraig prior to their removal?—I know that some of the Boreraig crofters went of their own accord; they were willing to leave; but the Suisnish people were put away against their will, and that at the point of the bayonet by sheriff officers and emergency men.

6928. But do you know anything of their circumstances?—Well, we must look to the times; the failure of the potato was a cause of it.

6929. You think they were in backward circumstances, but you say that was owing to the times?—Yes, they had not got over the famine.

6930. *Mr Mackintosh.*—They were also deep in arrear of rent to such an extent that there would be no difficulty at the present day in clearing the whole township.

FARQUHAR KELLY, Crofter, Heast (47)—*examined.*

6931. *The Chairman.*—Are you a crofter or a cottar?—I am a crofter.

6932. Do you occupy one-half of lot 2, Heast?—Yes.

6933. I see the holding extends to 2 acres 2 roods 16 poles arable, 1 acre 0 rood 27 poles outrun; 3013 acres grazing common to the township, divided into thirteen shares, of which you hold half a share; your old rent was £5, 4s., and your fair rent £3, 10s.?—Yes.

6934. Can you give us any information with reference to available land for crofts?—Yes; there

Broadford, Skye.

Farquhar Kelly.

are some in the two townships of Boreraig and Suisnish in our neighbourhood.

6935. The lands of Suisnish and Boreraig?—Yes.

6936. Any others?—Well, I believe Kinloch also.

6937. That is going towards Isleornsay?—Yes.

6938. Any others?—Swordale, I believe.

6939. Is that all?—Yes, that is all I am acquainted with.

6940. Do you think the lands you have mentioned on these places are all available for arable land?—Some of it—some for pasture, and some for cultivation.

6941. *Mr Macleod.*—How many crofters are in Heast?—There are thirteen crofts and five of them are in halves.

6942. That is eighteen families?—Yes, eighteen families.

6943. How many cottars?—One.

6944. Do you belong to the township of Heast yourself? Were you born there?—No, I was born in Boreraig.

6945. Are there many of your name in this part of the country?—Not many; there are some in Sleat.

6946. Where did they originally come from?—I could not say: I was told that my race came along with a Lady Macdonald from County Antrim in Ireland in about the year 1400.

6947. With regard to the township of Heast you say that you are marching on the one side with Boreraig and Suisnish?—With Boreraig only.

6948. And are you marching with Kinloch?—Yes, part of it.

6949. And is there a sufficiency of arable land in the township of Heast, supposing that there were only one family to each of the crofts?—No, the crofts are not sufficient for one.

6950. How about the hill pasture, have you got any sheep upon it?—Yes.

6951. Is it in a club stock?—Yes.

6952. Exactly the same as Torrin?—Yes.

6953. Then do you think that you could profitably occupy more hill-grazing than you have at present?—Yes, it is for that purpose that I came here. There were 419 acres of our hill-grazing taken from us by the Crofters Commission the time they were here.

6954. *The Chairman.*—We cannot go into that; we do not revise the judgments of the Crofters Commission.

6955. *Mr Macleod.*—Do you say that the crofters at Heast only desire an extension of hill pasture, that they don't want new holdings—or do you mean that they want both?—There will be some of them will do so, but it was only for the grazing that I was sent here.

6956. And they think that they could profitably use a larger area of hill-grazing than they have got at the present time?—Yes.

6957. Now with regard to the farm of Kinloch, could a portion of it be conveniently added to the township of Heast?—Not very conveniently.

6958. Boreraig lies very conveniently?—Yes.

6959. There is no other farm that lies near the hill-grazing of Heast?—None, excepting Kinloch and Boreraig.

6960. And Boreraig would be the most suitable for an extension, supposing there was an extension?—Yes. There is a part of it that they wanted called Peighinn. It is separated from the other part of Boreraig by a burn, a ravine.

6961. A sort of natural march?—Yes.

6962. How many acres would there be in that?—I have no idea. And it is completely divided from the rest of Boreraig from hill to shore by this burn.

6963. Now tell me about the club stock: how many sheep will you have on Heast?—Over 500.

6964. Do you winter the hoggs at home?—Yes.

6965. Is it a black-faced stock?—Yes.

6966. Did you have any profit last year, did you sell any sheep?—We sold the old sheep, wedders, and shot lambs. We also sold the wool.

6967. You had not to pay in any money, had you?—No, we cleared ourselves, low as the prices were.

Broadford, Skye.

Farquhar Kelly.

6968. And you have no doubt found the sheep stock of great assistance to you?—Yes.

6969. And you think that the club stock is the fairest to all parties?—Oh, certainly.

6970. And you would have no difficulty with regard to the management of it?—No, none.

6971. Now you have heard the opinion expressed to-day by a witness from Torrin that he saw no difficulty supposing that there were a very much larger number of sheep to manage, and a very much larger number of crofters interested in them; do you think any difficulty would arise? Supposing there were a larger number of crofters about a sheep stock, and that the sheep stock was say 2000, do you think there would be any more difficulty than with 500?—I think there would be more difficulty; but if they gave the management into the hands of two or three men, it should not be more difficult.

6972. You think it would be quite within the capacity of three men to manage such a large stock as that?—Yes.

6973. *Mr Gordon.*—What land is there in Kinloch that you think would be suitable for crofters?—The low-lying land, in view from the road that goes to Isleornsay, the left-hand side.

6974. By the shepherd's house?—Yes. The whole land from the shepherd's house down to the sea has been cultivated.

6975. How many crofts would you expect to get in there?—I think it should make four; I never looked at the thing.

6976. Would not the low land require to be drained?—Oh yes, parts of it.

6977. But the whole of it would, would it not?—No. There is a good deal of the land on the hillside down there that I think would not require much draining.

6978. But that is not arable land?—I mean the decline, the higher ground.

6979. You say you march with Kinloch, but it is a very small neck?—Yes.

6980. Would you prefer the extension of your grazings towards Boreraig rather than Kinloch?—Yes.

6981. What do you call that burn?—Allt-na-Peighinn.

6982. Have you any notion of the extent of ground between that burn and your present march?—It is fully half a mile broad.

6983. It is about 600 acres, I think, is it not?—About two miles or a mile and three quarters.

6984. Say a mile and a half by half a mile. There are about 600 acres, would that be enough?—Well, we thought that very convenient; it is cut off from the other part of Boreraig by the burn; it forms a natural march which would require very little fencing.

6985. *Mr Sutherland.*—You say that you were born at Boreraig?—I was.

6986. Do you know anything about the circumstances under which the people were put out of Boreraig of which we have heard something?—I have heard of it; I do not by my own experience know much of it, for I was very young at the time.

6987. But what did you hear about the state of the people before they came to Heast?—I know they were in circumstances the same as their neighbours round about them. The circumstances of the people here about that time were not so good as now.

6988. Any more than in any other parts of the country? I mean that the same circumstances existed relatively there as in other parts of the country?—Yes.

6989. But were they as well of as they are in Heast now?—No, I do not think they were.

6990. And were they as well of at that time as they were in the other townships here about?—I think they were.

6991. What was done with the townships of Bore-

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raig and Suisnish after the people were cleared out of them?—They were let to some tenant as a sheep farm.

6992. Were the people cleared for the purpose of making a sheep farm?—Well, I cannot say they were.

6993. But looking to the result.—Yes.

6994. The people were not thinned, and some of them left?—First of all some of them went to Australia, and those that were left were scattered here and there through other parts of Strath. They were put out of their houses there.

6995. And the land was made into a sheep farm?—Yes. My father was about the last in the place—the second last, I think.

6996. *The Chairman.*—Have there been any new houses put up in Heast of late years?—Yes.

6997. Within the last six or eight years?—Yes.

6998. How many?—One, I think, and there is another in the course of erection.

6999. Within what time were these put up?—About five years since the first was built.

7000. *Mr. Mackintosh.*—Did not those people who were removed from Suisnish and Boreraig, who did not go to Australia or elsewhere, get similar holdings on Lord Macdonald's property?—Did not they all get some place to go to?—No.

7001. Were any of them left without a place at all?—Yes.

7002. Did you see the farm of Suisnish and Boreraig advertised to let about eight years ago—offered to be let to nine tenants?—No.

7003. You did not see it advertised?—No.

7004. Did you ever hear that it was offered to be let to nine tenants?—I never did hear how many tenants. I heard it was offered to tenants.

7005. It is the case that Lord Macdonald was prepared to let Suisnish and Boreraig at that time, and to treat with them for the stock which his lordship had to take over at valuation from the outgoing tenant.

7006. *The Chairman.*—He does not know anything about it apparently.

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DONALD MACARTHUR, Fisherman, Luib—*examined.*

7007. *The Chairman.*—Are you a crofter?—No. I am a fisherman.

7008. Do you pay any rent?—Yes.

7009. What rent do you pay?—5s. a year.

7010. To Lord Macdonald?—Yes.

7011. Were you brought up as a fisherman?—Yes.

7012. And you subsist entirely in that way?—Yes.

7013. Do you go as a yachtsman at all?—No, but I have been sometime at sea, in a sailing vessel.

7014. How many years have you been at sea?—Two years.

7015. And have you a share of a boat?—Yes, two or three of them.

7016. Have you some boats of your own?—Yes.

7017. How many?—Three.

7018. Three of your own?—Not exactly of my own, but I have shares in three.

7019. Have you any of your own?—No.

7020. What is the size of these boats?—One of them is 15 feet, another 18, and another 24 feet keel.

7021. You go to the herring fishing?—Yes.

7022. And also to the white fishing?—Yes.

7023. What is it you desire to say to us, with regard to the land?—Well, about 5 or 6 acres of land; I will be pleased with that amount of arable land.

7024. But do you wish to give up the sea?—No.

7025. Do you wish to continue to depend mainly upon the sea for your livelihood?—Yes.

7026. But you want a small holding by the seashore?—Yes.

7027. With 5 acres or so of arable, and some grazing?—Yes. Broadford, Skye.

7028. But I suppose I am right in thinking that you do not wish a holding so large as would interfere with your carrying on your trade of a fisherman?—No. Donald Macarthur.

7029. Is there land near where you are that would be suitable?—Yes, there is a small spot over the head of Loch Ainort.

7030. That is at Kinloch-Ainort?—Yes.

7031. In the Deer Forest?—Yes.

7032. Your notion is that a holding there would be suitable?—Yes.

7033. *Mr. Macleod.*—You said that you would like a holding of 5 or 6 acres. There would not be much land at Kinloch Ainort?—No, but I think there would be as much as would make that much. Of course there is plenty land in the Island of Scalpay.

7034. Anywhere else?—Down nearer, about Corry there.

7035. But not in your own immediate neighbourhood?—Oh, there is another nice spot about Strollamus farm.

7036. That you think would be suitable for the sort of holdings?—Yes.

7037. And that would still be quite convenient to the fishing?—Yes.

7038. And if you and your neighbours got such holdings as you have spoken of, I daresay they would be able to put up the necessary buildings, and get the little stock that you would require?—The most of them would not.

7039. But you have got considerable means yourself, having a share in all these boats. Are the others as well off?—No.

7040. Not as well off as you are, speaking generally?—No.

7041. And you do not think they would be able even to take a small 5 or 6 acres croft with some hill grazing, without some assistance?—No.

7042. Do you think they would be able to repay a loan, if it were made to them?—If the fishing was successful; but the fishing has forsaken the district, since a good number of years.

7043. *The Chairman.*—You are not making so much out of it?—No, not in our own district, but we do on the west side of Loch Slapin.

7044. You have to go round there to do it?—Yes. And about Loch Hourn, and Loch Scavaig.

7045. As a matter of fact, you have found that in prosecuting the fishing, if you are to make a profitable thing of it, you must go away from home?—Yes.

7046. For considerable periods?—Yes.

7047. And you have no fear but you would be able to pay up the instalments of a loan if it were made to you?—No.

7048. If the fishing were successful on an average of years?—Well, I think we could.

7049. *Mr Munro.*—I was rather surprised to hear you say that you and the bulk of your acquaintance would not be able to take a small croft without outside assistance, in the shape of money advance?—Well, some of them have only got small boats, and they cannot go fishing far off, now that the fishing has forsaken our place for a good number of years. Of course, we have got that bigger boat last season; we have not done anything yet, but we are in hopes that we shall be able to do something yet.

7050. From whom do you think assistance should come?—Unless it would come from the Government, I do not know of any other way.

7051. But what security could you give the Government for any advance?—I could not give an answer to that question.

7052. How do you know that you would be able to repay the loan, if you got such a loan from Government?—I think there is not a year during the last three or four years when we would not have been able to repay it.

7053. Did I understand you to say in answer to

Broadford, Skye.

Donald Macarthur.

Mr. Macleod that if the fishing were good you would be able to repay the instalments?—Yes.

7054. But suppose the fishing were bad, what would happen?—We would do it some other way.

7055. You know it is a very easy matter to contract a debt, but it is not easy to get out of it?—No, it is not.

7056. Do you not think, now, that if land were offered to you, you could stock it, and build your own houses, without outside assistance, just as many other crofters would?—I do not mean to say about the houses, but I think we could stock a small lot.

7057. You have referred to Scalpay as affording an excellent field for the migration of crofters?—Yes.

7058. Would the crofters be able to take the stock of 1800 sheep which are there, and pay for them?—No, I am afraid they would not be able to do anything of the kind.

7059. Without assistance?—Without assistance.

7060. *Mr Shaw Stewart.*—In what capacity have you been at sea?—Before the mast.

7061. I want to ask you one or two questions to find your general opinion about fishing. Do you think the transport of fish could be improved in the south and west of Skye?—Well, I don't know.

7062. If there was a railway to Mallaig, for instance?—Yes, of course, if there was any handy convenience for the English market there would be more money got for the herring in these corners.

7063. The fish are there but the transport fails?—Yes.

7064. Well, now, I want to ask you this. Speaking of any fisherman in the south of Skye whose chief profession was fishing, would he not be better off with a small patch of potatoes, and live entirely by the fishing, with nothing but his potatoes to look after at odd times, rather than go in for a croft of some acres of arable and some hill pasture?—No, I don't think so.

7065. I want your general opinion, would you mind telling me why you think not?—Because he could turn some odd time or another to the land when he could not to the fishing.

7066. At what time of year?—Through the winter time. There is not much fishing going on here through the winter time.

7067. You really think that a fisherman who is making a good thing fishing will have time to attend to a small croft and hill pasture?—Yes.

7068. And that it would be a benefit to him?—Yes.

7069. Even with rent to pay and bad times and failure of stock and that kind of thing?—Yes.

7070. You say at present you have to go some way from home for good fishing?—Yes.

7071. Where do you go to?—Round to Loch Hourn and anywhere about the west of Sleat.

7072. That is not a very great distance?—It is about forty miles.

7073. And you think that if there was better transport for the fishing you would be able to do as well as the East Coast fishermen do who come round to Skye?—I really do not know.

7074. Why do the East Coast fishermen do so well to make it worth their while to come round to the west of Skye?—Because they have more capital, and the accommodation is better, and they have more gear to work the boats.

7075. *The Chairman.*—Have you seen cases of men whose crofts were so large that they had to attend to the croft when they should have been at sea fishing; or were at sea fishing when the croft required their attention?—No.

7076. Now you mentioned 5 acres arable, would that not be rather large for a man who depended on the sea for his livelihood?—Yes, for an old man, but we are three or four young strong fellows.

7077. Are you brothers?—Yes.

7078. How many brothers have you?—Four, besides myself.

7079. That is, five in all?—Yes.

7080. And do you all live together?—No, there are two of them in England. Broadford, Skye.

7081. How many are living at home?—Three.

7082. Counting yourself?—Yes. Donald Macarthur.

7083. And when you speak of 5 acres arable you mean that one of your number would be looking after the croft and the stock while the other two were fishing?—Yes.

7084. But suppose this case, that you were alone as a fisherman, or you and one brother; would you be able to cultivate a croft of that size and carry on the fishing successfully?—I think I could, if my health could stand it.

7085. But don't you think there is a danger in a fisherman getting too large a croft if he wishes to depend on the sea?—I think there is, unless he were clear of the fishing altogether.

7086. But I suppose it is your opinion that if he depended on the fishing it would be necessary that he should have a small croft, and devote his time mainly to the sea?—Yes.

PETER ROBERTSON, Cottar, Luib (31). Peter Robertson.
(Examined in Gaelic through an interpreter.)

7087. *The Chairman.*—Are you a crofter or a fisherman or what?—A cottar.

7088. And do you pay rent?—No rent.

7089. Did you hear the evidence of Macarthur?—Yes.

7090. And do you agree with it?—Yes.

7091. Have you any land?—No land.

7092. How do you live?—By fishing.

7093. Do you fish along with Macarthur?—I fish along with two other young men, not with Macarthur.

7094. What are their names?—Angus Mackinnon and John Mackinnon: one of them has land—John Mackinnon.

7095. Can you tell us of land available for a holding near where you are?—About Loch-Ainort there is some, and there is a bit at Strollamus, also at Scalpay.

7096. These are lands that have been mentioned already?—Yes, these are all that are near the sea.

7097. And do you agree with the evidence that has been given with regard to these portions of land?—Yes.

7098. Do you wish to make any addition to the statements made already?—I have only the same language to repeat which the other young men spoke.

7099. *Mr Munro.*—With reference to the question of fishing, Mr. Macarthur stated that the difficulty in prosecuting the fishing on the Skye coast is mainly owing to the lack of good boats and fishing gear?—Yes, there are no good boats.

7100. If you had good boats and quick means of conveying the fish to the Southern markets, could you prosecute it successfully then?—Yes, if there was fishing and good prices; many a one who was at the fishing with good gear did not succeed.

7101. *Mr Macleod.*—How many are paying rent in Luib?—I think about eighteen.

7102. And how many cottars, like yourself, that pay no rent?—Ten cottars, in addition to the eighteen.

7103. Are you aware whether there was any application made from the township of Luib for a loan for fishing-boats or fishing-gear, under the Crofters Act?—No, I am not aware.

7104. Is your view that even supposing they had boats and gear the fishing might not serve as a means of livelihood?—That will be just in accordance with the fishing that there might be.

7105. What is your view about the fishing along this coast: do you mean to say that there is good fishing and that they don't take advantage of it, while East Coast fishers do; or do you mean that there is so little fishing that it only pays for a few East Coast boats to come and do it?—The fishing is good enough as long as it lasts; but it does not last

Broadford, Skye. Peter Robertson.

long, and sometimes when the fishing is there, there is no price.

7106. So that the fishing is not such a very good thing after all?—The people are trying to make their living by it.

7107. *The Chairman.*—Do East Coast boats come to your quarter?—Yes, plenty.

7108. How many on an average in the season?—For the last two years there would be about a hundred East Coast boats during autumn.

7109. And do they come every season?—Some of them come every year, and there are some that never leave our coast at all.

7110. Are there always East Coast boats going about your quarter?—Some one or two are constantly between this place and Portree.

7111. Are there any boats from your township of a similar size prosecuting the fishing along with the East Coast boats?—Yes, some West Coast boats fish along with the East Coast boats.

7112. Are the East Coast boats larger than the West Coast?—Yes, very much larger.

7113. And do they get the best fishing?—Yes, and then when these East Coasters come here the poor fishermen from this side won't get the chance of casting their nets among them.

7114. Why do West Coast men allow the East Coast fishermen to get the best of the fishing when you live on the ground?—They must allow them; they set the nets at high mid-day.

7115. But why don't the West Coast men set nets and go to fish with the same vigour as the East Coast men, who come a long distance?—Some of the West Coasters try to do the same thing.

7016. But not successfully?—Sometimes they succeed and sometimes not.

7117. But you say the East Coaster gets the best fishing; why do you allow him to get the best fishing when you are on the ground?—We cannot prevent them; we cannot keep the fishing from them.

7118. But why don't you try to rival their fishing?—We try to do that, but we are not succeeding.

7119. Why did you not succeed?—The nets which they employ are full of stones.

7120. With sinkers, you mean—Yes.

7121. Why don't you use similar nets then?—Sometimes that would answer, and at other times it would not.

7122. Is this the way of it, that they are able to put much more capital into the enterprise, and use much larger boats, and go to work more systematically than the West Coaster?—That is the reason; they have more fishing gear and better than we have.

7123. Mr Shaw Stewart asks me to put this question. Could the West Coast men not club together and get larger boats with better gear, so as to compete with the East Coasters?—Perhaps if they did that the matter would be worse than before.

7124. Why?—Many a reason.

7125. Give us one of the reasons?—Should one of the party in company stay at home one year and not succeed the next year he would leave; he would go away elsewhere.

7126. *Mr Macleod.*—I think you said that one of the reasons that the East Coast boats succeed better than the West Coast boats at the fishing, was that they put down their nets at mid-day; is that legal?—Good fishing is nowadays found in deep waters and stormy waters, where our smaller boats cannot venture.

7127. But did you not say that East Coast boats put down their herring nets at mid-day?—Sometimes they do, and if they get herring they would set the nets at any time.

7128. And do you know whether that is according to the law or not?—They leave the nets in our loch the whole day without lifting them at all; I cannot say whether it is legal or not.

7129. But the West Coast men do not do that, do they?—No.

7130. Why don't they do it?—They don't want to scare away the herring.

7131. Then in that sense you think that the West Coast men are better fishermen than the East Coast men?—Some of them are and some are not.

7132. But you are not willing to admit that the East Coast men are better fishermen than West Coast men?—No, nor so good; they are not so good fishermen, in my estimation, as the West Coast men would be if they had proper gearing.

7133. Do you think that sometimes the reason why the East Coast men succeed better than the West Coast men is that the East Coast men have less consideration for their neighbours in the matter of fishing?—Sometimes the East Coaster fishes to his own disadvantage, to his own loss as well as that of the West Coaster.

7134. *Mr Sutherland.*—Is it not the case that the East Coast fisherman is a fisherman all the year round, and follows the fish from place to place?—Yes, I am aware of that.

7135. And is it the case that when he is at home he has easy communication with the markets of the South, and gets a higher price than he could get here?—Yes, I am aware of that.

7136. And do you think that is one of the reasons why he has more capital than the West Coast fisherman?—Doubtless that is one reason why he is possessed of more capital; and he has bigger boats besides, and can follow the fishing wherever it is.

7137. Can you also affirm that the East Coast boats during the fishing season on the East Coast are almost entirely manned by West Coast fishermen?—Yes, I am aware of that.

7138. Of whom a great number are Skye men?—Yes, plenty.

7139. Are you aware further that the fishing has been so unremunerative on the East Coast of late years that those who used to be sole owners of boats are now only part owners of boats?—Yes, I know that to be the case also.

7140. *Mr Maccallum.*—Do you think that generally the East Coast fishermen make a profit off the fishing on the West Coast?—Some of them profit by their fishing here, and some of them return emptier than when they came.

7141. And do they make their profit principally on the East Coast?—Yes, on the East Coast.

7142. And they only come here when there is no fishing on the East Coast?—Yes, when there is no fishing there.

7143. And could they live by fishing here alone?—No, I do not believe they could live all the year round.

7144. Only a small number would succeed, you think?—Only a small number could live upon it all the year round.

7145. And you think, therefore, that the fishing on the East Coast is much superior to that on the West Coast?—It was better before now, at all events.

7146. *The Chairman.*—I would like to ask you this: you said to Mr. Sutherland, I think, in answer to one of his questions, that a considerable number of Skye men go as hired hands on the East Coast boats that fish on the West Coast?—Yes, before now they used to go in greater numbers than at present.

7147. Fishing on the West Coast?—Fishing on the East Coast.

7148. Do they go as hired hands on the West Coast?—Sometimes where there are big boats they employ natives.

7149. On the West Coast?—On the West Coast.

7150. Why should these natives go as hired hands on the East Coast boats fishing on the West Coast rather than have large boats of their own?—They would not get employment at home, because there are no big boats.

7151. *Mr Alexander Macdonald.*—Does not the much longer period for which the East Coast men have had railway facilities account for the accumula-

Broadford, Skye.

Peter Robertson.

tion of capital on the East Coast which has enabled them to buy boats?—They have had the opportunity of making money by the railways for a long time, and the West Coast people have not.

7152. Are you able to say whether in your judgment the establishment of a railway to Mallaig would greatly increase your facilities for the transport of fish?—Doubtless, but then Mallaig is far away from us here.

7153. Would it not be suitable?—If the fishing was near Mallaig.

7154. *The Chairman.*—A railway to Kyleakin would be an improvement, would it not?—Yes, it would be much better there.

Kenneth Macrae.

KENNETH MACRAE, Crofter, Dunan (60)—*examined.*

7155. *The Chairman.*—Are you a crofter?—Yes.

7156. You have the half of lot 1?—Yes.

7157. I see the croft has 1 acre 0 roods 37 poles arable, 3 acres 3 roods 39 poles outrun, and 473 acres common grazing divided into eight full shares, of which you hold half a share. The former rent was £1, and the fair rent is also £1?—Yes.

7158. You have heard all the evidence given to-day?—Yes.

7159. Have you any addition to make?—Well, no, but I was sent here for the township; they were wanting more land.

7160. And I suppose the locality of the land has been mentioned already?—Oh yes, there are too many on the place.

7161. Do you subsist mainly by fishing?—Yes.

7162. Do you wish to give up the fishing?—No, I cannot.

7163. You are going to stick to the fishing?—I must; I have some gear, and if I dropped the fishing the gear would become useless.

7164. But you don't want to get a holding away from the sea?—No, I would like to get a holding near the sea.

7165. What size of holding?—Four acres arable.

7166. And some grazing?—Yes.

7167. And you think if you had four acres arable and some more grazing you would get along with your fishing?—Of course, I would get as much as would plant seed potatoes anyhow.

7168. How many crofters are there in Dunan?—There are eight crofters, and six of them occupy half crofts.

7169. Are there any cottars?—Yes.

7170. How many?—Three cottars looking for land, but more than that not looking for land.

7171. How many cottars altogether?—Five.

7172. *Mr Maccallum.*—Are there any new houses built at Dunan since the passing of the Act?—Yes.

7173. How many?—Three.

7174. How have they been able to put up these houses?—That is a thing I cannot tell; by working their way the best they could.

7175. The holdings are very small?—Very small.

7176. So they must have got the money for building these houses from elsewhere?—Of course; they have families in the South in service, &c.

7177. And those who go to the South are very mindful of the family they leave behind and send them money?—Yes.

7178. They send their savings home?—Yes.

7179. And the houses have been built in that way?—Yes, likely.

7180. Do you think that these houses would not have been put up if it were not for the security of the holdings?—Well, yes. Before the Act there was no use in putting up a house like that; they could not build houses before the Act in Sleat, because if they were sent out of the land they would get nothing for them.

7181. They have now been encouraged to build houses on account of the security which they have under the Act?—Likely.

Broadford, Skye.

Norman Macrae.

NORMAN MACRAE, Crofter and Fisherman, Dunan (58)—*examined.*

7182. *The Chairman.*—You are a crofter and fisherman at Dunan?—Yes.

7183. You have the half of lot 1?—Yes.

7184. The acreage is 2 acres 0 roods 30 poles arable, 2 acres 3 roods 15 poles outrun, half a share of 473 acres grazing divided into eight shares. The former rent was £1, 9s., and the fair rent is £1, 4s.?—Yes.

7185. Are you anxious to get a larger holding?—Yes, a few acres.

7186. But you live as a fisherman?—It is not long since I was a fisherman; I was sailing.

7187. How long have you been a fisherman?—Eleven years.

7188. And do you get your means of living mainly from the sea?—Not altogether.

7189. But mainly?—No.

7190. How do you get it?—Some of my family are at sea.

7191. And they send you help?—Yes.

7192. Is it a holding close to the sea or away from the sea that you want?—Close to the sea.

7193. You do not wish to give up the subsistence you obtain from the sea?—No.

7194. What size of holding have you in view?—Four or five acres arable.

7195. And some more grazing?—Some more grazing.

7196. Have you any stock?—Yes.

7197. What stock have you?—Two cows and two stirks.

7198. And no sheep?—A few sheep.

7199. In other words, you would be content with a holding of about twice the arable you have got and some more grazing, and continue the fishing?—Yes, if any one would leave in the township so that I could get the croft that was vacated, close to me. There are other four crofters wanting more land too.

7200. You are representing, I suppose, the township of Dunan?—Yes.

7201. And you state their views as well as your own?—Just so.

7202. What are the names of those other four crofters?—One of them spoke already.

7203. That is Kenneth Macrae?—Yes; and Lauchlan Macleod, Colin Mackinnon, and John Macpherson.

7204. And yourself?—And myself, also the two cottars.

7205. Their holdings are very much like your own, I suppose?—Well, they are still better than myself.

7206. But they are small?—They are small.

7207. *Mr Sutherland.*—In your opinion is the land of Scalpay suitable for holdings such as you have in your mind?—Well, it is pretty good, but still we would rather have Strollamus or down at Skinidin.

7208. Are the facilities for carrying on the fishing as good as in Dunan and Luib?—Yes, and it is handier for steamers.

7209. *Mr Macleod.*—You have some hill pasture at Dunan; would it be any advantage if you got more hill pasture, leaving you where you presently are?—Well, to be sure, but we lost some of our hill pasture last Commission, without anything on us.

7210. *The Chairman.*—We cannot go into that here.

7211. *Mr Macleod.*—You had more pasture at one time than you have now?—Yes, two years ago.

7212. And you think that you would be more comfortable than you are if you had an extension of your present grazing, even supposing you did not move?—Well, still it would be as much good to us yet as it was but for the march.

7213. But what I am saying is this, that supposing you had an extension of your present grazing would it be any advantage?—If we could get it; but they are close on all sides of us.

7214. Who?—Luib, and Strollamus, and Torrin.

Mr. Gordon.—That was black ground that you lost, was it not?—Yes.

7215. And it would not be possible, in fact, to give you an extension of your grazing?—No, not without breaking them.

7216. You would be going in on other crofter ground if there was an extension given to your grazing?—Yes.

7217. You do not march with the farm of Strollamus at all?—We used to march with the farm of Strollamus and Torrin.

7218. But you do not now?—We march with Strollamus and Luib.

7219. So that in order to give you any relief in Dunan, it would be necessary to take a number of you out of there?—Just so, and give us land elsewhere.

7220. Is there any land on the Strollamus farm that would be suitable?—Oh yes.

7221. And you think that you could make small holdings there that would suit along with the hill pasture?—Just so.

ALEXANDER MACLEOD, Crofter, Ardorch (70) —*examined.*

7222. *The Chairman.*—Your holding, I see, extends to 1 acre 3 roods 8 poles arable, 3 acres 0 roods 10 poles outrun, and a share of 325 acres divided into four shares. The former rent was £4, 2s., and the fair rent is £2, 10s. Your township is up at the point beside Scalpay?—Yes.

7223. And is there land near you that would be available?—Yes.

7224. Where is it?—It is about Strollamus that I would wish it, if I was to get a chance myself.

7225. I see you have only an acre and three-quarters; are you anxious to get away from Ardorch altogether?—Yes, if I could get a better chance. My father was once at Strollamus, and I was a while there myself.

7226. How long is it since you left it?—Forty years.

7227. Was there a township there?—It was an inn; and then a shooting lodge at the point there.

7228. Had your father the inn?—Yes.

7229. He was the innkeeper?—Yes, he was at that time.

7230. What extent of land had your father?—He had the land below the house, and the point, and below the road, and above the road, a bit of ground.

7231. Was the holding a good deal larger than the one you are in?—Oh yes, far larger.

7232. And would you like to get into a new holding similar in size to what your father had at the inn?—Yes, if I could get it.

7233. What stock did your father keep?—He kept only two cows at the inn, because it was let as a Tack; it belonged to Scalpay at that time; and he had a horse.

7234. You do not keep a horse now?—Oh no, I can walk myself where I am.

7235. Have you any sheep?—No, but there are some who have a few.

7236. How many crofters are in Ardorch?—There are five; two in one share, and three in full shares.

7237. And how many cottars?—There are three cottars.

7238. Are they crowded together, the crofters and cottars?—Indeed, ay, they are very near each other. It is but a small place, however.

7239. And it would be an improvement, in your judgment, if some of them were flitted to other places with larger holdings?—Suppose I was to stop where I am it would be that.

7240. Did you go to the fishing when you were younger?—Yes, and I am going to fish yet about the coast where I am. I am an old fisherman. If I was to get any support, I would rather this—I have a smart son that would like to get a skiff to buy, for he is a good fisherman. I don't ask anything of the land, but if I could get that boy land I would take it. My neighbours desire me to say the whole of them would take land if they could get it.

ALEXANDER GRANT, Seaman and Cottar, Ardorch (35)—*examined.*

7241. *The Chairman.*—You are a cottar. Do you pay any rent?—No; I pay a little dues.

7242. What dues do you pay?—Just the school rates and the poor rates, and the like of that.

7243. But do you pay any rent?—Not now; I used to.

7244. What is it you wish to tell us?—I wish to get a bit of land.

7245. Have you no land where you are?—No, not a bit; not a plot of land.

7246. Is your place at Ardorch rather crowded?—Yes.

7247. With crofters and cottars?—Yes, there are more cottars than crofters.

7248. How many cottars are there?—Five.

7249. And how many crofters?—Five.

7250. And is the land there worked out?—There is no land there in that ground; there is land in the neighbourhood of it.

7251. Where?—Strollamus and Corry and Scalpay, and these places.

7252. The land that we have been hearing other witnesses describe?—Yes, just the same land.

7253. And you agree with their evidence?—Not at all; I did not hear any evidence from the rest of them.

7254. But do you agree with what you did hear?—Oh yes.

7255. Do you wish to say anything more?—I wish to have about four acres.

7256. Your idea is a croft of four acres arable?—Yes.

7257. And some grazing?—Yes.

7258. Well, now, suppose you had a croft of that size, could you put stock upon it, and erect the buildings without assistance?—I would try to.

7259. Yes, but could you do it at present without assistance?—No, but I would sooner not get any loan of money, but put it up on my own account. I could not do it.

7260. You could not do it at present?—No, I could not do it at present.

7261. *Mr Gordon.*—You are a sailor, are you not?—Yes.

7262. You are a married man?—Yes.

7263. But you are generally at sea?—Yes.

7264. When were you at sea last?—Not this year.

7265. Were you at sea last year?—Yes.

JOSEPH MACPHERSON, Cottar, Kyleakin (46) —*examined.*

7266. *The Chairman.*—You are a cottar at Kyleakin?—Yes.

7267. Do you pay any rent?—Between 5s. and 6s.

7268. The cottars there have village lots, I think?—No, most of them have feus that have the lands.

7269. You are not a feuar?—No.

7270. And you represent the township?—There are two or three of us, two of us especially.

7271. What case do you wish to state to us with regard to the desire for more land?—Well, for my own part, I am a cottar, and in a way I am more of a burden to the rest that have the smaller holdings about the place. It is very small, the bits they have—about an acre each individually, I believe, and we are more a burden to them than any good. If the Commission could do anything for us, in letting us have a little bit of land, that is what we would like.

7272. Do you mean in the neighbourhood?—Yes.

Broadford, Skye.

Joseph Macpherson.

7273. Is there available land in the neighbourhood?—Yes, there is plenty.

7274. Where?—Kyle Farm.

7275. Is there good land there?—Oh yes, pretty fair land.

7276. Both arable and grazing?—Yes.

7277. Who occupies that farm at present?—Robert Ryrie, Esq.

7278. As a sporting tenant?—Yes.

7279. Has he the grazing in his own hands?—Yes.

7280. But he has the farm mostly for sporting purposes?—He has sheep on it and he has the shooting.

7281. He is not a sheep farmer?—He is a London merchant; he does not depend upon the sheep, I suppose.

7282. Does the Kyle farm come close up to the village of Kyleakin?—Yes; there is just a fence between them and the village. There is a sort of point that extends into the sea, and there is a fence round the small spot where the village is.

7283. What sort of holding have you in view?—Well, for my part, I am a fisherman myself, but sometimes that does well with us and sometimes it fails; and it would help ourselves and our families if we had a little bit of land. At this time of the year we could set our potato crops.

7284. What size of holding have you in view?—Between 4 and 5 acres of arable land.

7285. And how much grazing?—We would like to keep a cow or two.

7286. But no sheep? Have you no idea of keeping sheep?—Well, it is low land; we might have maybe ten sheep or thereabouts.

7287. May I ask you what rent you would be disposed to pay for a holding of that kind?—I leave that to the Commission. I have not much idea of land, but I can work it myself if I had it.

7288. You live by the sea?—Well, I never earned a week's living ashore in my life; but it is going against us.

7289. But such living as you get is from the sea?—Yes.

7290. Have you a family?—Yes.

7291. Have you grown-up sons?—My eldest is sixteen.

7292. Do you think you could proceed with such a holding without assistance?—Yes, I think I could.

7293. Stock it and put up the necessary buildings?—Well, I have a nice house where I am, and it is near enough if I could get it there.

7294. You would not require building?—No.

7295. How many cottars are at Kyleakin altogether?—To give what I may call a rough sketch, there are about twenty of them, I think.

7296. And how many feuars?—I think between eighteen and twenty.

7297. There are no crofters?—Well, they have small crofts—those that I mentioned just now; they have what they call a lot. Maybe an acre or so.

7298. Is there any other land besides Kyle farm to which you wish to invite our attention?—Well, no; for my part, as I have got my home there, it would be more suitable if I could get a bit there.

7299. You have no desire to leave the place in which you are?—No.

7300. In fact, you do not wish to change your house if you could get more land?—No.

7301. Of course the land would be away from the house a bit?—A little bit, but it would be no harm.

7302. Have you a share of a boat or boats?—I have two little boats of my own, a middle-sized one.

7303. What do you call that?—A second class fishing-boat.

7304. What keel?—Twenty-two feet keel.

7305. You have a smaller one?—Yes.

7306. *Mr Sutherland.*—I understand from what you say that there are two classes in Kyleakin, first, feuars who have got small holdings at present; and, second, those who pay the 5s. or 6s. a year of rent for the sites of their houses, and who have got no land at all?—Yes.

Broadford Skye.

Joseph Macpherson.

7307. What do you do for fire in that case?—Well, we are a burden to them that have a little bit. Of course, we have to cut our peats off their grazing.

7308. Have the feuars much grazing?—No, I think it is little enough.

7309. For themselves?—Yes.

7310. Then you think that if there was an extension given of the grazings attached to Kyleakin you could all share and share alike with it?—Yes.

7311. And you are satisfied it could be managed jointly to your advantage?—Yes.

7312. Do you know if the feuars would like to join with you in any application?—Well, I did not put that question to them; but there are a few of them here to-day. I might ask them.

7313. We may ascertain ourselves, but you think that they would have a desire to participate in the extension of the holdings probably as much as you?—Oh yes, it would be to the advantage of the place, I believe, on both sides.

7314. Are the feuars able to have cows?—They have all cows.

7315. But those of the class you belong to have none?—Oh, nothing at all; we have not even as much as would plant half a dozen potatoes.

7316. And is there land adjoining you or near you which could be given to you as arable holdings?—Yes.

7317. Would it be equal in size to what you have in your mind—to what the feuars have at present?—Yes, it would, and more, I believe.

7318. Are the feuars' arable holdings adjacent to the village?—Close by the village.

7319. Do you know land where small arable holdings could be given to you also within convenient distance of the village?—Yes, plenty of land.

7320. And is the grazing you have in view immediately behind that again?—Behind that again.

KENNETH MACKAY, Cottar, Kyleakin (67). (Examined in Gaelic through an interpreter.)

Kenneth Mackay.

7321. *The Chairman.*—We propose to take the evidence given by Macpherson as applicable to the whole of Kyleakin, unless you have some addition to make to it?—I agree with what has been said by Macpherson, and you may take that as sufficient.

7322. Some of our number have been over the place, and we are quite familiar with the locality and know exactly the state of the case at the village.—Yes.

7323. And we know the narrowness of the holdings and the whole circumstances of Kyle farm, and in these circumstances we do not feel it necessary to examine you further.

DONALD MACKINNON, Cottar, Ashaig (38)—*examined.*

Donald Mackinnon.

7324. *The Chairman.*—Are you a crofter?—I am a cottar.

7325. What claim do you make?—I have a written statement.

7326. Read it please.

Statement of the Cottars of Ashaig in the Parish of Strath.

We, the cottars of Ashaig, in the Parish of Strath, live on the hill above the road leading from Kyleakin to Broadford. We have been for a considerable length of time cottars on the Kyle farm, the last arrangement being made by Alexander Mackinnon, Esq., the then tenant of Kyle, forty-four years ago. Our lots were then rented at £2 each; for this we were allowed to build houses, to cultivate and possess a piece of waste ground, and to hold some stock of

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sheep or cattle on the adjoining hill. There was no cultivated ground there previously, that is, the tenants of Kyle, whose cottars we were, had no cultivated grounds at or near our lots. On his, that is, Mr Alexander's leaving, Mr John Mackinnon, his brother, came into possession of the farm of Kyle, and being scarce of labourers, made an arrangement with the cottars that in lieu of the £2 we should give so many days' labour. We were required to labour as many days as he required our services, and with the threat of eviction if we refused to go at any time we were required. We possessed the same privileges as previously, that was, to cultivate the small lots we reclaimed from the waste, and to have some sheep on the hills. Nearly six years ago Mr Ryrie became tenant of Kyle, and since then till now no rent or labour has been exacted. He has taken no notice of us, and we have not troubled him by offering rent.

There is a considerable extent of land in our neighbourhood, in fact, bordering with our lots, the high road only separating our lots from it, called Lower Ashaig. It formed the same part of the Kyle farm, and originally was held by the same tenants as our lots. This place has been made noticeable of late years, the neighbouring tenants having placed their stock upon it, and has given a considerable amount of annoyance and trouble to the estate officials and the tenant of Kyle. It consists of about 320 square acres, half of which, or say 120 acres, could be easily rendered arable. It is contiguous to our homes, and could be made into ten or twelve lots of as many acres arable, and this, with the privilege of hill grazing which we at present possess, would enable us to live in comparative comfort; this would enable the six cottars having lots and the seven who have no lots, and who make this statement, to have holdings, and once and for ever settle the present burning dispute. If this were granted we would not require to remove from our present holdings, and we could and are willing to pay fair rents, and also we could without much difficulty, or at least the most of us, stock the holdings, that is, the sections mentioned of Lower Ashaig.

(Signed) JOHN ROBERTSON.
DONALD MACKINNON.

May 15, 1893.

7327. This is a statement on behalf of the township of Ashaig?—Yes.

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JOHN ROBERTSON, Ashaig (40)—*examined.*

7328. *The Chairman.*—Have you signed the statement handed in by the previous witness?—Yes.

7329. And it represents your views?—Yes.

7330. I do not think we require to ask any more; we know the ground very well.

7331. *Mr Mackintosh.*—Might I ask him whether the occupants of Ashaig would be able to keep the stock belonging to the tenants of Upper and Lower Breakish off the ground if they got possession of it; would they pay rent for it if they got it, and hold the places themselves?

7332. *The Chairman.*—Mr Mackintosh is concerned to know whether you could keep the Upper and Lower Breakish stock off the Ashaig land?—But if Mr Mackintosh wants us to pay rent for it, he will put the Breakish people off it.

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DONALD MACKENZIE, Ashaig (27)—*examined.*

7333. *The Chairman.*—Do you concur in the statement given by Donald Mackinnon?—Yes.

7334. And you have nothing more to add, I suppose?—No.

7335. How many cottars are in Ashaig?—Seven.

7336. And how many crofters?—Six.

7337. *Mr Mackintosh.*—They are not exactly crofters, my lord: there are six cottars without any land to cultivate, and the others have a small plot of land—six cottars with land and seven without. Broadford, Skye. — Donald Mackenzie.

ANGUS MACLEOD, Crofter, Upper Breakish (48)—*examined.* Angus Macleod.

7338. Are you in No. 6 Upper Breakish?—One-fourth of No. 6.

7339. *The Chairman.*—Have you a written statement?—No.

7340. What is it you wish to tell us?—It would take some time to tell all I have to say.

7341. But we must bring the thing to a point?—I have to tell in the first place that I live in a very poor township; it is occupied by thirty-one tenants to my knowledge and two cottars, and is reckoned the worst soil in the parish. We live very uncomfortably.

7342. You are too crowded?—Yes.

7343. And you wish an opportunity of claiming more land?—Very much.

7344. Where is the land that you point us to?—There is enough surrounding us.

7345. What is the name of it?—There is the farm of Kyle, in the possession of Mr Ryrie, a bachelor from London; and the farm of Kinloch, in the possession of Lord Macdonald, without a tenant.

7346. Are these two the only available places in your neighbourhood?—Yes.

7347. What is the size of holding you would propose to take?—It depends on the quality of the soil where we are placed.

7348. Well, but you know the quality of the soil in the locality?—Well, supposing that we got the arable of the farms in our neighbourhood, I suppose from 10 to 12 acres of that arable land with good pasturage would support a moderate family.

7349. Do you do anything at fishing?—I do, sometimes.

7350. Are you anxious to give up the sea, or do you wish to keep on fishing?—I am very tired of the sea; I go very far to sea sometimes.

7351. But do you wish to give it up altogether?—I do wish to give it up, because I am getting too old for it now.

7352. And to live by your holding?—Yes.

7353. How long is it since you went to the sea?—I daresay twenty-eight years ago.

7354. How many since you gave it up?—Not a year itself.

7355. *Mr Shaw Stewart.*—Can you give us any idea of the acreage of the farm of Kyle, roughly?—I cannot; I do not know the acreage.

7356. Or of the farm of Kinloch?—No.

7357. But you must have some idea of the size of it?—No; but I suppose it is very easily got from the factor or some of the other officials.

7358. Have you any idea of the rental of either?—No. I was never in conversation with these gentry at all.

7359. Then what you suggest is that thirty-one crofters and two cottars should have 10 or 12 acres each in the farm of Kyle and the farm of Kinloch?—I did not say that they should have that in the farms of Kyle and Kinloch; we have a wide country here. We have lands quite convenient to the church here that might be suitable for some of them; so is Suisnish and Boreraig; also Pabbay, right in the neighbourhood, capable of holding four or five good crofts.

7360. How are the lands close by here occupied just now?—The island of Pabbay, I understand, is under rabbits lately for a good many years.

7361. But the land you spoke of near the church here?—The land near the church here is occupied by the hotelkeeper here.

7362. And you would like to see him give up the land and one or two crofters put on it?—I would

Broadford, Skye. Angus Macleod.

imagine that the large hotel in Broadford here would support a family.

7363. When you mention particular lands naturally one wishes to know what comparative use the lands could be made of compared with the use made of them now?—It is cultivated partly here and the rest is under grazing.

7364. But thirty-one crofters and two cottars with 10 acres each would be about 400 acres of land somewhere?—I suppose that could be got in the grounds I have mentioned.

7365. Well, supposing they were; supposing you found the land and could get it, would they be able to pay any rent for it?—Yes.

7366. In bad years as well as good?—Bad years as well as good. There are cottars in our township that offered as high as £90 for a small croft that is vacant here this spring with the use of the small stock; that was over double the value. I should think they would be quite willing to pay and quite able to stock a good croft in these good localities if they got it.

7367. Without assistance?—Without any assistance.

7368. They must be possessed of a good deal of capital?—I think the crofters want to be as well posted as these cottars.

7369. You think they would all be able, or nearly all, most of them?—The majority of the township that I represent would, I think, be able to stock a fair croft in this parish.

7370. But if they have so much land now, and are not making much at the fishing, how are they able to find the money to stock and occupy the land?—I know several in my township who have three times the stock that they should have already; I daresay some of them gave evidence before the Crofters Commission here, that they had four times the stock that they should have, and I do not see why they should not stock a croft in some other part of the parish.

7371. About this island that you say is now under rabbits—how many crofters would it take?—I think four or five crofters could live there very comfortably.

7372. And make something by it besides maintaining themselves and paying a rent?—Make a living; I do not say that they would lay any money aside.

7373. You doubt their being able to pay rent?—I know they would be able to pay rent by the shellfish on the shore, let alone the produce of the land.

7374. Mussels for bait?—Whelks and mussels and bait; crabs and plenty of other produce.

7375. And they would fish too?—If they liked; the crofter has a good deal of leisure time to fish.

7376. Would it pay them to fish?—It would pay them to fish at their leisure time. I worked ten hours yesterday, and I came out with about a shilling's worth of fish. The crofter can live on very little here. I don't mean that it would pay a crofter, the value of the fishing all the year round,—quite different.

7377. *Mr Sutherland.*—You are of opinion then that, provided the farm of Kyle were distributed among the people in your township, they would be able to live very much better than they live now?—Very much.

7378. And you do not think there would be any loss to any party by doing that?—I think it would be a great profit to the proprietor and the people.

7379. You think that if they have certain rent-producing powers in a small place and under poor circumstances, they would have far more producing powers in a better place and under better circumstances?—I do.

7380. You think that follows quite naturally?—I think an acre of the Kyle farm is better than four of the ground that we possess.

7381. And your neighbours generally, I think you said, are willing to take up such holdings?—Yes.

7382. And you think with a prospect of success?—The prospect would be very successful.

7383. Would you now undertake to take one of these holdings yourself?—I would. Broadford Skye. Angus Macleod.

7384. And be glad to get the opportunity?—Very glad to get the opportunity.

7385. *Mr Macleod.*—How many whole crofts are in Upper Breakish?—Fifteen.

7386. That was the number of crofts that were originally on the place?—Yes.

7387. And you said that the land was very bad?—The worst in Skye; the clippings of these two farms.

7388. Of what two farms?—Kyle and Kyleakin; where they are without cattle, and sheep could not live, I actually am not ashamed to say.

7389. Is it boggy?—Bog and moss; nothing but bog. There is not one acre of what we call green grass on the hill of Upper Breakish pasturage.

7390. And the arable land that you have got is mossy land?—The arable land is the worst that I know.

7391. But I want to know its nature. I don't deny it may be very bad, but what is the nature of it?—It is mostly moss and rocks.

7392. How long is it since the township was formed?—About eighty years ago, I think.

7393. *The Chairman.*—It is right to tell you that since we began our sittings we have been told in various parts of Skye that the land we were talking of was the worst land in Skye.—Our land?

7394. No, but a great many people say that their best land is the worst in Skye; I have heard the expression frequently?—I have to say that one of the Crofter Commissioners told me that to his own knowledge there was not worse land in the north of Scotland except Gairloch that ever he knew. And to give you an idea of our cattle pasturage, we never had a bull that could exist on it. It is a common thing in our township to have cattle two years without calves.

7395. *Mr Maccallum.*—How do you manage to have such a large stock there on such bad land?—Did I mention the stock?

7396. You said many of them had more than their souming; how does that come about?—Because the place is not laid out for a large holding, and the people are very industrious and are trying to have as much stock as they possibly can—what the place is not able to bear.

7397. *The Chairman.*—There is more stock kept than the land will sustain?—Yes, than the place is able to bear; I may say three times as much. They are merely in existence by trespassing a little on the neighbouring farms.

7398. The original number of families was fifteen?—Fifteen crofts the place was meant to hold when it was cut out.

7399. Would it sustain fifteen now?—If they were confined to their own ground they would be poor enough.

7400. How many would it sustain?—I could not say.

7401. Would ten do?—Yes, I think ten would make a living.

7402. How was the number increased so greatly from fifteen to thirty-one?—There were some evicted from other parts of the estate and put there.

7403. And were some of the holdings divided by the crofters themselves?—I expect so. When their families got up they would be divided. My own father is living still, and he divided the croft between us.

7404. And the croft was too small for your father, I suppose?—Small enough for him.

7405. So you made it a little smaller?—Yes, I made it as small again; but he has no family but myself.

7406. You think that subdivision of new holdings should be prevented in the future?—Well, I don't think they would subdivide now for their own sake. It has gone far enough, I think. If there is any more division they should go into some other part of the estate.

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7407. You think it has gone too far already?—Yes.

7408. And that it is injurious to the people?—Injurious to the people.

7409. And the multiplication of stock is also injurious?—Oh yes, our stock will soon be ruined unless we get more ground for it.

7410. Has the ground got three times as much stock as it ought to have?—Yes, the factor says we are taking the use of Ashaig and most of the Kyle farm already; and Ashaig is as bare as our pasture. A good deal of our stock is trespassing on Kinloch. They won't stay on our ground. It is a bad sign of Breakish, that the animals themselves have to leave the place, and take to some other place.

7411. Your father is Neil Macleod?—Yes.

7412. The entry in the Blue Book is 3 acres 1 rood 24 poles arable, 2 acres 1 rood 23 poles outrun, and half a share of 2593 acres common grazing divided into fifteen shares. The former rent was £3, 3s., and the fair rent is £2, 10s.

7413. *Mr. Mackintosh.*—What stock do you keep?—I have a cow and a stirk, and about twenty head of sheep.

7414. Is that more than your proper souming?—Oh yes, a good deal more.

7415. Do these parties you spoke of as keeping three times their souming pay for the right to graze to some of the other tenants who have not the souming?—They do not; it is not worth while paying for it.

7416. It is worth paying. The other tenants who have not got the stock are forced to pay?—Maybe the souming they have is trespassing on the neighbouring farms.

7417. Do you grow as much fodder as to winter the stock you have?—I just barely wintered the cow this year, I had nothing over.

7418. Do you know any of the others in the township who grow as much fodder as to winter their full souming?—Very few.

7419. There are some?—I don't know many.

7420. How many?—Well, to my knowledge I don't know any who have their stock and wintered them this year.

7421. Do the people not sell crop off Breakish Moss?—Not one that has his souming; they would have to buy it.

7422. You described the number of acres of arable land required; would you be surprised to know that there are nearly as many acres of arable land in Breakish Moss as in the farms of Kinloch and Kyle?—I would be astonished to hear what is not true, Mr. Mackintosh.

7423. Excluding Ashaig, which is almost in your own possession?—There is more arable land in Ashaig alone than in Upper Breakish—double, I think.

7424. I am excluding Ashaig. Supposing you got all that arable land, what would you do with the rest of the hill ground? There are about 22,000 acres of hill ground between the two farms. We don't want the whole of the two farms to put us in good circumstances.

7425. You wanted all the arable land evidently. You stated there were so many of them requiring so many acres?—Yes.

7426. What could be done with the hill ground if you got all the arable ground?—The hill pasture would be in connection with the arable land.

7427. Would you take the hill ground in connection with the arable land?—Yes, the most of it.

7428. And at a fair rent?—At a fair rent. We offered a fair rent to the Crofters Commission for Ashaig and its pasturage already, and promised to pay or lodge five years' rent to Lord Macdonald for the use of that.

7429. Are you aware that the Breakish Moss people are not now paying their rent?—I am not aware that they are not paying their rent.

7430. Well, they are over £90 in arrear. There may be widows or people with small families who are in arrear.

Broadford, Skye. Angus Macleod.

7431. You have stated that you were quite prepared to take the hill ground along with the arable land of Kinloch and Kyle?—I did not; that would be too much for us.

7432. *The Chairman.*—I thought that was what you intended to convey?—I never meant anything of the kind.

7433. What is it you do mean?—I mean that every man that wants land in Breakish would take 10 to 12 acres with pasturage and stock it.

7434. *Mr. Mackintosh.*—How much stock?—Four cows and sixty sheep.

7435. I asked you then what became of the rest of the hill ground and you said you would take it?—There are other parts of the parish wanting ground.—

7436. They don't want hill ground without arable.—There is arable on it.

7437. *The Chairman.*—The question put before you is this. Suppose the arable land absorbed, what would become of the grazing land, 20,000 acres of hill grazing? how would you dispose of that?—I think there is arable enough to take up all the pasturage on these two farms, and there is another township that has not come forward yet that wants plenty of pasturage, where there are fifty families without any sheep pasturage at all. I think it will take a good many acres to supply them when they come forward. They will be after this, I suppose.

7438. What place is that?—Lower Breakish.

7439. *Mr. Mackintosh.*—Would they take the sheep stock of Kyle and Kinloch at valuation—the crofters of Breakish?—I don't know. I am saying that our place is over-stocked; we should have room for our own stock first. I think there is a good deal of Kyle farm that is under stock that is very ready for the market just now, and their wedder stock could be removed, and Ashaig would have no stock at all. There is not an animal belonging to the tenant there to my knowledge these five years.

7440. Whose stock did we see yesterday?—The crofters' stock.

7441. How many horses were there?—I could not tell you. They have a large number of horses, more than the place is able to carry at present.

7442. In fact, if a man has an acre of land in Breakish he gets a horse?—No! oh no. In Breakish there are fifteen without a horse. I have no horse myself.

7443. Did you ever drive your stock off Ashaig if you found them trespassing there?—Well, to tell you the truth, Mr. Mackintosh, I never drive them off nor on.

7444. *The Chairman.*—We cannot go into questions of trespass, Mr. Mackintosh. *The Witness.*—I am giving him a fair answer.

7445. *The Chairman.*—There is a long-standing dispute there, as we know, and we have heard a great deal about it in another place. *The Witness.*—I must state before I sit down, that Ashaig is a great nuisance to Breakish at the present time, because it is open to everybody that likes to come and place a beast there. There is no tenant to keep up the ditch to save our crops. The people that live near it, their crofts are ruined every year. A tinsmith might come round and he sends his horse there, and in the morning it will be found maybe in the crofters' land or among the crofters' corn. There is nobody keeping march with us at all, and nobody to put up the dyke.

7446. *Mr Mackintosh.*—Did you interfere with the stock——

7447. *The Chairman.*—We are dealing with the question of available land, not with questions about this Breakish dispute. *The Witness.*—There is plenty of available land there.

7448. *Mr Sutherland.*—You never proposed to break up the farm of Kyle and pick out the arable land and leave the pasture behind?—I never did.

7449. You mean to say that if you take the arable

Broadford, Skye.

Angus Macleod.

land you will also take the hill grazing in proportion?—Yes, and much more pasturage.

7450. So that practically there would be no separation of the arable land from the pasture land such as has been suggested?—There would not. There is plenty of arable land to take up all the pasturage on the farm.

7451. *Mr Shaw Stewart.*—But I rather understood that the arable land of Kinloch would also be required for this number of tenants as well as of Kyle?—Very well.

7452. And then that there would be so much hill pasture left over out of this whole 20,000 acres which would not be taken by the crofters. The question is what would be done with them?—I have told already that there are plenty crofters on Lower Breakish that have no grazing, and they will take up a good deal of hill pasture. I think the township of Kilichro will take up a good deal more pasturage if they could get it. I think there are plenty of crofters surrounding the two farms that will take them up, arable and pasturage.

Archibald Mackintosh.

ARCHIBALD MACKINTOSH, Crofter, Upper Breakish (36)—*examined.*

7453. *The Chairman.*—Are you a crofter?—Yes.

7454. I see from the Blue Book that your holding covers 3 acres 0 roods 32 poles arable, 3 acres 1 rood 7 poles outrun, and half a share in the common grazing. The former rent was £3, 3s., and the fair rent £2, 12s. Do you concur in the evidence that has been given?—Yes.

7455. Is there a desire among the crofters in Upper Breakish for new holdings?—Yes.

7456. Where would these holdings be situated?—In the neighbourhood.

7457. What do you call the neighbourhood?—The farms of Kinloch and Kyleakin.

7458. There is grazing land there?—Yes, plenty.

7459. And arable? and hill grazing also?—Yes.

7460. Is it the desire of those whom you represent to take both the grazing land, the old arable and the hill pasture?—Yes.

7461. For the formation of new holdings?—Yes.

7462. *Mr Shaw Stewart.*—Do you also think there is enough arable land in the farm of Kinloch to take up most of the hill pasture behind it? I think so.

7463. Would you take a holding there yourself if you had the chance?—Yes, I would.

7464. *Mr Gordon.*—Where is the arable land in Kinloch? Is it beside the old house there?—Yes, to the head of the loch; the woodside at the back of the hill.

7465. How much would there be there?—I am not very sure; but I know the place very well.

7466. How many acres would you think there would be?—I don't know the acreage.

7467. Would there be twenty?—Yes, and more.

7468. Thirty?—Yes, and more.

7469. Forty?—Yes, round the coast line.

7470. Is there any arable land round Loch Sleat opposite, near Ostaig?—Yes, I think so.

7471. But you are not sure?—Well, I was there many a time.

7472. There is no arable land that I know of round that side?—There have been crofters there sometime.

7473. Where at?—At a place called Camuscross, and as far as Ostaig at the west side.

7474. I don't think there is anything like 40 acres of it?—Yes, up to the shepherd's house in Kinloch.

7475. There are some acres round down to the riverside, and about 20 acres near the shepherd's house?—It was cultivated some time ago.

7476. It must have been a long time ago; it is all rushes now?—Yes, but crofters in my neighbourhood were there cutting corn.

7477. Suppose you put in four crofts; would you suppose that they would take up the whole of the pasture land—about 9000 acres of hill ground?—I think there is more arable land there than that.

Broadford, Skye.

Archibald Mackintosh

7478. I took your own word; you say four crofts could be put in?—Four crofts? I did not say that.

7479. I thought you said you could put in four crofts on that side?—Yes, on the coast side.

7480. Tell us where on the coast side there is land?—The woodside down there, the woodside and then up the head of Kinloch.

7481. The fact is that I think there is very little arable land and about 9000 acres of pasture.

7482. *The Chairman.*—I was down there yesterday, and I did not see arable. There are small patches, but we could not see arable land, or old arable in any quantity. If you could tell us where it is we would be happy to go back and look at it?—I was many a time there myself, and I have seen the old houses the people had there.

7483. *Mr Macleod.*—Give us the names of the places?—Camusantallin, they call the place.

7484. What other places?—The wood we call it.

7485. Is that in sight of the road?—Yes, beside the road to Isleornsay.

7486. *Mr Gordon.*—I think possibly there may be four crofts got in there by reclaiming part of the hill ground?—Yes.

7487. But if you take the whole farm you would require to take 9000 acres of hill pasture?—It would keep up a lot of crofters on the shepherd's side up to the head of the loch.

7488. You might build houses upon it, but you would not have land for them?—There is plenty of land about there.

7489. *The Chairman.*—We can go back and look at it after what you have said; we will see it to-morrow.

7490. *Mr Macleod.*—Have you ever seen any land in your township that has been reclaimed? Has there been land reclaimed there since you remember the township, or was it all in cultivation before you remember, in Breakish?—Yes, it was cultivated since I remember.

7491. Have you seen any land taken in since you remember?—Yes.

7492. Is there land, do you think, on the farm of Kinloch that might be taken in the same way as the land was taken in at Breakish?—Yes, I think so.

7493. Tell me the places where you see that land on Kinloch?—It is in Kinloch—I have no names on the places. It is the farm of Kinloch.

7494.—*Mr Sutherland.*—You know how sheep farms are made up; there must be a certain amount of low grazing for them?—There is.

7495. In proportion to the hill grazing?—Yes.

7496. There is that in Kinloch farm, I presume?—Yes.

7497. So that if it is good for a sheep farmer, it would be good for you also if you got it?—Yes.

7498. *Mr H. V. Maccallum,* on behalf of the Highland Property Defence Association—How much seed do you sow per acre on your own holding?—About two bolls.

7499. And what is the return?—Perhaps I would have to buy a boll or two.

7500. What is the average date of sowing?—I begin in March and April, that is the time we sow.

7501. Can you tell me what are the earliest and latest dates on which you have seen harvesting begin and end?—They are sowing in our township to-day.

7502. Sowing to-day! as late as this?—Yes.

7503. When do you see your harvest end as a rule? What is the latest date?—I cannot give you a date.

Hugh Macrae

HUGH MACRAE, Crofter, Upper Breakish (40)—*examined.*

7504. *The Chairman.*—I would propose to take you as concurring with the other evidence given on behalf of this township of Upper Breakish?—Yes, with the evidence of Angus Macleod.

roadford, Kye.

7505. You concur with his evidence?—Yes.

Hugh Macrae.

7506. I do not know that we have more to ask you, but if you wish to make an additional statement we would be glad to have it.—I have not many additional statements, except that there is plenty of land round about.

7507. Kyle and Kinloch?—Kyle and Kinloch and Pabbay.

7508. Well, we have seen them already, and we will see them again.

William Munro.

WILLIAM MUNRO, Crofter, Lower Breakish (56)—*examined.*

7509. *The Chairman.*—You are a crofter from Lower Breakish?—Yes.

7510. What is the number of your croft?—No. 22.

7511. I see the arable is 1 acre 0 roods 31 poles, the outrun 29 poles, the grazing 763 acres, divided into forty shares, of which you hold one-fourth of a share. The former rent was £1 and the fair rent is 16s. Have you a statement?—Yes.

7512. Kindly read it.—Statement of Lower Breakish. Names of those that want to remove.

William Munro,	No. 22.	
Finlay Robertson,	„ 3.	
Alexander Robertson,	„ 25.	
John Macleod,	„ 39.	
Donald Fraser,	„ 17.	
Duncan Macleod,	„ 13.	
Malcolm Macinnes,		Sublet Crofter.
Murdo Macleod,	„ 13.	
John Macinnes,	„ 31.	
John Maclean,	„ 4.	
John Fletcher,	„ 4.	Sublet Crofter.
Lauchlan Macrae,	„ 32.	
Murdo Macdonald,	„ 18.	
John Macinnes	„ 34.	

7513. You say the same thing, I suppose, with regard to the lands of Kyle and Kinloch?—Yes, and any in our parish fit for cultivation. Ashaig is nearer us because it marches with us; but anything convenient would do.

7514. *Mr Mackintosh.*—You find a difficulty in paying your present rent; would you be able to stock a new holding?—I would put my stock on. I have doubled my stock. I can't go beyond the limit.

7515. What size of holding would you be able to take?—Well, I have got a promising young family, five sons and three daughters, and I quite believe they would be able to help me.

7516. But can't you say what size?—8 or 10 acres, with four cows and a horse and sixty sheep.

7517. Do you find your present holding too much for you?—No, I did not, but it put me to poverty altogether.

7518. You do not find it more than you can manage?—No.

7519. But you do not manage to pay the rent?—I can easy pay the rent sometimes. I lost all my gear last year and I was better off when I started than when I finished. I have been twenty-eight years skipper of a boat. I made a great deal of money before I was married; the fishing ruined me and kept me in continual poverty, and I must drop it at once or else it will put me on the rock. I tried almost everything in my power to get subsistence for my family, even going to the seashore for whelks. It is a positive fact, my lord.

John Macinnes.

JOHN MACINNES, 31 Lower Breakish—*examined.*

7520. *The Chairman.*—I suppose you wish to give us practically the same account as the previous witness?—Yes.

7521. You desire to leave your holding, if there is available land in the neighbourhood?—Yes.

7522. And you will leave us to look over the land and form a judgment upon it?—Yes.

Broadford, Skye.

7523. *Mr Macleod.*—Do you know the farm of Kinloch well?—Yes, I do.

John Macinnes.

7524. Can you mention any places where people were living at one time that were not mentioned by the previous witnesses?—No, not exactly.

Myles Maclean

MYLES MACLEAN, Harrapol (60)—*examined.*

7525. *The Chairman.*—Have you a written statement?—No.

7526. Your holding, I see, extends to 5 acres 1 rood 28 poles arable, 0 acres 2 roods 3 poles outrun, 1396 acres of common grazing, divided into twenty shares, of which you hold one. The former rent was £4, 10s., and the fair rent is £3, 10s. Are you desirous of leaving your holding if land can be got?—Well, I am, in a manner. My family is grown up now; some members of it have grown up to the age of manhood and are desirous of leaving me. They have been true and diligent in supporting me, and for the sake of my family I am desirous of getting a larger holding, either for me or for them. There is no use dividing the few acres that I have; it would leave both me and them in misery.

7527. How many crofters are in Harrapol altogether?—There are twenty crofts.

7528. And how many crofters?—Well, one of them is at the present time occupying two crofts, and I understand that this present year the rest are divided, which would leave nineteen.

7529. Are there any cottars?—There are not very many. There is a place, Lower Harrapol, below the road, where they are mostly cottars, for all that they have is small patches of land.

7530. Do you know how many cottars there are?—I could not exactly tell the number, but there is a delegate to give evidence upon the matter after me.

7531. Is the township crowded?—It is.

7532. Is the land exhausted?—It is fairly exhausted.

7533. Would it be an advantage to the township if some of the crofters or cottars could be removed to other holdings?—It would.

7534. And the remaining crofters and cottars get the vacated holdings?—Undoubtedly, because the land that I now occupy I do not recollect of leaving it out to improve it, but had to cultivate it regularly every year and sow it. I would calculate it a good return if the ground was to sow the seed back again.

7535. And do you think there is land in the neighbourhood?—I think there is.

7536. Tell us where it is?—It is right fornent me there—the farm of Corry.

7537. Who occupies the farm of Corry at present?—One of the name of Murchison.

7538. Is it a large farm?—I cannot say the acreage of it; it is a large farm. The rent is about £100, I think.

7539. Does the farm of Corry include the lands of any old townships?—At first the farm of Corry was in one, but it is divided now into four parts, that is Strollamus, Swordale, and Liveras over here; it is divided into four parts now, which were at one time occupied as one farm.

7540. And is it many years since the division was made?—I cannot exactly tell the date.

7541. It is not in your recollection?—Oh, yes.

7542. How many sons have you?—I have two sons that are grown up and a boy about twelve years of age.

7543. And the grown up sons want new holdings?—They do, and are desirous of having them.

7544. And you wish to be relieved of them?—No, I have no desire; they were not so very undutiful to me.

7545. But, I mean, to get new holdings?—Undoubtedly; I want to pay my respect to them as far as in my power.

7546. *Mr Shaw Stewart.*—Have they been brought up to any trade at all?—Well, not to a certain trade;

they are following the sea in a kind of manner at times of the year.

7547. They know about the sea a little bit?—Yes.

7548. Fishing?—They are generally at the fishing and sometimes in yachts.

7549. They have no desire to go to the mainland and seek work there or further south?—They are south at the present time.

7550. Oh! are they? at sea?—Yes, engaged in a yacht.

7551. *Mr Gordon.*—This large piece of pasturage up here belongs to the township of Harrapol—this green ground away above the house, does it not?—Yes.

7552. That is to say, the greater part of your outrun or the common pasture is green ground?—No, the most of it is quite visible, all the green ground mostly. It was there where the crofts were made at first till the proprietor removed them to cultivate this mossy ground where they are now situated.

7553. Did you get good grazing upon your old crofts?—Yes.

7554. Is the half of your grazing green ground?—No.

7555. Do you go back as far as Swordale?—There is a river that leads up just over here which divides us.

7556. How many cows would you have in the twenty crofts? What is the souming?—The souming of each croft is three cows and a horse.

7557. You have fully that amount upon it just now?—We are not allowed to keep more than the souming.

7558. You have not more than the souming?—No; if you keep more than the souming you are bound to pay grazing for them, and there is hardly a croft within my knowledge in the township that will feed the souming. You may keep life in them, but no feeding.

7559. But your grazing would keep them in summer well enough?—They will not die in summer.

7560. There is plenty of grass just now on the hill?—Yes, because there is grass everywhere at this season.

7561. *Mr Macleod.*—Have you got any sheep on this hill grazing?—Yes, we have a few sheep: five sheep on each croft, some more or less.

7562. And would it be an advantage to you if you had that grazing further extended?—Well, it would be the desire of some to have additional grazing.

7563. Those in the township who desire to stay where they are would naturally desire to see the pasturage enlarged?—Undoubtedly.

7564. And who are you marching with?—Marching on the one side with the township of Scullamus, and on the other with Mr Ross, the hotel-keeper here.

7565. That is the only ground you are marching with?—Yes.

7566. You are not marching with any other?—Yes, with the Heast people; we are coming in contact with the Heast people.

7567. You are not marching with any other farm than the farm of Swordale?—No: these are all the big farms. I may state that I was requested by seven or eight of the young men, and married men too, remaining about Harrapol there, just to speak in their behalf that they would get land in the old Corry farm there.

7568. You were requested to make that statement?—Yes.

7569. Are they living in Harrapol just now?—Not at the present time, but they belong to Harrapool.

7570. Where are they living?—They are young men mostly that are grown up to manhood now, and they are away at their employment.

7571. Where is that?—South.

7572. Labouring in the south?—Generally following the sea.

7573. Some of them in yachts?—Yes.

7574. *Mr Mackintosh.*—Would these six or eight men be able to take the whole farm of Corry as now possessed by Mr Murchison?—They will get plenty to assist them to take it along with themselves. There will not be an acre of it left without being taken.

7575. Would they be able to take the stock at valuation?—Let them drive their stock to Inverness sale and get cash for them. I wish I had the stock. I would know what to do with them.

7576. Would you not take the stock at valuation?—No! maybe I would take time before I would be able to stock the ground.

7577. But you would not take the present stock on the ground?—Not the present stock.

7578. Are you aware that stock sold off a sheep farm are not worth as much in the open market as they are to the man who takes the ground?—Any one who takes the ground at the present time is not bound to take the stock; the person has no lease of the ground.

7579. You know more than most people do. If you take Corry as a tenant, you are bound to take the sheep stock.

7580. *The Chairman.*—If it is agreeable to the others who are here—John Maclean, Lower Harrapol; Malcolm Maclean, Waterloo; John Mackinnon, Waterloo; and Lachlan Mackinnon, Black Park—we take them as concurring generally in the evidence we have heard to-day, and not prolong the examination of the witnesses from Broadford. But if any of these tenants desire to come up and make an additional statement, we shall be glad to have it.

JOHN MACLEAN, Lower Harrapol—*examined.*

7581. *The Chairman.*—What is it you wish to say?—Well, I was proposed to come here as a witness to give evidence on behalf of the people of the township of Harrapol. Their minds were laid wholly upon getting more land, so as to get the living out of the crops in the land, and the benefit of the cattle. As far as I can understand their means, they would live in the old style by cropping the land for food, and the use of milk for feeding.

7582. They feel their crofts to be too small, and would like larger holdings upon good ground?—Yes, and the crofts they have are in an exhausted state. The land gives no return whatsoever; it is only labour in vain, tilling it over year after year.

7583. We are quite familiar with the circumstances. We will look at all the ground in the neighbourhood while we are here.—Very well, sir.

7584. *Mr Mackintosh.*—Would you adopt a different course of cropping land if you were to get a new holding? Would it be the same mode of cultivation, or how would you cultivate a new holding?—By cropping it, ploughing it, harrowing it, putting in seed and allowing Providence to raise a crop out of my labour.

7585. What would you do with it next year?—When I would get it into good working order I would bring it into rotation, so that I would have room to come and go upon. But allow me to state now that I have seen Morayshire men brought into this country to crop lands, and they have owned on leaving the country that the people here were far better at raising a crop than these strangers, because we knew the nature of the climate and the nature of the soil, and studied all these things that would raise a crop out of the land better than those strangers that came from Morayshire, Banffshire, and these countries.

7586. And Elginshire?—Well, it might be. I have seen a crop of wheat—this experienced man tried for two years to raise wheat out of the land here, and he had nothing but black smut: not an article for his trouble.

LACHLAN MACKINNON, Cottar, Elgol (47).
(Examined in Gaelic through an interpreter.)

7587. *The Chairman.*—You are a cottar at Elgol?—Yes.

7588. Have you any land?—No land.

7589. What is it you wish to say?—I came here to get a piece of ground if I possibly could.

7590. Are you a yachtsman?—I was at one time: I have given that over now.

7591. *Mr Forsyth.*—What land do you wish? Have you any land in your mind that you were seeking on Strathaird?—Yes, I am sent here for others as a delegate. I mentioned the farm of Glasnakill, Dunlia, Riochan, and Robustan.

7592. You speak on behalf of the whole of the crofters and cottars at Elgol, do you?—Only for the cottars.

7593. How many cottars are there?—Seventeen.

7594. How much arable land do you want each?—We would like to get six acres if it is possible, and if we cannot get it we must give up asking.

7595. Do you think you could get what you want at Robuston and Glasnakill?—Yes, I think so.

7596. Are you also asking for hill grazing?—Yes, if possible.

7597. Would you be able to stock it?—Partly.

7598. The people are living partly by fishing at Elgol, are they not?—Yes, the most of them.

7599. But you could work your fishing and more land if you got it, together, profitably?—If I got the land I would not depend much on fishing, but I will try the fishing when I am beat in dealing with the land.

7600. *Mr Alexander Macdonald*, Factor for Sir William Mackinnon.—Since Sir William Mackinnon bought the estate, is it the case that you have lived mostly by fishing?—No, I gave up the fishing a year or two before he came. It is seven years since I gave up the fishing.

7601. Has it not been by work given by Sir William Mackinnon since he bought the estate that you have been living since then?—No, but it was a help to me: I was living on my previous savings.

7602. As a cottar?—As a cottar.

7603. You saved money as a cottar then, did you?—Yes, on the fishing about Ireland and England.

7604. Have you not had lots of work of all sorts since Sir William Mackinnon bought the place?—Yes, I did, but the others are complaining.

7605. I am only asking yourself. You got as much work as you could do, or pretty near it?—Yes, sometimes.

7606. Sir William has spent a large sum of money on making a road for you from Elgol, has he not?—Yes, but I think he did not do that on account of the cottars, at any rate.

7607. The cottars use it as well as others, don't they?—Yes; I live on my neighbour's ground, and I am in his way; and I must either get land or leave the place, and I hope it will come to be that we will get the land.

7608. *Mr Macleod.*—I suppose that you did a fair day's work for a fair day's wage to Sir William Mackinnon?—Yes.

NEIL MACKINNON, Cottar, Elgol (37).
(Examined in Gaelic through an interpreter.)

7609. *The Chairman.*—You are a cottar at Elgol?—Yes.

7610. Do you wish a new holding?—Yes, there is plenty there that I could get.

7611. Tell us what land you refer to?—Drynan: the townships that are already mentioned. Glasnakill, Dunlia, Riochan, Drynan, Mebost, Robustan, and Glen-Scaladale, a part of Robustan. That is without encroaching on the chief part at all of the farm. These lands that I mentioned are green places on which crofters lived before. I am not mentioning the place called Keppoch. It is only forty years since the tenants left that place; and another place where there is a tenant that we need not trouble, that is Camasunary, and then Kirkibost and Kilmaree—we leave that to themselves, and we need not go to the hill to seek for land. The land begins at the end of Loch Slapin up to Loch Scavaig, round 13 or 14 miles of seacoast.

7612. *Mr Maccallum.*—Are the 17 cottars desirous of getting land?—Yes, they are as desirous as I am.

7613. And we have found out that Sir William Mackinnon has done a great deal for the place. Did you forward to him any application for holdings?—Yes, four or five times, and I may even with safety say oftener.

7614. What reply did you get?—We got various replies: we asked Glasnakill of him, and offered a reasonable rent for it, and we did not get it. Then we asked a cow's grazing a-piece of him, and offered to pay for it, and we did not get that.

7615. What reply did he give to the first application?—That he could not at all give it.

7616. Was that the whole of it?—We then sent a letter to him asking a park in which we could plant potatoes; to which he replied that he would rather give us money wherewith to buy potatoes than give us land, the giving of which he might repent, until he would come himself to the country.

7617. When he came to the country did you renew your application?—He then came to the place, and we gave him time in obedience to him. On another occasion we went to meet him at Feaulin when his steam yacht was lying there. We waited on him with a letter for him, and we sent the letter out to him on board his yacht. He asked our messenger for the names of the applicants, and we furnished him with them, and we heard no more of the application.

7618. Did you accept the alms which he offered in that way?—We did not get alms.

7619. *Mr Alexander Macdonald.*—You said that you were going to leave Kirkibost with ourselves, with Sir William Mackinnon. Do not these places of Robustan and Drynan and Dunlia comprise the greater part of what is known as the farm of Kilmaree?—He has plenty besides that. From Ringill away to Kirkibost and Nead-an-fhirein. Though I mention these names, the fourth or fifth or even the sixth part of them would satisfy us.

7620. So you do not mean to take the lot?—No, nor anything like it.

7621. I understand you admit that these places comprehend a great part of Kilmaree, and that you could not take them.

7622. *The Chairman.*—Yes, Mr Forsyth was over the ground and thinks he is giving his evidence very well.

7623. *Mr Alexander Macdonald.*—I do not think the Commission understands that these places comprise a large part of Kilmaree. (*To witness*). Is the farm of Glasnakill a farm that was until lately let as one small farm?—The last man in whose possession I saw it was a south-country man who had it along with Glasnakill—Mr Bower—and he had the whole estate except Camusunary and Elgol.

7624. But was Glasnakill always known as a separate farm on the estate, and is there a separate slated farmhouse on it, with a separate rent in the valuation roll?—Yes; that was the case to the best of my knowledge until Mr. Bower took it.

7625. Are you aware that Glasnakill, which you mention, is a small farm, let hitherto at a £70 rent, with a slated house?—I heard different rents: I know that Archibald Macallister had it for £20.

7626. When was that; before you were born?—Yes, before I was born; he may have had it for £5.

7627. He was a relative of the proprietor, was not he?

7628. *The Chairman.*—What of that?

7629. *Mr Macdonald.*—I mean that it was let for favour; it was not a fair rent.

Broadford, Skye.

Neil Mackinnon.

7630. *The Chairman.*—By one relative to another.

7631. *Mr Macdonald.*—Yes. (*To witness*). Is Drynan, the other place that you mention, within just a few yards of the house of Kilmaree?—Not the nearest side of Drynan; it is about half a mile.

7632. *The Chairman.*—It is right to mention that we have received in connection with the township of Elgol the following petition:—

ELGOL, SKYE, *March* 24, 1893.

We, the undersigned cottars of the township of Elgol, Strathaird estate, proprietor, Sir William Mackinnon, beg most respectfully to lay this petition before you, craving your kind consideration of the same. We have grievances to lay before you, the chief one being concerning "land," and our chief object in placing this in your hand is in the hope that when you come to Skye, you will kindly favour us by asking an interview with us, and we will be most happy to meet you so that you may be able to settle our grievances. We may say that we spoke to our proprietor fully two years ago about our poor condition. He then said to wait a little. We have waited now all the time, and as there has been nothing done, nor any signs of anything, we would crave your consideration of our affairs, and hope you will see to them when you come to Skye.

(Signed)	LACHLIN MACKINNON,	Cottar,	Elgol.
,,	DONALD MACKINNON,	,,	,,
,,	JOHN MACKINNON,	,,	,,
,,	NEIL MACKINNON,	,,	,,
,,	DONALD MACLEAN,	,,	,,
,,	JOHN NICOLSON,	,,	,,
,,	PETER MACKINNON,	,,	,,
,,	ALLAN MACKINNON,	,,	,,
,,	ALEXANDER MACKINNON	,,	,,
,,	ALEXANDER MACKINNON	,,	,,
,,	HUGH MACLEAN,	,,	,,
,,	DONALD MACLEAN,	,,	,,
,,	NEIL MACGILORAY,	,,	,,
,,	DONALD MACDONALD	,,	,,
,,	WILLIAM MACKINNON,	,,	,,
,,	NEIL GRANT,	,,	,,
,,	LACHLIN MACKINNON,	,,	,,
,,	CHARLES ROBERTSON,	,,	,,
,,	PETER MACKINNON,	,,	,,
,,	WILLIAM MACKINNON,	,,	,,
,,	DONALD ROBERTSON,	,,	,,

7633. We will take this petition into consideration along with the evidence we have heard from you and the preceding witness.

James Mackintosh.

JAMES MACKINTOSH, Ostaig, Sleat, Factor for Lord Macdonald—*examined.*

7634. *The Chairman.*—I think you wish to make a general statement, Mr Mackintosh?—In regard to the parish of Strath, I am quite prepared to make a statement. I have here a statement giving the total acreages in the different townships in the parish of Strath, together with the fair rent fixed, the arrears ordered to be paid and the arrears at this date, also stating the number of lots and the number of tenants in each township, together with the souming. [It is given on page 178.]

7635. The rents are better paid here, I believe, than in the north end of the island?—Much better.

7636. And the arrears are not nearly so heavy?—Not nearly.

7637. Last year, I suppose, you will agree was a very bad year?—Yes, it was.

7638. Considering the unfortunate circumstances of last year, would you say that the arrears have been fairly well paid?—They have been fairly well paid.

7639. You do not feel that you have any such ground of complaint in the matter of arrears in this part of the island as in the north?—No, certainly not.

7640. Do these arrears represent much more than half a year's rent?—There is a little more than that; about two-thirds of a year's rent.

Broadford, Skye.

James Mackintosh.

7641. But under a year?—Under a year.

7642. And I suppose you anticipate that a considerable part of these arrears will be recovered?—Yes, if times improve, there should not be more than a quarter of a year's rent lost.

7643. If this year turns out good?—There will be a material reduction in the arrears.

7644. You attribute the non-payment of the arrears very largely to last year being a bad year?—Yes, certainly.

7645. *Mr Sutherland.*—Who designed the form of that return?—I did myself.

7646. You just took those parts of it that more readily convey your view of the case?—I took what would give you most information in the least bulk.

7647. Did not you think the old rent might be some information to us also?—I did not think so; I see the report of the Crofters Commission is very much in evidence here.

7648. We can get the fair rent out of that?—Yes, and you can get the old rent there also. The reduction of rent that the crofters got is about 32 per cent.

7649. *Mr Gordon.*—You have not included in that statement the amount of the old arrears?—No.

7650. *Mr Sutherland.*—Can you give us any idea of the total amount of rent paid by the crofters since 1889, when the Crofters Commission visited this place?—I could do it in ten minutes.

7651. Could you hand it in at any time as a supplement to that?—I will.

7652. *Mr Shaw Stewart.*—Supposing in any cases where a landlord was willing to give up say a sheep farm, to be divided into crofts and hill pasture, one great difficulty would be the valuation of the stock, would not it?—It would.

7653. If a landlord gave up a farm to be divided into crofts, he would have the sheep stock in his hands?—In every case. In every sheep farm in these properties the proprietor is bound, or the incoming tenant is bound, to take the sheep stock at valuation.

7654. Have you ever thought of any way of overcoming that difficulty?—No, I have not, because I consider that in an island like Skye, with a climate of this sort, it would be a mistake not to take the stock on the ground at valuation.

7655. Why?—It is a difficult matter to acclimatise sheep to the ground.

7656. *Mr Gordon.*—Can you tell us the stocking at present of Suisnish and Boreraig?—About 800 ewes, I would say.

7657. Could you tell us what sheep stock is on Corry—I mean the bigger Corry?—I think about 450 Cheviots. The rent is £100.

7658. And what is the rent of Suisnish and Boreraig?—£125.

7659. And of Strollamus?—£60, and there are about 350 sheep.

7660. Now could you tell us about Kinloch?—The rent in the valuation roll is £200.

7661. And what stock has it?—There are over 2000 of a stock.

7662. Mixed stock?—Yes, ewe and wether.

7663. Cheviot?—No, blackfaced.

7664. What about Kyle?—I am afraid I don't know exactly at this moment.

7665. *Mr Forsyth.*—It is a wedder stock he has now, is it not?—I think about half and half.

7666. *Mr Gordon.*—What is the rent of Kyle Farm?—£440.

7667. Without the shooting?—Mr Ryrie values the shooting at £200, but that includes Ashaig.

7668. Could you give us any idea of the stock?—About 2000 blackfaced sheep.

7669. It ought to carry 2000 if fully stocked, is that your idea?—Yes; I have here also a report on the different farms in the parish of Strath, prepared by Mr Taylor and myself.

7670. *Mr Gordon.*—Excuse me one moment. There

MACDONALD ESTATES.

STATEMENT showing Extent of Arable and Pasture land, &c., held by the Crofters of each Township, the number of stock they are entitled to keep on the Common Grazings, the Fair Rent fixed, the Arrears ordered by the Commission to be paid, and the Arrears outstanding at 19th May 1893.

PARISH OF STRATH.

Township.	Arable.	Outrun and Hill Pasture.	Total.	Common Pasture.	No. of Tenants.	No. of Lots.	Souming.			Fair Rent.	Arrears ordered to be Paid.	Arrears at 19th May 1893.	Remarks.
							Horses.	Cattle.	Sheep.				
	ac. ro. po.	ac. ro. po.	ac. ro. po.							£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	
Luib	23 2 6	737 1 5	760 3 11	...	14	8	...	24	120	17 17 0	38 0 0	17 10 0	
Ardorch	11 2 13	338 1 3	349 3 16	...	5	4	...	16	...	10 12 0	16 10 0	13 17 0	
Dunan	23 0 9	516 1 0	539 1 9	...	13	8	...	32	...	18 8 6	19 0 11	0 12 6	
Strolomus	8 2 26	168 3 27	177 2 13	...	6	6	...	18	...	7 2 6	2 10 0	5 18 4	145 acres of hill pasture held in common with tenant of Strolomus farm.
Blackpark	11 2 30	15 0 13	26 3 3	...	13	13	...	...	...	7 9 0	...	0 5 0	
Harrapool	116 1 21	1453 2 13	1569 3 34	...	30	30	20	60	200	83 15 9	84 1 10	37 19 1	
Waterloo	50 0 22	239 0 24	289 1 6	...	21	12	...	24	...	28 14 0	26 14 4	17 4 8	
Scullamus	72 2 33	736 1 5	808 3 38	1352	18	12	12	60	96	60 11 0	64 3 0	31 17 0	
Scullamus Moss				...	7	...	...	...	...	4 10 0	4 0 0	1 5 0	
Moorlands	8 1 6	2 3 9	11 0 15	...	12	13	...	...	...	5 5 0	...	0 8 3	
Heaste	73 3 32	3065 0 37	3139 0 29	...	19	13	26	78	390	95 0 0	144 1 0	129 9 10	
Torrin	123 0 12	4420 3 36	4544 0 8	...	32	18	36	108	...	136 14 0	188 4 0	85 15 0	Sheep a joint stock.
Breakish Arable	165 0 17	821 2 1	986 2 18	...	51	40	...	80	...	102 0 0	130 4 0	51 13 0	
Breakish Moss	101 1 0	3682 0 20	3783 1 20	...	30	15	30	60	600	74 0 0	128 2 2	99 19 8	
Kyleakin Lots	27 3 23	332 1 39	360 1 32	...	15	20	...	20	...	29 10 2	...	39 9 9	Tenants do not have the benefit of the Act, being long lease holders.
	817 1 10	16,529 3 32	17,347 1 2	1352	286	202	124	580	1406	681 8 11	853 11 3	533 4 1	
			1,352 0 0										
			18,699 1 2										

BROADFORD, 19*th May* 1893.

(Signed) JAMES MACKINTOSH,
Factor for LORD MACDONALD.

(Signed) JOHN TAYLOR, Land Surveyor.

Broadford, Skye.

James Mackintosh.

is a small farm called Duisdale. What is the rent of it?—From Whitsunday next it will be £25.

7671. And the stock?—It is a flying stock; I really can't tell you. It is a sheep and cattle dealer who has the stock on it. I should think there will be about a couple of hundred sheep.

7672. What about Kilbride?—The rent is £70, and I think there will be 450 sheep on it, all ewes.

7673. *Mr Macleod.*—I see that you have given us here the amount of fair rent ordered to be paid when the rents were fixed and the amount of arrears ordered to be paid?—Yes.

7674. Which makes a total of £1535, 0s. 2d.?—Yes. The fair rent was of course ordered to be paid within the year, and the arrears were spread over a period of two years.

7675. But at the time the rents were fixed the crofters were due to the estate, according to the decision of the Crofters Commission, £1535, and to-day they are only due £533, 4s. 1d.?—At the time the rents were fixed, possibly before Whitsunday term, they were only perhaps due the amount of arrears ordered to be paid. During the first year after the fair rents were fixed they were due to the proprietor a year's rent and a certain proportion of the arrears. The arrears were not ordered to be paid at once.

7676. According to this statement, as I take it, the amount of the crofters' indebtedness to the estate at this moment is just a third of what it was when the rents were fixed?—Yes, that is so. I might mention in regard to these rents that the townships of Heast and Torrin, where the best crofts are, are most in arrear. And the smaller the crofts the less the arrears are. The following is the report on the farms.

REPORT on the Farms of STROLOMUS, LIVERAS, CORRY, KILBRIDE, SWORDALE, SUISNISH and BORERAIG, KYLE, and SCALPAY, the property of LORD MACDONALD.

STROLOMUS.

The farm as at present possessed by the heirs of the late Mr Alexander Campbell extends to 2203 acres, and is bounded on the north by the crofting townships of Dunan and Strolomus and sound of Scalpay, on the west and south-west by Torrin common hill, and on the east and south-east by the farm of Corry.

There are about 22 acres of old arable land, which is kept under permanent grass, with the exception of a small field kept under cultivation by the shepherd for the use of his cattle. The remainder of the farm is all under land mostly of inferior quality, and embracing Ben Dearg, 2323 feet above sea-level.

There is a little green pasture along the public road, where there is the appearance of a little cultivation having been done amongst the rocks, but although it affords fair good pasture it is in no way suited for cultivation, and besides the farm could not be deprived of it, there being very little green on the whole grazing; consequently it will only carry a blackfaced stock of sheep, although the neighbouring farm of Corry carries a Cheviot stock.

There is very little, if any, land on this farm that could be brought under cultivation, and the small portion mentioned as being under permanent grass is required in connection with the grazing; indeed the scarcity of good green pasture appears to be the greatest drawback in connection with this farm. The dwelling house is quite suitable for the farm, and the marches as at present are those recently rearranged by the Crofters Commission when fixing their fair rents for the crofters' common hills adjoining. The farm is of a size that should not be interfered with, should there be suitable land for crofters to cultivate—which there is not.

LIVERAS.

This farm is occupied by Mr John Mackinnon, and extends to 751 acres, of which 53 acres or thereby is arable land and kept under a regular rotation of cropping.

Broadford, Skye.

James Mackintosh.

This is more an agricultural than a grazing farm; and should feus be taken up and built upon in the neighbourhood of the new pier, as is being done, this would be a very desirable small farm for dairy purposes.

The farm is surrounded on three sides by the sea and on the fourth by the public road, along which there is a wire fence and stone dyke which entirely encloses the farm.

The arable land, which is situated close to the new pier, is composed mostly of good soil, worth being well farmed and properly treated, and is such as will yield a fair return for labour.

There is also a small field under permanent grass at Camus-Sgianadan, at north end of farm, but the soil here is not so good as the fields already mentioned.

Although these fields are well enough adapted for cultivation by a farmer, I do not think it would be desirable to break any of it up for the purpose of giving it to crofters. The outrun is small, and would not be sufficient for any number of well-to-do crofters,—such as would be in a position to build suitable houses in this locality.

The steading is very suitable for the farm as at present possessed, and the sitting tenant who recently erected the wire fence along the public road intends building a suitable dwelling-house.

CORRY.

Presently tenanted by Mr Murdoch Murchison, extends to 3867 acres, of which 20 acres or thereby is arable and permanent grass, and is bounded on the north by Liveras and Scalpay Sound, on the east by Swordale, on the south by Kilbride, and on the west by Strolomus and Torrin common hill.

The farm along Kilbride and Swordale marches consists of good mixed pasture, partly low-lying and liable to be flooded along the Broadford River, part of which has at one time been under cultivation. There is also a strip of land stretching from the present dwelling-house in a northerly direction, to the public road leading to Broadford, a distance of about 1300 yards and about 300 yards broad, that has at one time been under cultivation and is now under fog and fern.

This part, in which there are some small spots of good soil, is a good deal interspersed with rock, and turf, and stone-dykes, and it would entail a very great deal of manual labour to bring it into good arable land by levelling down the old dykes and removing the stones. The dwelling-house and steading are suitable to the farm as at present occupied.

The hill grazing, which extends to the top of Benna-caillich and Ben-Dearg, 2403 and 2323 feet high, is entirely moorland with very little mixture of grass. All the green pasture is along the parts mentioned, and without which the remainder of the farm would be of very little value. Whether let to one tenant or to crofters, the green land on the east of the farm and the hill should go together, as there is no green pasture on the west side, where the hill is dry and black, and useless without a change of better pasture.

KILBRIDE.

The farm is presently occupied by Mr John Anderson, and extends to 1877 acres, of which 40 acres or thereby is arable at Kilbride House, but is rocky and uneven and cannot be close cultivated.

The boundaries of the farm are as follows: on the north by Corry farm and glebe; on the east by Swordale; on the south by Suisnish and Boreraig; and on the west by Loch Slapin. The farm, with the exception of a strip along the public road from the west end of Loch-Cille-Chriosd to the parks, is composed of black moorland, very rocky at the west side, and on the whole rather inferior pasture.

The strip of green pasture mentioned along the public road, and which appears to have been partly cultivated at some time, covers thin soil much broken up with rocks and not at all suited for cultivation.

We know of no land on this farm that could be profitably cultivated by crofters or any one else, even the parks would pay the tenant better, should he have them sown out with grass seed and left as permanent grass.

The dwelling-house and offices are suitable for the farm on its present boundaries.

Suisnish and Boreraig.

This farm, which extends to 2880 acres, is at present occupied by Mr Malcolm Macinnes, and is bounded on the north by Kilbride farm, on the east by Heast common hill, on the south by Loch Eishart, and on the west by Loch Slapin. At Suisnish on the west side, at the mouth of Lochs Slapin and Eishart, about 80 acres of land had at one time been under cultivation extending from Ault-a'-Mhuilin along the shore to the east of Rhudha Suisnish. The old arable, which is now under grass and heather, with the exception of the shepherd's park and a small piece occupied by a cottar, is very steep and would be difficult to labour, the rocks along the shore at the place are also very steep, and we think it would be next to impossible to land up seaweed. This point being as mentioned at the entrance of the two lochs is very much exposed to the westerly winds; it is two miles from the nearest public road, to which there is only a very rough footpath, and about 3¾ miles from the nearest public school at Torrin. This point forms all the green pasture on the west side of the farm, the part lying behind and to the north and east being moorland.

At Boreraig on the shore of Loch Slapin, and distant about three miles from the public road leading to Broadford, there are about 50 acres of old arable, which is very much broken up by rocks, and, with the exception of the shepherd's park and about another two acres, is under green pasture.

The two parts mentioned are the only green pasture on the farm, the remainder being moorland. Neither place is well adapted for cultivation, the one being too thin and rocky to yield a fair return, and the other, although better soil, is, as already mentioned, too steep and much too exposed. The farm throughout is well sheltered and very compact, being surrounded on two sides by Lochs Slapin and Eishart, and of a size that would easily let.

Should crofters be put on the shores of either Loch Slapin or Loch Eishart, the farm, as a sheep grazing, would be useless.

Swordale.

This small farm is at present occupied by Mr James Ross and extends to 1859 acres, of which about 65 acres are arable and permanent grass. It is bounded on the north by Corry and Broadford Bay, on the east by Upper Harrapool, on the south by Kilbride, and on the west by Corry. With the exception of the arable land mentioned and a little green pasture adjoining the glebe lands and Corry farm, the remainder is moorland, embracing Ben Suardal. Except the land at present under cultivation, and which is well farmed, there is no other part of the farm that could be cultivated; a good part of what is enclosed is under grass as being unfit for cultivation.

The farm, which is small, is at present used as much as an agricultural as a grazing one, and being in the neighbourhood of the hotel and village of Broadford, suits better, we should think, with a fairly mixed stock of horses, cattle, and sheep. This farm, and a few others in the parish, appear to us to be of a size that, should a proportion of them be suited for cultivation, it would not be judicious to curtail them in any way. This farm of Swordale in particular would not let readily if the arable and grazing portions were separated. The present tenant has considerably improved the land both by fencing and draining.

Scalpay Island.

The island is at present let to Mr Robert Ryrie, and extends to 6098 acres. The parks at Scalpay House are partly cultivated and partly under permanent pasture, and extend to about 70 acres, part of which is soft and boggy.

A small herd of Highland cattle are kept, and all this land is necessary for producing winter keep. This is all the arable or green land on the island, except two small parks used by the shepherds, the remainder of the island being moorland with in places a mixture of green grass. Along the shore between Corran-na-chinn-Uachdavaich and Scalpay House small patches of poor land have been cultivated many years ago, but there is really no land on the island fit for cultivation except about 15 or 20 acres of the 70 acres in the parks at the house.

The proportion of green grass on the island is barely sufficient to give justice to the sheep, but every part that could be cultivated and converted into green grass appears to have been taken advantage of. Many years ago, probably seventy years back, the then tenant, who only kept a cattle stock, cultivated every available part, not for the purpose of getting a paying return, but so as to produce winter keep for his cattle. Should the island have been under sheep at the time, those few patches of cultivation on such miserable soil would never have been made. The island, taken as a whole, is fairly good grazing and suitable for a sheep run, but not at all suitable for cultivation, nor for crofters, as it would be necessary to build a school, &c. &c., it would be grazing and not cultivation they would have to depend upon. The dwelling-house is a good substantial building, with a good garden attached, and both it and the steading are very suitable for the grazing.

Kyle.

This farm is at present occupied, as also the shootings, by Mr Robert Ryrie, and extends to 9490 acres, of which 15 acres are arable near Kyle House and about 23 acres under permanent grass at Lusa Bridge. The farm is bounded on the north-east and south by the sea, and on the west by Ashaig, Breakish, and Kylerhea crofts.

At the top of Loch-na-Beiste a small piece of old arable is still green, and at the Rudha-na-Caillich on the south end of the farm, and where one of the shepherds now lives, a good deal of cultivation had at one time been done, but the soil is very inferior, being thin, wet, and spongy, and situated over two miles from the public road at Kylerhea.

The whole farm, with the exception of these spots, is composed of rough moorland, partly covered with natural birch wood and all quite unsuited for cultivation. Beinn-na-Caillich, which is the highest hill on the farm, rises to 2396 feet above sea-level.

The proportion of arable land on the farm to grazing is smaller than on any other of the sheep farms on the Macdonald estates, consequently, little or no cattle can be kept for want of wintering.

The farm on its present marches is very compact, being surrounded by the sea on three sides, so that a wire fence of about six miles long along the remaining side would enclose the whole farm.

After carefully examining all the most likely places we are unable to see any ground that could be profitably brought under cultivation; the greatest drawback in connection with the farm being the want of sufficient good pasture or green land.

Note. After going very carefully over all farms in this parish belonging to Lord Macdonald, with a view to looking for land that could be profitably brought under cultivation, we see none that could be so occupied, except perhaps the small portions at

Broadford, Skye. James Mackintosh.

present kept under cultivation by the present tenants, and in most cases that would not (even should it not damage the farm to take it) be sufficient for more than two or three ordinary crofters in each farm. Upon the whole, therefore, we are of opinion that no part of any of these farms should be cut up for crofting purposes; but if cut, the crofters should get the whole, so as to have the bad land as well as the good patches.

BROADFORD, *May* 19, 1893.

(Signed) JAMES MACKINTOSH,
Factor for Lord Macdonald.
" JOHN TAYLOR, Land Surveyor.

7677. *The Chairman.*—Is that report signed?—Yes, it is signed by Mr Taylor and myself.

7678. We will take Mr Taylor as concurring in the report.

7679. *Mr Macleod.*—You say in your joint report that this farm of Suisnish and Boreraig is not suitable for small tenants?—No, I don't think it is.

7680. But you stated in the course of putting a question to-day, that you had advertised it to let for small tenants?—They did not come forward, and they are better judges of what suits them than I am.

7681. But what I want to be at, is this. You come to us and say that these places are not suitable for small tenants, and yet you yourself admit that you advertised it for small tenants?—Yes, I consider when the crofters did not offer for it, they must be better judges of what was suitable for them than I am.

7682. So that the statement contains your opinion, converted by the crofters?—Yes.

7683. Did you think the evidence to-day went to controvert your statement, that they did not want to get there?—There was an opportunity given.

7684. But can you give us the conditions that were attached?—Mr Macdonald is here who drew up the advertisement, and I believe Lord Macdonald was quite willing to let it to eight or nine substantial crofters, and to treat with them for the stock. The stock was in his own hands.

7685. What was the particular point on which they differed?—There were none applied for it, as far as I know.

7686. You had nothing whatever to do with it personally?—No, it was before my time.

7687. *Mr Sutherland.*—You, of course, know the terms of the remit to us, and the object of our inquiry?—Yes.

7688. And I take it generally—I do not wish to trouble you to go into details—I think the purport of the paper you have read, is, that you cannot help us in this object, by pointing out land suitable for the purposes for which we have been appointed?—Not land that could be cultivated with profit to crofters.

7689. You have heard the evidence that has been given by crofters here?—Yes.

7690. They have a very different opinion?—They have.

7691. You have just said, in answer to a question by Mr Macleod, that you thought in a certain circumstance, they were the best judges of what was good for themselves?—Certainly.

7692. Why do you exclude them from their judgment in this case?—They do not always know what is best for themselves.

7693. Only in the case where they agree with your opinion?—I don't fail to state it then when they agree with my opinion; but at the present moment, I think some of them have not been quite so successful as they might have been.

7694. I suppose that would apply to a good number of people besides crofters?—No doubt.

7695. They are in hopes of good times coming with lower rents and higher prices, and they think they will be successful. We look around, and see that the crofters in the parish of Strath have undoubtedly the best grazing land in the parish?—Yes.

7696. Better than the farmers have?—Yes.

7697. That is your opinion?—Yes.

7698. I think you said, that if the lands were to be taken at all, they should be taken in whole?—Yes.

7699. Now, I take it from that statement, that if the lands were taken in whole, a good number of your objections would be removed. Is that so?—A good many of my difficulties would.

7700. Of the difficulties?—Yes.

7701. But do not your difficulties determine your objections?—Not always. One great difficulty would be, what would have to be done with 7000 or 8000 acres of the farm of Kinloch, if the farmers got 2000.

7702. Take them over altogether?—Take them over altogether; good and well. Give the landlords security for the rent, and fix a fair rent.

7703. And then all your objections would be overcome?—If they pay their rents.

7704. To whom they were due?—To whomsoever they were due.

7705. And in that case?—Oh, take over the whole island.

7706. Would that apply also to a farm, as well as to the whole area of an island in your opinion?—I think if you take over the few farms there are in the parish of Strath, you may take over the whole island.

7707. You do not look upon farms as entities in themselves; it is the island of Skye you look upon as an entity—I mean in wishing anything of that kind to be done. If these difficulties were removed, you would have no objection to the land being taken over?—I have no objection to the land being given to crofters or others, if there be fair rents fixed, and security given to the proprietors.

7708. So your fear is not for the crofters not succeeding, but for the landlords suffering?—My fear is for the landlords suffering. I have no fear the crofters will succeed if they get all that they expect for nothing.

7709. For nothing! That is a most important qualification?—They expect to get it for nothing.

7710. Who said that to us?—They expect to get money to stock it.

7711. Do you deliberately say, Mr Mackintosh, from the evidence they have given here, that they expect to get it for nothing?—No, not exactly, but a witness here to-day fixed a fair rent for his own croft at £11, and he would have to pay interest on money borrowed as well as that.

7712. That was one witness?—That was one witness. He could not live a couple of years at that.

7713. That was one out of many. I don't think you would yourself, upon consideration, say that the people would expect to get it for nothing, judging by the evidence you have heard?—Oh, they don't expect to get it for nothing.

7714. But on reasonable terms?—I don't suppose they expect it on reasonable terms.

7715. You don't?—No.

7716. *Mr Maccallum.*—You admit, I suppose, that the present holdings are congested?—Some of them are.

7717. Which of those?—The two townships of Breakish are congested.

7718. And Luib, and round that point?—Well, Luib and these places are fishing lots.

7719. But are they not too small even for that?—No, I don't think they are. I think they would make a mistake if they asked big crofts that would take them away from their living.

7720. But you admit that there are several townships that are congested?—There are.

7721. Is there any remedy at all, that you can suggest yourself for the amelioration of their condition?—If they get crofts of a suitable size, and security was given for the rent, and that the landlord would not suffer to the same extent as has formerly been the case.

7722. *The Chairman.*—That is not an answer to the question.

7723. *Mr Maccallum.*—Is there land in the parish that could be formed into lots for which they could

roadford, kye — ames Iackintosh.

pay a fair rent and have a profit for themselves?—No, I am not aware of any place of any extent where they could be settled down, where burdened with the fair rent and interest on money borrowed for stock and cattle, they could meet their liabilities.

7724. What can be done for them at all?—Well, I am sorry to say that I am hardly in a position to answer that. It is for the men to find that out. I say that without meaning any disrespect to the gentlemen before me.

7725. Then you spoke of Lord Macdonald's estate being more burdened with crofters than any other estate in Skye?—Yes, and I don't know but what I said in Scotland, which includes Skye.

7726. And they are burdens that you wish to throw off?—We should have our own share of them only.

7727. When did they come to be considered burdens by Lord Macdonald?—I don't know if Lord Macdonald ever considered them burdens.

7728. But you represent him?—I said he was burdened with them.

7729. And he does not see how he could bear the burden of them?—He does not see why he should bear more than his share of them.

7730. Well, but can he find available land then for his own share of them?—If he has none to give, he can't find it.

7731. It comes to this, then, that they are considered by you as burdens that must be thrown off?—I did not say that they are burdens that must be thrown off.

7732. That make you very uncomfortable?—If they are allowed to subdivide and increase and not to move out of the country to obtain their livelihood elsewhere, I certainly say they become burdens.

7733. Do not they object to subdivision as well as you?—They do now; but even at the present moment I have as much to do as I can sometimes to get them from subdividing still.

7734. But you don't offer them land on which they could settle?—No, I don't.

7735. Then, taking the whole island of Skye, do you think there is land on which the crofters or the surplus of them that would require to be removed from the townships could be settled?—I don't know the whole island.

7736. I would just call your attention to a question and the reply that was given to it before the Napier Commission in this place. This is the question put by Professor Mackinnon. "But even with the enlarged crofts, and supposing they were spread over some of the tacks of the country to the utmost reasonable extent, emigration would still have to form some solution of the problem for the improvement of the people." The reply is, "I think if an opening could be found for them in the different places in the country, the question of emigration might be deferred o a future generation."

7737. Do you agree with that reply?—I don't think I should be asked whether I agree with it.

7738. Do you agree with that reply?—I will take nothing to do with it; I have not read the evidence before or after it, and I don't know the context.

7739. You will give no opinion as to that?—I will not.

7740. Then the next question by Professor Mackinnon is, "It would come?" and the reply is, "Well, we would not see the necessity for it, if they could get those holdings at home." Do you agree with that answer—that there would be no need of emigration if they got these holdings at home?—Well, I think that some people would have to emigrate. If the island of Skye was cut out into small holdings, such as you describe, or such as you desire, the public burdens—the poor rates—would become so heavy, that it would be a serious matter how they could be paid. How would the poor be supported? The local rates would not be sufficient.

7741. And you think that emigration would need to form part of any scheme for ameliorating the condition of the people?—I certainly think that any person thinking of emigration should be encouraged. Broadford, Skye.

7742. I will put it in this way to you. This answer was given by Dr Mackinnon of Strath?—I suspected it was he, and he was a better judge of the matter than I am. James Mackintosh.

7743. You considered he was a very good judge?—Yes.

7744. Are you aware, too, that he was not against emigration; that he considered emigration a very good thing?—I do not know his views sufficiently to say that.

7745. I think we may take it that this is the position; he thought that emigration in certain cases would be a very desirable thing, but he did not see after all the necessity of it; and don't you think he was a very good judge?—He certainly ought to be.

7746. He was very long in this place, and that was his opinion.

7747. *Mr Munro.*—I should like to put one question suggested by an answer given to Mr Maccallum. You stated, I think, that if the people were put back upon the land, the numbers that are now claiming land, the poor rates would increase very much, and the condition of life in the island would become perfectly intolerable and unbearable?—Yes.

7748. Is it not the case that the poor rates increased as the people were put off the land?—No, I don't think so. I think there are more crofters in Skye now than there were 100 years ago, or for that matter 50 years ago.

7749. I think it will be within your recollection that at Portree, Mr John G. Mackay submitted a statement showing that as the people were removed from the soil the poor rates increased?—He may have done that with regard to one parish, but I don't think he made any mention of the parish of Strath.

7750. My recollection was that his statement was with reference to the whole of Skye. Now assuming that statement to be true, is it not a fair inference that if the people were put back on the land the poor rates would diminish?—I don't think so.

7751. You are a gentleman of great experience in land matters and you know Skye thoroughly. The question was put to you by Mr Maccallum whether you could suggest any remedy for the present state of discontent among the crofters. Now have you considered that a little further since he put the question?—Oh, I considered that long long ago.

7752. And you have no remedy to suggest?—I have plenty. Provide me, or provide a committee of gentlemen who have the same experience or more, with the amount of money that these Commissions have cost since the first was appointed, and we will satisfy every crofter in the Highlands.

7753. So you think that what is wanted in order to satisfy the crofters in Skye is charity?—Not charity.

7754. Or the distribution of money?—No. Distribute the money among the many and not among the few.

7755. Well, but that is charity, I take it?—No, I don't think it is charity.

7756. Any other remedy you have to suggest?—Emigration—inducements to emigrate.

7757. Then you do not agree with Mr Mackinnon that provision could be made for them in land?—No, I don't think that sufficient holdings could be found in Skye for the number of people who would expect to take holdings in it. Sufficient holdings, I mean, to enable them to make a livelihood out of it.

7758. That is for the present population of Skye?—Yes.

7759. But seeing that they manage to live on their present scant holdings, is it not possible that if they got them even slightly increased they might become more comfortable?—No, I don't know a crofter to-day—and some have got very nice holdings, some of them have got better holdings than any of the witnesses described to-day, and I don't think any of them are able to take their living out of it.

Broadford, Skye.

James Mackintosh

7760. *Mr Sutherland.*—Did not you yourself describe to us a holding that showed £27 to the good?—Yes, but none of the crofters on this property have got any such holding.

7761. But they might have them in the future?—Yes, but if you divide Skye into holdings of that extent there will not be enough for the people. You will leave a great many people without any at all.

7762. A great number of people would be required to furnish them with the necessities of life. I mean tradesmen and shopkeepers and people engaged in commerce.

7763. *The Chairman.*—Are you to be at Isleornsay to-morrow?—I am.

7764. If I find it necessary to put a few questions after perusing this report, I suppose you will have no objections?—No objections.

Alexander Macdonald.

ALEXANDER MACDONALD, Factor for Sir William Mackinnon—*examined.*

7765. *The Chairman.*—Do you wish to make a statement?—I don't want to go into the whole question. Your Honours have seen Strathaird and know the nature of the land, and you can judge how far it suits the purpose you have in view. You saw it for yourselves, so I am not going to offer any remarks such as have been offered on other estates on that point. I merely make one general observation, and that is that the breaking up of a compact subject is one of the most difficult things possible with justice to all concerned. If there is a small moderate-sized sheep farm it is a *unum quid*, and it is almost impossible to break that up without doing serious damage to some one. I was also going to point out the large expenditure which Sir William Mackinnon laid out on his property. He bought it only five years ago, I think, at a cost of £15,000; but he has spent about £12,000 since then on the estate, and the crofters got the benefit of a great part of this expenditure. Of course there were contractors, but the crofters got work to do. In connection with the farm of Kirkibost and Kilmaree, he built a large set of offices which cost £1200 or £1300. He also made a road for the benefit of his tenants and himself to Elgol, a place which was quite inaccessible before. Of course it is a private road, and is not given over to the public; but practically they have the use of it, though it is a private road belonging to the proprietor and his tenants. Sir William spent £2500 on that road. Then he made a great many other minor improvements. The churchyard there was in a disgraceful state; he put a fine wall round it and improved the site generally. That is all I wish to say, unless the Commissioners would like to put any question.

7766. *Mr Sutherland.*—Who maintains the road that is made to Elgol?—Sir William Mackinnon maintains it out of his own pocket.

[ADJOURNED.]

NINTH SITTING.

ISLEORNSAY, SKYE, MAY 20, 1893.

Present:—

DAVID BRAND, Esq., Advocate, Sheriff of Ayr, and Chairman of the Crofters Commission, *Chairman.*
MICHAEL HUGH SHAW STEWART, Esq., M.P.
ANGUS SUTHERLAND, Esq., M.P.
JAMES NOEL MULLER FORSYTH, Esq.
GEORGE GORDON, Esq.
REV. MALCOLM MACCALLUM.
JOHN MACLEOD, Esq.
HENRY MUNRO, Esq.
WILLIAM MACKENZIE, Esq., *Secretary.*

7767. *The Chairman.*—I may mention at the outset of the proceedings here that the townships in our list have been arranged in a certain geographical order, and naturally that order should be followed; but it has been represented to me that there is one general witness from a special township who is in a position to submit a written statement applying to the whole of the townships in the district. I accordingly propose to take his evidence prior to that of the others; but before doing so there is one general witness at the head of the list who should probably come first of all, as I understand his statement will be of even a wider scope. I shall, therefore, call first the name of Myles Macinnes, Portree.

MYLES MACINNES, Merchant, Portree (32). Myles Macinnes.

7768. *The Chairman.*—You belong to this district?—I belong to this district.

7769. And to the township of Drumfearn, I believe?—Yes.

7770. Do you propose to submit a written statement?—I have a written statement here which deals generally with the parish, and gives the acreage under farmers and under crofters, &c. Part of it again deals with a general statement regarding the island. I may say that apart from the interest I have taken in the proceedings of this Commission, I was instructed by the League of which I am secretary to make a general statement before the Commission left the island.

7771. Read it, if you please.—The lands in the parish of Sleat at present in the hands of farmers, which should be immediately available for crofters' holdings, and which can be cultivated to profit, are the following farms, the table showing area, total rent, and rent per acre:—

Farm.	Acreage.	Total Rent.	Rent per acre.
		£ s	s. d.
Tormore, Gillen, and Ostaig	9,450	325 0	0 8¼
Knock	1,750	180 0	2 1½
Ord	6,410	240 0	0 9
Duisdalemore	1,040	73 10	1 4½
Kinloch	8,320	200 0	0 5¾
	26,970	1018 10	0 9½

7772. That includes both arable and grazing?—Yes, both arable and grazing. Thus there is in Sleat an area of 26,970 acres, occupied by five individuals at a rent of £1018, 10s., which shows the average price per acre paid by them to be 9½d. Now consider the area occupied by the crofting population of Sleat. I find that the entire ground, including arable, outrun, and common pasture, tenanted by the

Isleornsay, Skye.

Myles Macinnes.

crofters of Sleat, amounts to 12,018 acres 0 roods 23 poles. For this there is a rent paid of £623; this is the fair rent, which is at the rate of 1s. 0½d. per acre. The number of crofters in the parish is 247 or thereabout, showing that the average individual croft, including arable, outrun, and grazing, is but a modest 49⅓ acres. This amount of land is adequate grazing for no more than sixteen sheep; in other words, the average crofter has an extent of land sufficient to rear only sixteen head of sheep.

7773. Next let us turn to one or two ordinary crofting villages, to examine the actual condition of things in particular instances. Drumfearn in the north of Sleat has 68 acres 2 roods 31 poles of arable land, 75 acres 3 roods 31 poles of outrun, and 1340 acres pasture, amounting in all to about 1486 acres. The whole rent for the village is £54, 19s., being at the rate of 8½d. per acre. On this land they keep an entire stock of the equivalent of 740 sheep. This shows that the actual pasture for a sheep is but two acres, including arable and all. Take next the township of Camuscross, further south. Here the total area is 495 acres 1 rood 3 poles. The gross rent of the village is £69, 15s., showing that the rent is charged at the rate of 2s. 10d. an acre. Leaving the parish of Sleat, I find that on Lord Macdonald's estate in the parish of Strath, the farm of Kyle pays only 5d. per acre, and Boreraig and Suisnish 10d. per acre, while in the same parish the crofting township of Harrapol pays 11½d. per acre. On the same estate, and in the parish of Portree, the farm of Glenvarigil, with an area of 3740 acres and a rent of £110, pays at the rate of 7d. per acre, while the adjacent crofting township of Penifiler is charged 8d. per acre. Further north, in the same parish, the crofters of Drumuie are charged 1s. 1d. per acre, while the large farm of Scorrybreck, which has historic, agricultural, and pastoral fame, is rented only at the same figure. On the Kilmuir estates, the property of the heirs of the late Mr. Baird, the large farmers pay 1s. 1½d. per acre on the average, while the crofters of Bornaskitaig are rented on the average at 4s. 10d. per acre.

7774. So much for indisputable statistics, which are perfectly representative of the respective land rents charged against farmers and crofters all over the island; now for the examination of these facts, and for the stating of justifiable conclusions. Farming Sleat, then, pays 9½d. per acre, crofting Sleat 1s. 0½d.; a difference of 3d. per acre cheaper for the farmer. Thus the landlord gets 3d. per acre more from the crofter than from the farmer, and it is therefore plain that Lord Macdonald loses annually in pence three times the number of acres occupied by farmers, *i.e.*, £337, 2s. 6d., by the fact of his having farmers and not crofters as tenants of those 26,970 acres. But the worst aspect for us of this fact is that according to the justice meted out to the farmers, the crofters of Sleat are overcharged to the extent of, in pence, three times the number of acres occupied by them, *i.e.*, £150, 4s. 6d. annually. But this by the way. What I wish to make plain is that 3d. per acre of difference embodies far more injustice than the figure superficially shows. For let it be remembered that the crofters hold by selection the worst places available, and that the very fact of their being left in or sent to these holdings is proof that the land was considered too inferior for a farm. Secondly, it must be taken into consideration that the proportion of arable to outrun and pasture in crofters' holdings is enormously less than the corresponding proportion in large farms, for the simple reason that the greater part of those farms have once been cultivated by crofters.

7775. Can you state the proportion?—No, I have not got the actual figures of the porportion. Thirdly, the landlord never gave assistance to crofters for in any manner equipping their lands or houses, while such assistance he does give to farmers. For these three reasons, then, it is outrageous that crofters should be charged more than the agricultural value of the land, taking that to be for the sake of the argument, what the farmer pays. But so far from its being just that the crofters should pay more than the farmers, it is gross injustice that they should pay as much. For let it be remembered that the crofter has from of yore been busy in improving the soil. He has, in fact, reclaimed the whole of it. Of old, when his land was well fattened by improvements, and when it pleased his master's eye, marching orders were given, and the sheep run substituted. This has been the recognised historical routine. Moreover, when there came to be no worse place to which to remove the crofter, and when forcible emigration began to be resisted, the rent was carefully raised on his miserable patch. In fact, the crofting system has been a huge machine used by the landlords for draining bogs, and pasting a depth of soil to the faces of precipices, and then came the eviction or the increase of rent. In inevitable succession there recurred improvement, eviction, improvement, increase of rent. The crofter has increased the value of the land for the landlord, and for such kindness he receives the following tokens of esteem:—he is sent to land of worse than prairie value if possible, he has to pay for it more than the farmer pays for the improved land, and in his improvement he gets no assistance.

Isleornsay, Skye.

Myles Macinnes.

7776. My conclusion, therefore, is that the crofter never got a fair chance, as his industry was never encouraged. But I am coming to conclusions more thoroughgoing than this. If we look at the farms of Skye, we will see that of all the forty-five farms only eight are tenanted by practical farmers depending entirely upon their farming profits. Fourteen are held by proprietors, eight by hotel-keepers, four by sporting-tenants, five by gentlemen of independent means, and six by merchants. With all these gentlemen farmers, sportsmen, and general absentees, it is obvious on the face of it that rents are not fixed by the actual value of the land in a competitive market, but by the extent of the superfluity of spend-thrift coin. Land, in short, is a sporting luxury, for which a fancy price is paid. To prove the truth of this allegation, I shall mention a number of excellent practical farmers who, in my recollection, had either to make haste to escape from competition with these fancy farmers, or had to succumb to the extortion. I begin with one who was an extensive farmer here, and who has some connection with the parish yet,—I refer to Mr Macdonald, Tormore, who still has the Isleornsay stores. Then comes Mr Mackinnon, who had the farm of Kyle and Kinloch; Mr Martin, who succeeded him, and who had to give it up; Mr Bower, Strathaird—some of those that I have mentioned are dead, but all the same they had to give up farming—Mr McRae, Camusunary; Mr McRae, Glasnakill; Mr McRae, Glenvarigil; Mr Macleod of Scorrybreck; Mr Macleod, Duntulm; Mr McCrae, Ose; and Mr Mitchell, Kingsburgh. These were all obliged to give up their holdings—some of them were ruined, and others gave them up in time. Nothing can in my opinion account for the general failure of the man who depends entirely on his farm but an exorbitant rent charged. Thus it is clear that the farmers are over-rented; and much more, therefore, are the crofters. This also shows that the crofters have stood the strain of hard times and injustice quite as well as the farmers.

7777. In regard to remedies for the present grievances, I beg to submit some clauses which I proposed some time ago as desirable amendments to the present Crofters Act.

7778. The following are the proposals which I made with the concurrence of some and the most of the people of Skye, and those that were taking an interest in their behalf:—

1. That Government loans be given through the County Council to stock new and enlarged holdings, and to build suitable steadings of properly slated houses, and that the loan, interest and capital, be repaid by annual instalments extending over thirty years.

Isleornsay, Skye.

Myles Macinnes.

There are two or three reasons in connection with this that I should like the Commission to look at, and I may just briefly mention these. There is the disadvantage of having to cut rushes for thatching the houses, instead of using it for wintering their own sheep. That it keeps a man mostly all the year round to keep three houses in proper thatch. If the house was slated the man could use his labour entirely for improving the soil.

2. That each district committee report to the County Council the loans considered necessary for each district, and that the County Council investigate the claims, and be directly responsible to Government for collecting the successive instalments.

3. That loans be not given to fewer than five applicants.

4. That no townships be eligible for a loan without first putting their sheep on a joint stock or club farm system.

5. That every company or township that gets a Government loan must keep a qualified shepherd in constant employment, and that the shepherd be responsible to two men annually appointed and to the parish or district Councillor.

6. That it be illegal to keep on a holding more than the specified stock, but that a shareholder may let his grazing to the extent of his deficit in horses, cows, or any other animals grazed in the township not in the joint or sheep stock.

7. That any crofter or number of crofters who are able and willing to stock their own share of the joint stock township independent of Government assistance may become shareholders.

8. That no landlord be entitled to let shootings—(this is perhaps rather strong according to the present ideas)—that no landlord be entitled to let shootings or loch and river fishing on township holdings, but that the township singly or collectively be so entitled; and that it be part of the shepherd's duty to protect the game and fish.

I hold that the landlord should only get one rent, and I hold that it is not good enough that the landlord would put a man on my croft or on my farm to rear up animals which I put down as vermin, and that he should be interested in making these as profitable and as plentiful as possible; and that the more rent he gets for this grouse moor or forests, or rabbits, or whatever it is, the more they eat of the crofters' stock or crop. Therefore I hold that if these rents are to be given to the landlord, you never get at a fair rent for the crofter, while he is encouraged by keeping a man on to keep stock that is eating up what belonged to the farmer or to the crofter. I think that the one rent should be fixed, so that the man who had the land should reap everything that was growing on it or feeding on it.

9. That all proceeds of joint stock be banked in name of each township till the annual balance, when after payment of expenses (1) his due share shall be given to each shareholder who did not receive Government aid; (2) the annual Government instalment made over to the District Committee, who shall remit the same to the County Council; and (3) the balance divided among the shareholders.

10. That joint stock and houses be security for the Government loan till the payment of the last instalment; that rent accruing from shootings and fishings be security for the rent. I suppose the crofters then would be interested in letting to a sportsman the ground game or winged game or fowls, which although they would get full liberty of themselves, one man would take advantage of it and another would not. I think they could make something out of it by having the whole thing. It would be to their advantage, and it would not be too much, to have a reasonable amount of shooting on the lands, but I would give this as a security to the landlord for the rent. This is the statement, my lord.

7779. Is that the whole of it?—That is the whole of it.

7780. Do you submit that statement on behalf of all the townships that are being heard to-day?—Yes, and I may add a few remarks about one or two townships. In the Aird, there are twenty crofts, and there are forty-six crofters, I think. The cottars are not very numerous in this end of Sleat; there are a few, but not so many as in the other end of Skye. They have very small holdings as a rule, and the township of Aird is very much congested. It lies near Tormore and Gillan, and marches across to Calligarry on this side, and on to Achnacloich and Tarskavaig, and Tokavaig comes between them and Ord. The farm of Ord marches with Drumfearn, so that the farms are contiguous to all the crofter holdings. Then we come to Teangue and Saasaig on the other side of Knock; then to Camuscross and Baravaig; the south part of Knock marches with it, and is quite suitable and within easy access of it. Then there is Duisdalemore marching with Drumfearn, and Kinloch on the other side. Kyle Rhea is a very small township, with very small crofts; they have first-class pasture beside them, but they have no sheep, and depend entirely on the fishing. I know there are some in the parish of Sleat, who would migrate, and some places suitable for migration, but the most of it is more suited for enlargement of holdings to the people who already hold it. If some people were taken out of the most congested townships the rest would have good land in the neighbourhood to increase their arable and pasture land.

7781. You have given us a number of figures here; are these the result of your own calculations?—Yes. I may be a little wrong in them.

7782. What I mean is, do you make yourself responsible for these figures, so far as they are correct?—Yes, entirely.

7783. This statement is written out by yourself?—By myself entirely. I think I am pretty correct in the figures, but I may have made some mistakes. The reason why I made up the comparison as to the farmers' and the crofters' rent was that I had been hearing so much said in previous evidence in regard to the larger rent that landlords were getting from farmers, and more benefit. I believe if I had access to their books for the last twenty years I would be able to show that the landlords have lost fully as much by the farmers as by the crofters, in the island of Skye. I went over a few statistics dealing with other places in Skye, and I found that the crofter pays the higher rent.

7784. *Mr Shaw Stewart.*—I should like to ask a few questions about the statement you have read, which is of some importance. First, with regard to your comparison of the rate per acre, paid by the farm land and the crofter land respectively: comparing a rate of 9½d. with one of 1s. 0½d., might not that show that there is a large extent of poor land on the farms, as well as good land?—No, it cannot show that, because any man who has any knowledge of land will see at a glance that in all Skye the best land is farmer's; that is an indisputable fact.

7785. But looking at the figures only, without seeing the land, would it not occur to any one that that is a possible explanation of the difference in the figures? On paper a smaller rent per acre, with a larger acreage, might mean that there is a great amount of rough hill ground, which would not bring in so much rent under crofters?—But I will tell you that is not the case with all those farms that I have mentioned. I know them intimately, and have walked through them, and while that might be the case elsewhere, it is not so here. It might be put in that way, certainly.

7786. It is open to that construction?—You could put anything on the paper.

7787. *Mr Sutherland.*—Mr Shaw Stewart means that if that were the case, it would be an explanation?—Yes.

7788. *Mr Shaw Stewart.*—I don't want to alter your opinion, but I only wish to point out that figures are capable of more than one construction. Then you go on to say that by letting their land in this way

Isleornsay, Skye. Myles Macinnes.

to large farmers instead of to crofters, the landlords lose a good deal of rent that they might otherwise gain.—Yes, I hold that strongly.

7789. But you went on to say that it is unjust that crofters should pay as much rent as farmers?—So it is, because they improve all their own land; the farmer gets money for improvements, he gets houses and fences erected for him, but the crofter gets nothing.

7790. But those two statements rather contradict each other?—No, I don't think so, because each deals with its own side of the case. The farmer here gets houses built for him, and he gets the benefit of the crofter who has been removed, who brought the land into an agricultural state. I will not say that it was brought into first-class agricultural condition, but it was taken in by the crofter from the state of nature to the state of green, which it now shows. If you lift a crofter township, you will find the land is worth half as much rent again for the next twenty years; after that it deteriorates in value as it goes under moss. In this country I believe the land is reduced too much by the cultivation of the crofters, and on the other hand it is allowed to go too much to a state of nature by the farming tenants.

7791. Follow me for a moment. You say the landlords have lost an opportunity by not letting a great amount of this area to crofters?—I believe so.

7792. They might get more than the rate of 9½d.?—They might.

7793. You then compare that with land which is at present let to crofters at 1s. 0½d. per acre, yet you say that crofters really ought not to pay as much as farmers; therefore is 1s. 0½d. too high a rate?—It is much too high in the present circumstances. That does not affect my conclusion that both are over-rented, but the crofter higher rented than the farmer.

7794. Surely it comes to this, that there would not be such a very large inducement to landlords to let to crofters, if the crofters are too heavily rented at present? If this land were to be let to crofters (I quite understand your view that it is unexhausted land) it would have to be let at a lower rate than the crofters have been paying hitherto?—Yes, that has been proved by the Crofters Commission. The rents have been reduced already by the Crofters Commission, and I hold they have no right to be charged on their own improvements.

7795. Now with regard to these forty-five farms in Skye, I don't quite understand on what principle you have taken them. Are they taken at random, or from certain districts?—I actually know the men personally who occupy them.

7796. I don't question that, but I don't know them all. Have you taken a farm here and a farm there, or how?—These are the whole of the farms in Skye, every one of them, except that I omitted from them some home grounds such as Lord Macdonald's policies at Armadale, and the policies of Macleod, and places of that sort.

7797. You speak about fancy farmers, and the superfluity of spendthrift coin, as if there was no work at all for crofters in the laying out of the grounds of the fancy farms, or in making roads. Is there none of the superfluity of coin going to the crofters at all?—No, and it had not been going to the crofters. The benefits that the crofters got in my recollection from being beside a sheep farmer were very much worse than they are to-day.

7798. Pardon me a moment; I am not speaking only of the sheep farms, I am speaking of the fourteen proprietors, the eight hotel-keepers, the four sporting tenants, the five independent gentlemen, and the six merchants.—Some of them are absentees, living in another place; and I hold that no man can be a benefit to a community unless he lives among them.

7799. That is a matter of opinion, not a matter of fact.—It is a matter of fact I am about to give you. I know the farmers in Skye, and I say that a crofter spends more in the community, and is more useful to the community; if he could pay his way and support his family, he would be of more benefit than the farmer.

7800. That is further than my question went. My question only went so far as to ask if none of this superfluous coin went in wages to crofters at all?—Oh no, crofters get no share of it, nothing worth mentioning. You may count a few shepherds who are engaged in a place, but that is nothing; they are only getting a fair day's wage for their work. The farmer is bound to have these men; but it is nothing in comparison with the profit the crofter would have in having the land itself.

7801. That brings me to my next question. If the crofters were living on this land that you speak of, and the fancy farmers were no longer there, would there be any work for the crofters to rely on, in building houses or keeping up the roads?—There is nothing for the crofter just now; he does not get a day's work from the farmer. I was referring to shepherds, not crofters.

7802. I am speaking of other places besides sheep farms.—Every one of these is a sheep farm. There is no arable farm that has been used for work. There is no labour on any of them. I remember when a crofter might be employed in smearing the sheep; but now, since dipping came in, there is not a copper spent on the crofter.

7803. What work would the crofters get to rely on besides the working of their own crofts?—They would not require any work. And they would not have the same burdens to keep up as they have now, because every one would have land, and there is plenty land to keep them. Many of them become a burden on the parish at present, but the rates would be relieved by having the land more equitably distributed. I do not at all advocate that all the crofts should be on a level; I think they should be varying in size according to the place. Some of them would have the liberty of going to the fishing when it came round, and they would be just much about the same as they are at present; only I would like to get the place thinned out, so that there would be room to live.

7804. I understand your point, and I won't trouble you to make a statement in reply to every question, but I just want to know this. You think that except for those crofters who would be fishing, the other crofters who were not fishermen would not have to rely on outside work?—No, they certainly would not.

7805. You have considered that point?—Yes, I have often thought of it, and I see it daily.

7806. Well, but they would have not only to maintain themselves and their families, but they would have to repay the loan that you spoke of?—Yes. I speak as a man who has been actually working at this work myself; I know what it is, and what time it takes a man to thatch a house, and to keep in order three houses, a byre, a barn, and a stable, even without the storms that we have here in Skye. I know the labour that it is, and I know that a man would actually earn more than the interest on what the dwelling house would be.

7807. How?—By wages anywhere.

7808. Where would he get these wages?—He would get the wages out of his own soil if the croft was increased. He could spend more time in trenching it.

7809. But he would not get wages for trenching his own croft?—It would come in in the shape of wages. If he had land, and could spend on his land what he would spend in cutting and keeping in order the houses that he has to keep up to-day, I say that in two or three years you would see quite a different country.

7810. I quite understand your point about the cultivation of the croft, but what I want to point out is this. I may as well state that as far as I have been able to see very few witnesses wish to have a croft inland. Many witnesses have come

Isleornsay, Skye.

Myles Macinnes.

before us, and said they would rather have a croft near the sea where they could get to the fishing or something of that sort, and I want to find out whether in your opinion the crofters could maintain themselves entirely by their own crofts without getting wages for work elsewhere?—Certainly they would, and be very comfortable.

7811. But just now you said something about wages?—I compared wages with the man's work; I compare a man's work in earning a day's pay with the man keeping up his crofting.

7812. Improving his croft?—Ay, even improving his croft. A man who had not so much as would keep him improving his croft would earn as much in the ordinary way as a labourer in the country.

7813. But with the country in the condition in your mind, under crofters, what labour would they chiefly look to?—Well, there would be a great deal more labour in the country under the proposals that I made than they have just now.

7814. Such as?—Roadmaking, masons, joiners, and all trades would be busy in the place, whereas the farmer at present, with miles of land has only two or three shepherds, and he has all, even to his own clothes and boots, from London. There is nothing done in the country; the tradesmen get nothing and the crofters get nothing; and I failed to count in the township one out of 60, or even one out of 100, that gets even a day's pay.

7815. Then you think there could be work by cutting up the farms?—Far more work.

7816. And you think the crofters would need this work, because they would not be able to maintain themselves and repay the loan solely by working their own crofts?—Certainly, and every other work that would be in the parish in connection with that.

7817. Just answer my point. I don't wish to stop your statement; I understand what you mean, but do you agree with the opinion that a crofter must look for some outside work at some periods of the year besides the produce of his own croft, to maintain himself and repay his loan?—No, I do not, if he gets anything like a reasonable rent, and enough land to keep himself going, he must work.

7818. We are speaking of the ordinary croft of 20 acres.—With that croft the man should live independent of outside assistance.

7819. The croft that is desired, I mean?—Yes, even with 15 acres of arable and outrun for one horse and about 100 sheep a man could live without being in the reverence of any man, and as independent as any man in Scotland.

7820. He would not have to work?—On his own croft.

7821. Yes, but not for any other man?—No, not for any other man.

7822. Then there is one more question. You speak of the shootings in the hands of the proprietors now, and say it is to the interest of the shooting tenants to keep up the game which destroyed the crofters' crops, and therefore the only remedy would be to put down the game altogether?—Or give the game to the tacksman or to the tenants.

7823. Well, but if you give it to the tenants with the view of letting the shooting, you will have the same evil all over again?—No, they would have the benefit of the land themselves. They would see to what extent they could allow this to go, and they would soon find out the benefit of it.

7824. But everybody knows that a very few rabbits may do a great deal of damage in one night. —The winged game and others will do some damage, but the point just now is that it is the proprietor's interest to keep these plentiful, and the tenant's ruin.

7825. I understand what you are driving at there. But if the townships are to look to these shootings to make something out of them to help to repay this loan, it will be to the interest of the township to keep up the game, otherwise they will have very inferior shootings to offer in the market?—Certainly they would, but the benefit would be to themselves.

Isleornsay, Skye.

Myles Macinnes.

7826. But their crops would get as much damage from the crofters' covey of grouse or the crofters' rabbits as from the landlord's, and they would eat just as much?—Yes, they would eat as much, but the crofters would have the profit of the whole thing; whereas at present their crops are eaten, and they get nothing for it.

7827. The damage would be done all the same?—The damage of it would be the same, but the injustice would not be the same.

7828. But still the damage would be done?—The damage would be done, if they allowed it to get very high; but they would have the thing in their own hands and could manage it to their own pleasure. I gave that statement in not as a benefit, but as a security to the landlord for the rent.

7829. But what I want to point out to you is that you can't eat your cake and have it too. If the township has a shooting to let, that means a certain amount of game on it; and if you have a certain amount of game, it is very difficult to keep game within limits. You must either have game or no game at all, and certainly that applies to rabbits. You cannot have what you call a "reasonable amount" of rabbits?—I am not taking rabbits into consideration, because at present they are not game, but I am talking of the ordinary winged game.

7830. Well, if the township wanted to get a good rent for their shooting, they would have to keep up a good stock of winged game; the damage which you say is done by the winged game to the crops would injure a good deal of the income which the crofter would derive from his croft?—But they would be able to see what profit and loss was in it.

7831. Well, but I am afraid they would see the loss?—If that is the case, then the loss is very great just now; it is enormous just now.

7832. If the loss is very great just now, it would be just as great then?—But they would have the more profit.

7833. They would have the profit of the shooting, you mean?—Yes.

7834. If they reduced the head of game, they would not get much for the shooting?—No, certainly not. But there are some moors in which winged game would live without doing much damage; they could be bred there and live there.

7835. What I wish to point out is that in a place with a shooting where the game does damage now, if you wish the crofters to flourish in the future, you must put down the game, and write it off your security —No, the winged game could be to a certain extent kept within limits under a shepherd, without very materially damaging the ground, and that would be a reasonable way of giving a little sport if the people wish to have it.

7836. But for a very little sport you would get a very low rent?—I don't myself count anything on the rent; I don't attach much importance to the rent.

7837. But you put it down as a security?—So it would be. But the landlord gets more from it just now, and it is entirely fed on the crofters' land.

7838. But you would either have to keep up the game pretty much as it is now, or else you would have to put it down altogether, and give up the shooting rent for the township?—If the crofters got the land, I suppose they would willingly take the responsibility of seeing what would happen to the winged game, and I have no doubt they would soon find out the advantage of it. I know what I would do with it.

7839. What would you do with it?—I would encourage them in some moors where they would not do much damage. The shepherd would be the only man looking after them, whereas just now there are keepers and shepherds and others.

7840. *Mr Sutherland.*—You have supplied figures regarding the relative rent paid by large farmers and

Isleornsay, Skye. Myles Macinnes.

by crofters, and you have made out that the farmer is paying 9½d. per acre against the crofter's 1s. 0½d. May I ask you where you got the acreage?—I did not take it off the Ordnance Survey map myself, but a friend of mine took it off for me. Part of the figures, those relating to Kilmuir, I took from the figures already given by the factor. I have no reason to believe that I am in any way above the acreage, because I took the figure from the other side, not from any one who had a bias.

7841. I am glad we have got them, because we were promised them and the promise was not kept. I thought the difference would be much greater. What distinction do you draw between a large croft and a farm?—Very few of the crofters we have here pay above £5 or £6, they have small pieces altogether.

7842. Is it altogether a matter of size?—Altogether a matter of size.

7843. So that a small sheep farm could be called a large croft, and a large croft a small farm?—The very same; I see no difference between them: in fact the word croft is a new name altogether.

7844. It is not a Highland word?—No, it is not.

7845. It was absolutely unknown in the Highlands before the time of the clearances?—Yes, it was unknown to me in my younger days; I never heard of it until after growing up. It was always "tenants."

7846. And the crofter system was formed for what purpose?—It was formed for reclaiming the land. I know one landlord in Skye that we had before the Crofters Commission, Captain Macdonald of Waternish, who admitted that he removed a township three times to reclaim land and to take in others.

7847. Now, as regards the relative value of the land, you stated, and I believe rightly stated, that the land in possession of the large farmer is very much better than the land in the occupation of the crofter at present?—Yes.

7848. Better as to what?—Better in quality, and better in situation, and in that way better in grazing.

7849. Why is it better in grazing?—Because it has places from which crofters have been removed; and if you remove a crofter township to-day, the land is worth a great deal more to a sheep farmer for a number of years, because they leave it green.

7850. What made it green?—Their cultivation.

7851. So it is the crofters in times past who gave the value to sheep farms that they have now?—The whole of it, in fact more than it is now worth, because it has now deteriorated.

7852. Why has it deteriorated?—Because it is growing moss, and rushes, and heather.

7853. What is the thing to put it right in your opinion?—Cultivation again; that is the only thing that I know. And the proprietors, as far as I can see, have realised that, because they had lands that they could not get anything like the rent for the large farm, and then they were turned into deer forest or shooting.

7854. Is it within your knowledge that the land under farms at the present time supports less stock per acre than it did before?—I put that down in the statement. Taking Drumfearn, the nearest township to here, I found that reducing the whole stock to sheep, and taking the whole area, arable along with pasture, they had only two acres for each sheep on an average. Excluding the arable, it would be something like one acre, and I don't know how they are making their livelihood. They are taking far more out of the land, even with their poor cultivation, than the tacksman.

7855. Going back for a moment to the rent, the computation of the rent you gave was taken, I presume, from the Report of the Crofters Commission?—Yes.

7856. And if you had taken the old rent instead of the fair rent, the difference would be very much more striking?—Very much greater.

7857. What was the general reduction given by the Commission in the places you have referred to?—Some 30 to 50 per cent.

7858. So that if you take that old rent, this comparison would be very much larger?—From 30 to 50 per cent. more.

7859. Then I think you mentioned with regard to sheep farms that a number of the occupants of them were non-resident?—Yes; that has been so.

7860. Now when large farmers are resident, do you find them very useful public men as a rule?—No, I don't know that they do any use as public men.

7861. Do they take an interest in the public matters of the district?—Very little; perhaps some of them who would like to get in as members of the Parochial Boards, or of the School Boards, or the County Council, may take a little, but as for encouraging the crofters about them, or in any way associating with them, they are of no value in the place.

7862. Do they look upon themselves as having their home elsewhere, and being to some extent strangers to this community?—In fact, they are the most of them complete strangers to this community. You may find one here and there a native, but very few.

7863. From the remarks in your statement I take it that it would be safe to say that the large farming system has been as great a failure as the crofter system?—I think so; and were it not backed up by the capitalist sportsmen, it would have been a much greater failure. The only way to look at it in which it is profitable is to the landlord, and when it would not pay the landlord, then he had to resort to letting the shootings.

7864. What your statement amounts to then is that while the rent for the grazing has been going down, the rent for sporting purposes has been going up?—Going up.

7865. Well now, with regard to the comparative value to a community of a man who works for wages—days' wages—and a man who works for profit to himself at the end of the year, I think you expressed your opinion that a man who supports his family in comfort is a greater benefit to the trade of the community than a man who holds a large area of land?—Most certainly, that is my opinion.

7866. Taking the case of tenants who occupy these large tracts, as a rule there is just one family of them?—One family and a few shepherds.

7867. Now take the case of the local shopkeeper. I think you have some experience in that way yourself?—Yes, I have had some experience that way.

7868. Do you get much of your custom from large farmers?

7869. *The Chairman.*—Perhaps Mr Macinnes does not wish to go into that. *Witness.*—I have no objection in the world.

7870. *Mr Sutherland.*—Well, I will put it in this way. How do they compare generally?—Perhaps I am scarcely an independent judge of that, because they don't come near me at all personally. But without making the matter personal to myself, every merchant that I know in the country depends on the success of the crofters either as wage-earners or as good fishermen. The farmer is not looked on by the shopkeeper as of any benefit, and is not counted on. Even although the whole of the farmers in Skye to-day were to be cleared out without paying a penny to the shopkeepers of Skye, there would not be a third of the loss to the shopkeepers that there would be in the case of the crofters. In fact merchants would not miss from them all that the tacksmen buy in a year.

7871. Then you of course believe that the larger the number of men who are in comfort and who have families to support, the more trade there is?—Yes, in every way.

7872. I suppose you take it as a general thing that it is better for a man to work for himself than to work for another?—I know that a man will work more when he sees an advantage to himself than he will work for another.

Isleornsay, Skye.

Myles Macinnes.

7873. And you also, no doubt, believe that it tends to better habits in a man when he is his own master?—Yes.

7874. And that he gets more thrifty, and he will look more to the future?—Yes.

7875. And that he will also gather some capital?—Yes. There is one remark you have put me in mind of about the crofters. My belief is that the smallness of the croft and the continual cropping is not the only reason for the deterioration of the holdings in value. Until the passing of the Crofters Act they were so much terrified by the increase of rent and by the evictions, and by the threatening so much of removals given although not acted on, that they got discouraged.

7876. In connection with that, do you see an increased tendency on their part to erect better houses since the passing of the Act?—I see a marked improvement in the country.

7877. Not only in this neighbourhood, but in other parts of Skye?—In every part of Skye, there is quite an independent feeling about rising above their present surroundings.

7878. You speak more generally than in reference to houses, in other things also?—Yes, in everything. I believe that were it not for the bad times since they had got the advantage of fixity of tenure, there would be a great deal more improvements made than there is at present, even with the small patches they have.

7879. Do you think there is a general inclination on the part of the people of Skye to remain close to the seashore?—Not a general inclination, but there is some. The reason is this. There are some lochs here round Skye where the herring comes occasionally—Loch Slapin is a very good place—I buy fish myself, I have a small boat buying herring, and I know well enough what it is; it comes at nights and perhaps there will be a year before it comes to the loch again. When a man who has perhaps a hundred sheep on the hills has the opportunity he may take advantage of a night on the lochs when it comes. But to depend on it for a living, no man can make a living as a fisherman on this coast.

7880. Are you of opinion that those wishes that were expressed yesterday were dictated by the fact that the people were poor, and all the capital they had was already sunk in the fishing?—That is so. The men who have been following the fishing for some time back are poorer, if anything, than the crofters.

7881. You refer to Luib and those other places?—Yes, they are poorer than those men who do not depend on the fishing at all.

7882. There is one matter that has been mentioned, and I am only going to ask you one question about it. We have heard of emigration as a means of curing the state of matters that exists in the Highlands. Do you know if there was any disinclination on the part of the people of the Highlands to emigrate?—I know that they have all along been disinclined to emigrate, and that they looked on emigration as a way of forcing them from the land.

7883. But as a matter of fact, do you admit that there has been less emigration from the Highlands of Scotland than from any other part?—I know there has been more emigration; that is my opinion; in fact, there has been too much; and then, look at the way in which it has been encouraged, the best men were encouraged to go away, and the worst left at home.

7884. How were they encouraged?—In this way: they had been encouraged by some men who were interested. In my days I did not know that the men were interested, but they were taking the most able men, the men who were most thrifty, and encouraging them to go away.

7885. Is it not in accordance with your experience that the more comfortable a man is in the world, the less fear he has of emigration?—Yes; it is the poorest man always that stops at home.

7886. And if you want rational emigration from a country, don't you think the best thing to do is to put the people first in a position, so that they can see what the world is like?—That is entirely my opinion. I know of cases where families were brought up on small crofts, and where the sons and daughters when they grew up went south to work one by one, and sent home every copper they could spare of their earnings to support their families. When they got old they came back to their homes, and that is the way to a certain extent that the crofts were overcrowded. The man that could give some education to his family and some advantages could lift them up higher, and they had no fear of emigration; every one would be looking for a better place. I believe that if the crofters got justice, you would have a difficulty in getting the people to stop at home.

7887. *Mr. Gordon.*—You quoted the crofting township of Bornaskitaig, I think, at 4s. 10d. per acre?—Yes.

7888. Is there any hill pasture attached to it?—There is some—a little, I think.

7889. How much?—I am not sure; I just took the average.

7890. But would this 4s. 10d. not practically apply to arable lands or intersected pasture?—It applies to arable and pasture.

7891. And field pasture, not hill pasture?—Field pasture as well.

7892. And how much would there be?—I don't know.

7893. But that is a rather important statement to make without being able to go into detail?—I did not go into detail, because it would have taken too long.

7894. But you have given other townships here in detail, very clearly and distinctly?—Because I was then giving the parish of Sleat; but I mentioned a few other places as specimens of the island generally. But I know they have not very much hill pasture.

7895. I don't want to trouble you to make a long statement, but practically you don't know, you see?—No, but I know it is not very large. But I may mention Monkstadt on the other side; that is exactly the same land, that the people reclaimed.

7896. Practically it applies to arable and town pasture?—Yes, town pasture. But as a proof against that, Monkstadt is the very same quality of soil, taken in by crofters.

7897. I quite understand that the people took in the ground themselves, but the area applies to arable and town pasture?—I don't give any weight to the arable of the croft.

7898. You also say that previous to the evictions the crofters had improved their holdings from which they were evicted, and that these old crofter holdings now make the best part of the larger farms?—Yes.

7899. How can you reconcile that with the statement that the principal improvements they made were from peat bogs, and from precipices to which they pasted earth?—That is their present position just now.

7900. And then they were evicted, you said?—Yes, I will tell you places from which they were evicted.

7901. But it did not refer to these?—It refers to Boreraig and Suisnish if you like: there is there some of the rocky, thin ground, which the people had actually to put soil on. Some of the ground is quite shallow.

7902. I have seen the place myself, and I know there is a part of it very poor land; but we were told yesterday by one of the delegates who represented that place, that the people migrated or emigrated themselves of their own accord, because the soil was so poor?—Some of them; well, I was listening to the evidence, and I did not take it up that way. I know the man: he said some of them emigrated of their own will, and some were actually put

Isleornsay, Skye.

Myles Macinnes.

out. The man who made that statement was brought up beside me; his own father was evicted. There was a man who died in a sheiling in Suisnish after being put out of the house.

7903. You state that the crofters get no benefit from money expended in the island?—No.

7904. At the sitting yesterday we were told that Sir William Mackinnon had expended a sum of £12,000 on his property, principally in improvements, road-making and fencing, and draining. Did not the crofters in that district get part of that labour, and benefit to that extent?—Certainly, but I don't put that down, as the man was wanting to make the roads to his own mansion house. There is labour going on in the south all the same.

7905. But is it not better for a man to get local labour, than to go south and seek it?—But it is far better for the man to get the land.

7906. I don't dispute that; but if the man has to labour to get money, is it not better for him to get it in his immediate neighbourhood?—Very good, but no landlord will give labour unless he requires it for his own use.

7907. I don't suppose any landlord would create work to give employment to people except in a great emergency. Now you stated that a croft of 15 acres arable and 100 sheep would be sufficient to keep up a man. Could you give us in a few words the details of the income obtained from such a croft?—Not in a few words. You have had so many details of this kind already that I did not prepare myself with the figures. I thought my statement was already rather long.

7908. Could you do it now?—Not in the meantime, standing here. Though I know the matter thoroughly, I could not go into a profit and loss account for the year, showing the labour and the expenditure, and the proceeds; I could not do it off hand.

7909. Do you know any croft in your part of the country, of that size or larger, in which a man has sufficient to live on and keep his family without working outside his croft?—No, but I know lands in Skye that are not a third, or a half of it at anyrate, that are very near making ends meet.

7910. Without any foreign aid?—Without any foreign aid. I have known them for years require very little assistance.

7911. Could you mention any one of them?—Well, I am not going to mention names in connection with that, or perhaps I might be giving offence to some people.

7912. It would be rather an important thing, because I would go and see the croft. How do you make up your souming, will you tell us that? I want that for my own information, and for the information of the Commission. You said you reduced the souming of a croft to sheep; how many sheep do you put to a cow?—Four sheep to a cow, and eight sheep to a horse. I think I am a little under the mark, as some people say six should go to a cow, and twelve to a horse; but I believe the eight sheep would leave the place as bare as a horse; and about four as a cow.

7913. I think you are not too high at anyrate?—Not too high; no.

7914. In the statement you read you gave us certain proposals with regard to the disposal of the club farm proceeds. Now I may just put the question direct; why did you not include the payment of the rent before the division of the money, as a first charge upon the proceeds?—Perhaps that is an omission. I put down the stock as security for the government loan.

7915. Would you be prepared to put down the rent as the first charge?—Yes, I would put down the rent as the first charge.

7916. I think that is an important admission.—Yes, I am quite prepared to do that, and I believe there need be no fear, if what I propose was given. I would have no objections myself.

7917. It would be a very important matter if that was agreed to.—I would take in hand myself, if the crofters got the land, to act. I am quite confident that they would work harmoniously together, and I would feel no difficulty as a County Councillor in helping them to work it out.

Isleornsay, Skye.

Myles Macinnes.

7918. You have told me that you would like the graduated system of holding?—Yes.

7919. I quite agreed with you. Now you have given us the minimum croft as 15 acres, with 100 sheep. Have you any idea of the number of such crofts, assuming that they were all minimum crofts, that could be put into this parish, or into the island?—Of course that calculation could be made, but I did not make it.

7920. Have you any idea how many of the present crofting population could be accommodated with such crofts—what proportion of them?—No.

7921. A third, or a half, or a fourth?—I cannot give you figures at all. But I know personally every part of Skye, and I should say that there would be plenty of room for the men whom I would thin out, leaving the rest in comfort.

7922. I am afraid you or I would not be allowed to make the selection; they would select themselves.—It does not matter.

7923. *Mr Munro.*—Since we have entered upon this investigation we have heard a good deal about advancing money on loan to crofters to enable them to take enlarged holdings; but I feel bound to tell you that yours is the first intelligible and business-like statement on that question that I have yet listened to. Now am I correctly stating your views, when I say that the security you propose is as follows:—(1) the buildings on the croft, (2) the stock, (3) the game, and (4) that the County Council should intervene between the borrower and the lender?—Yes, that is so. The statement that I originally made is not altogether there; I had another form of security, that no merchant should be allowed to interfere with the joint stock, which should be left on the ground until the government instalment was paid, and nothing should interfere with it.

7924. Now to make your statement plainer, and that there be no mistake about it, let us go over in detail the several securities which you propose. First, upon the question of the buildings, I can understand that being a good security, because the lender can obtain a title to the buildings. But what security would the stock afford to a lender?—I think the stock would be as good a security as the building, except for the risk of some of them dying. But if the stock was put in on a joint farm, and no one allowed to interfere or to take out a beast, in time it would put off the usual average every year; and under a competent shepherd, with the assistance of the County Council and two men appointed by the township, I have not the slightest doubt that the return from the sheep stock would more than pay the instalment dues. I think it would be the most valuable of all the securities.

7925. But in a hypothecation of stock, does not this obvious objection occur to you, that stock can be removed from a croft?—Yes, but the sheep stock cannot be removed from a club farm.

7926. It could be removed with consent of the parties interested. I merely want to define the nature of your proposed security.—No, it cannot be removed with the consent of the parties interested; it cannot be removed at all. And besides, I would bind this provision in the clause of the Act in such a way as to make it impossible for any one to move the stock off the ground. At present no man can sell his own sheep stock; is not that so, Mr Maclachlan?

7927. *Mr Maclachlan.*—I understand that is so.

7928. *Mr Munro.*—I understand a sheep stock is raised for the very purpose of being sold?

7929. *The Chairman.*—Not by an individual. *Witness.*—But in the club farms they cannot be sold.

7930. *Mr Munro.*—You also proposed that the County Council should intervene between the creditor and the borrower. Do I understand from that that

the County Council would become the first security for the loan?—The first security.

7931. Now with reference to the payment of the instalments, which you propose should extend over a period of thirty years. Take, for example, an advance of £200, how would you propose that that should be repaid—in what instalments?—In equal annual instalments divided into thirty years.

7932. And you think that a crofter would be quite well able to repay these?—I feel quite positive about it; I feel as strong on that point as on anything that I have said. From my own experience among the crofters, I know if they got the opportunity they would work night and day—a man would leave that stock and work night and day to pay the Government.

7933. That is in consequence of the strong incentive that would be presented to them to become absolute proprietors of the crofts—they would work night and day to repay these loans?—Yes, and you would relieve them of an enormous amount of work in giving them slated houses instead of thatched ones.

7934. And I presume you have contemplated this contingency also, that if after a certain period of years they fail to pay their instalments, they would in all probability have to forfeit what they have paid?—Yes, and you would get another man to take up the place.

7935. That would be an additional incentive?—Yes.

7936. And you are also of opinion that if the crofters were placed on large holdings their comfort would materially increase, as well as enable them to pay these loans back?—Oh, yes.

7937. A statement was made to us yesterday on responsible authority, that if the crofters were replaced on the land again, poor rates would increase so much as to render the occupation of the island almost intolerable. Is that your opinion?—No; my opinion is that statistics clearly prove the other way—I believe the poor rates in parishes where sheep farms predominate are increasing as well as where the crofters are. Another thing, no crofter can get any money from poor rates.

7938. Then is it consistent with your knowledge that poor rates have increased as crofters were removed off the land?—It is not within my knowledge, but I always took it to be so, and it is the feeling and opinion of the country. From my own experience as a member of parochial boards, I think that is so; and I can tell you that since Mr. Wood came to the island of Raasay, and since the clearances there, the poor rate increased enormously, and I think it is now three times what it is on the mainland.

7939. *Mr Maccallum.*—I think almost all the questions that I should have liked to put have been already put and answered, and, therefore, I shall only keep you a very short time. I was very much struck with a statement you made that of the forty-five farms in Skye only eight are managed by practical farmers?—Only eight.

7940. Now, with regard to the qualifications of the crofters for taking up the land, do you think they have as much knowledge as the large farmers, as a rule, in regard to the working of the land?—I think they have far more.

7941. Can you also tell us about the factors, are they practical farmers? have they a practical knowledge of land?—There are five or six factors in Skye, and, I think, only two of them have had practical experience; the rest have none at all. Mr Mackintosh here has had some experience of land; he came from Beauly. As for his practical knowledge of working it, I don't know; but theoretically he knows a great deal about land. As to Mr. John Mackenzie, the factor for Kilmuir estate, my opinion is that he knows nothing about land except that he is living on it.

7942. What training did he get for it?—He was for some years in the factor's office. Then there is Mr. J. T. Mackenzie at Dunvegan.

7943. You do not think they are particularly qualified?—I don't think he had any knowledge of farming at all. He was a kind of merchant, having a shop, and dealing in coals; and then he was postmaster in Dunvegan. Then there is also Mr. Alexander Macdonald, Portree, who is a solicitor.

7944. Then there are fourteen proprietors having farms. Have they taken a special interest in agriculture?—Yes, some of the proprietors have a knowledge of farming.

7945. But what do you say of the majority of them?—The rest of them do not look at it.

7946. And they entrust it to the other hands?—They entrust it to the factors, of course.

7947. You said there were eight hotel-keepers who had farms. Are these hotel-keepers retired, or do they carry on the two businesses at the same time, farming and hotel-keeping?—There is only one of them retired, but I think his interest is drawn out of the hotel—Mr Ross of Glenvarigil. But Boreraig and Suisnish are in the hands of a hotel-keeper, so also are Swordale, Ose and Uig, and one or two more.

7948. Do you think hotel-keeping a profitable occupation in Skye?—I think it is perhaps the most profitable.

7949. Do you think it is by the profits of the hotel rather than by the farming that they live?—I don't believe they have made anything out of the farming.

7950. You spoke of superfluous coin, and a great deal of money being lost by the large farmer. Into whose pockets did that money go?—That is more than I can tell you; it did not go to the crofters in any shape or form. It went to the landlord probably in over-rent.

7951. Very little of it came to the crofter?—Oh, nothing at all of any consequence.

7952. It was put to you about Sir William Mackinnon having spent £12,000 on making a road, &c.; but is that a typical case?—That is the only case of a proprietor in Skye making any improvements since my time. I suppose when the rest bought their estates they might beautify the mansion-house, before my time. Major Fraser, for example, I suppose, spent more on the estate than Sir William Mackinnon did; but he trebled the rent after that.

7953. But in recent times?—There was nothing done in recent times; except when they took houses and bought estates, I believe they improved them, and brought them into working order.

7954. And you are clearly of opinion that the stock-carrying capacity of the land is getting smaller by being put into large tacks?—Yes; I know instances in which they cannot carry the old stock, or anything like it. Boreraig and Suisnish cannot carry within 300 of the stock that it carried when Mr Scott had it, when the people were removed out of it.

7955. Then do you think that if the land on these large farms were divided into small holdings, the crofters could pay as high a rent as any tenant can pay out of the land?—Yes, if it is taken out of the land. If you take as the value of the land what can annually be taken out of it. I think the man with an ordinary share who could work it himself will take more out of it than the man who has a large tract.

7956. He can cultivate it, you think, more profitably than the large farmer?—Yes, that is my opinion.

7957. *The Chairman.*—I do not mean to detain you at any length. You have a number of proposals here which you have submitted to us with regard to the development of the crofting system in Skye; but I do not intend to ask you any questions on these proposals, because in my opinion they do not at all come within the terms of our remit. These matters are not before us.—Quite so.

7958. You made a statement and were asked a question about Bornaskitaig?—Yes.

7959. The Secretary has been good enough to turn

up the blue-book and give me the figures, which are: —arable, 158 acres 3 roods 30 poles; outrun, 75 acres 1 rood 5 poles; pasture, 273 acres; total, 507 acres 0 roods 35 poles; the fair rent is £120, being at the rate of 4s. 9d. an acre on the average. I think you said 4s. 6d.?—4s. 10d.

7960. You were referred to the farm of Strathaird, on which there had been much capital expenditure by the landlord?—Yes.

7961. Is not there another farm in Skye where there has been very large and very generous expenditure?—(*A pause*). Do you not remember the farm of Skeabost?—Oh, yes, I remember that fencing being done.

7962. Is not he a very generous landlord?—Yes.

7963. And has not his expenditure been very large?—The crofters, I suppose, gained more by his expenditure than by Sir William Mackinnon's. In the first place the difference between the two is very much. Skeabost has fenced in a piece of moor, which is not very good land; but Sir William Mackinnon's land is first-class land for cultivation.

7964. Is it not the fact that Skeabost's tenants are so satisfied with the way in which he has treated them that they are exceedingly loath to make any claim for land?—I believe they would rather suffer than make any complaint against him, he is so kind to them in every way.

7965. And in their claims for land they have been very careful to keep away from any land that they think he might be reluctant to part with?—I believe that is so. But it is not the same in the case of Sir William Mackinnon. It is not from a feeling of generosity or gratitude, but they are actually afraid of Mr Macdonald and of Sir William Mackinnon—afraid of getting into their bad graces: and the parish minister said that to Mr Macdonald yesterday in front of the hotel in presence of witnesses.

7966. We cannot take that; it is not evidence.—I have a knowledge of it myself.

7967. You say there are 45 farms in Skye?—Yes.

7968. And you are in favour of a large development of the crofting system?—Yes.

7969. Would you carry that to the extent of obliterating the farms?—No, not quite. I would leave every farmhouse on the farms, and some value in connection with it. There are only eight practical farmers.

7970. Never mind the farmers, it is the farms. Would you obliterate any one of these farms?—No, not as a whole; I would not wish to do that.

7971. You would be in favour of the continuance of the farming system to the number of 45 farms as at present, but with a very much reduced extent?—Very much.

7972. *Mr James Mackintosh, Factor for Lord Macdonald.*—What rent did you say is now being paid for Ostaig, Tormore and Gillen?—I think it is £200 odds.

7973. You said £325, but the present rent is £395.—Of that £70 is paid by the sub-tenant.

7974. You said Ostaig, Tormore and Gillen: the rent of these is £395, not £325?—I took that out of the Valuation Roll.

7975. But Gillen is entered separately at £70. As regards improvements on farms, is it not by arrangement with the landlord that the farmers execute improvements on their holdings?—I suppose it is.

7976. Therefore there is no such arrangement between the landlord and the crofter?—He is allowed to do that if he likes.

7977. You said that the land held by crofters in Sleat was inferior to land held by tacksmen?—Yes.

7978. That is your opinion?—It is.

7979. State any crofter you know in Sleat to-day who adopts the process of fattening his land?—If you remove the township the fat that the people leave there is very material to the tacksman, it is out of that that the tacksman made his profit, and the landlord too.

7980. That is not exactly an answer to my question; I asked you to mention any crofter in Sleat to-day who fattens his land?—My answer is that what I meant by fattening was the fattening the crofter made for the benefit of the landlord, who got the benefit after removing the crofter. I say if you throw him out of house and home, you have the land fat for grazing.

7981. What sheep stock is there on the Kyle-Rhea end of the Kinloch farm; what class of stock is it?—I don't know, indeed: I saw blackfaced sheep about the road, but I don't know what is on the hills.

7982. You stated that it is good grazing land: is it so?—So it is.

7983. Is it usual for farmers to graze wedders on their best grazing land?—Sometimes it pays them, if the price is good, especially if the land is high. The wedder would thrive on good high ground where the lambs would not do.

7984. What class of sheep stock has been the least remunerative for the last few years?—I suppose the cheviots were the most unremunerative.

7985. What kind; ewe or wedder?—The wedders.

7986. Then is it likely the farmers would continue keeping wedders on ground if it was suitable for ewes?—Certainly, if the wedders were profitable.

7987. But you said they were the most unremunerative?—Yes, but on high hills the most profitable. Of late years mutton was high, and wool cheap, and wedders on good grazing paid better.

7988. What is the acreage of arable land under crofters in Sleat?—Something like 12,000.

7989. Arable?—I don't think I have the arable in my statement.

7990. Have you any idea what is the extent of arable land held by tenant farmers in Sleat?—I have not a positive proof of it, but I know that some time ago it was mostly arable and cultivated, but now it is growing wild again and going back to a state of nature.

7991. Do you consider it is a fair comparison to make between the whole land held by crofters and the whole land held by tenant farmers, seeing that the crofters have 900 acres of arable land and the farmers only 200 acres of arable land?—The comparison is this: the crofters took in the whole of their arable, but the tacksmen reduce the arable; they do not take a twentieth part into cultivation.

7992. Were there crofters on the farm of Ord?—Yes.

7993. On the whole of it?—On the most of it.

7994. Were there crofters on the farm of Knock?—Yes.

7995. On the whole of it?—The whole of it except the grounds around the house: at Baravaig and Morsaig and Linigary.

7996. You said that crofters earned no money by employment from sheep farmers in Skye?—Nothing of any consequence.

7997. You said that they obtained none?—None whatever, unless they gave them a day's free labour in clipping: that is the only thing I ever knew.

7998. I am not aware of any free labour being given.—Well, it was given in my time.

7999. In passing along the road, did you never see crofters employed in harvesting the crops at Armadale?—Yes, I believe there would be some there about the castle; one or two.

8000. Did you ever see them employed in harvest work at Ostaig?—Not the crofters; never.

8001. Did you ever see them so employed at Knock?—I never did. It is quite natural that they should be working perhaps a day at the harvest, but I never saw them there.

8002. Do crofters expect, or would you support, a measure giving them the sporting rights without any rent for them?—I would leave the rent to be judged by those who would be assessors—competent men.

8003. You would expect the crofters to pay a fair rent for the sporting rights?—No, I don't think so.

Isleornsay, Skye.

Myles Macinnes.

My view is, that everything belonging to the land should belong to the man who pays the rent.

8004. What is the lowest rent of the forty-five farms you spoke of?—I suppose it will be about £73, Duisdalemore. The rest are all a good bit above £100.

8005. In drawing a comparison between the average rent of the farmer and that of the crofter, you calculated the crofters' rate on the fair rents?—Yes.

8006. And you calculated the farmers' on the present rent too?—Yes.

8007. If you had taken the rent paid five years ago in this parish by farmers, it would have made a considerable difference?—Well, I suppose there would be a difference in both cases.

8008. And the difference in both cases would not be greater than it is now?—I cannot say very much as to that.

8009. Are you not aware of any farmers in Skye who take an interest in the social condition of the people, inducing them to better their circumstances in any way?—No, I am not aware; I heard that Major Kemble was to give them a bull.

8010. That is not to improve the social condition of the people; I object to that answer. Are you not aware that the crofters and others in Sleat held a cattle show in Sleat last year? who promoted that?—That is something like the others.

8011. Was it not got up principally by a tenant farmer, to induce the people to take an interest in their stock?—That is not the first cattle show that I have known; I did not know anything of that.

8012. When was a cattle show held in Sleat or in Skye before that?—I suppose there are many new things done, and the people are not much the better of all the introduction of new things.

8013. When a crofter has borrowed money, would he not require to take more out of his land to pay interest on borrowed capital, than one who had no interest to pay, before he could meet his debts?—He would, certainly.

8014. *The Chairman.*—In the Valuation Roll, the rent of Tormore, Ostaig and Gillen, is given as £325, and the lands and farm of Gillen £70, but the witness fairly enough took as the valuation of Tormore, Ostaig and Gillen the rent marked in the Valuation Roll, £325. *The witness.*—I gave an explanation of that; the man is paying £70 to the tenant.

8015. *Mr Mackintosh.*—The farm of Tormore, Ostaig and Gillen, is responsible to us for £395. *The witness.*—But he gets £70 from the sub-tenant.

8016. *Mr Macleod.*—There is a sub-tenant on Gillen?—Yes.

8017. Can you tell us why Gillen is mentioned along with Tormore and Ostaig, and then is entered as a separate subject?—Just to give a vote to this man, as he is on the other side.

8018. That is not what I want to be at. Mr Mackintosh stated that the amount of rent for which the tenant of Tormore, Ostaig and Gillen is responsible, is £395?—Yes.

8019. Then you don't doubt that the figure you should have given in your statement should have been £395, and not £325?—I should not do that, because I know that the sub-tenant of Gillen pays £70 to the principal tenant.

8020. So that you still maintain that your statement of £325 is correct?—Yes.

Donald Macpherson

DONALD MACPHERSON, Crofter, Saasaig (67).
(Examined in Gaelic through an Interpreter.)

8021. *The Chairman.*—You are a crofter from Saasaig?—Yes.

8022. Do you occupy No. 4?—Yes.

8023. And your holding is 4 acres 0 roods 32 poles arable, 2 acres 1 rood 8 poles outrun; 278 acres grazing, divided into ten shares, and you hold half a share. The present rent is £2, the former rent having been £3, 6s. Have you a written statement?—I have.

8024. Will you kindly read it?—

Isleornsay, Skye.

Donald Macpherson

STATEMENT OF SAASAIG, SLEAT.

The crofting township of Saasaig has ten holdings, only one of which is not subdivided. There are twenty-one families in the township. Prior to 1811, there were only five tenants.

About sixty-three years ago the park of Glen-Saasaig was taken from the township, and added to the tack of Ord. It was here the crofters of old used to cut the bulk of their grass for wintering.

About 1874, a stretch of common pasture called Glen-Saasaig was taken from the township, and added to the tack of Ord. Our souming before these lands were taken from us was 8 cows, 1 horse and 24 sheep per holding. To-day it is 4 cows, 1 horse and 8 sheep for an entire holding; and the land would not do justice to more than half our present nominal souming.

To improve our position, we would respectfully suggest two things: first, the lands taken from the townships should be given back; and secondly, that the congested condition of the township should be relieved by migration to new holdings.

There is a great amount of suitable and available lands in the parish for new holdings in old cleared crofting townships in the farms of Knock, Ord, Ostaig, Tormore and Kinloch.

Knock Farm.—This farm includes the township of Baravaig, from which tenants were evicted in the beginning of the century, and where there is old arable and improvable lands sufficient for four new self-supporting holdings. There is besides the Brae of Knock, where four could be placed.

Ord Farm.—This farm contains Morsaig, cleared about fifty years ago. All the old tenants had a large stock of cattle, horses and sheep. This township would keep three new tenants very comfortable. Croisg would keep two tenants.

Tormore, Ostaig and Gillen.—These three now form one farm. Tormore includes the old townships of Little Calligarry, Capisdale and Carradale. Carradale was cleared of eight crofters fourteen years ago. The excuse was the want of a school, but they were all better off there than where they are now. The above three townships would make thirteen comfortable new holdings.

Ostaig embraces the old townships of Kilbeag and Linigary. Kilbeag would provide five new holdings. There were eight tenants in Linigary, each of whom had 8 cows, a horse and corresponding sheep.

Gillen includes the township of Dalville, where there were five tenants, who were evicted a little over sixty years ago.

Kinloch Farm.—This farm includes the township of Tettercailleach, which was cleared twenty-five years ago. Ardnameachdan was also once occupied by small tenants.

We cannot close our statement without referring to the Knoydart evictions of thirty-nine years ago, when the following townships were absolutely cleared, viz., Niogart, Samadlan, Doune, Sandaig, Rhidarroch and Croulig. All these, with the best arable land to the sea level, are now under deer, and would, along with the townships already mentioned, relieve completely the congestion of population in the whole parish of Sleat.

(Signed) DONALD MACPHERSON,
No. 4 Saasaig.

8025. How many crofters are in Saasaig?—Ten.

8026. And how many cottars?—One cottar.

8027. *Mr Mackintosh, Factor for Lord Macdonald.*—When did crofters occupy Knock Farm or any part of it?—They were there, at all events, though not in my time. My grandfather was there.

8028. Was he a crofter?—He was.

8029. In a pamphlet, entitled "The past and present

Isleornsay, Skye.

Donald Macpherson.

condition of the Skye crofter," by Lachlan Macdonald of Skeabost, there is a list given (Sheet 19) of farms held as tacks in 1733 and 1751 still in the possession of proprietors and tacksmen.

Peter Macdonald.

PETER MACDONALD, Saasaig (30)—*examined.*

8030. *The Chairman.*—What is your No. in Saasaig?—No. 6. I am only a sub-tenant of my father.

8031. Your father's name is John Macdonald?—Yes, my Lord.

8032. And the croft has 8 acres 0 roods 36 poles arable, 1 acre 2 roods 3 poles outrun, with a share in the common grazing; the old rent was £7, 8s., and the fair rent is £6, 5s.?—Yes, my Lord.

8033. Have you a written statement?—I have, my Lord.

8034. Would you read it?—I only wish to call the attention of the Commission to a few remarks especially regarding my own case. When I was out of school I was getting into a situation in Edinburgh, but my parents would not let me go, as my father was old and could not work the croft alone. Some years ago I got the third of the croft from my father, for which I pay very high rent. The stock I keep is one horse, one cow and one stirk, but the crop of my share of the croft is not sufficient to winter this stock, and last year I was out about £10 in provender and oats. Now if I had the value of that £10 of good land I could keep and winter a good deal of stock. From this it is evident that the smallness of holdings keeps the people in poverty, for the little money they earn during the summer season, which in many cases is not sufficient for the support of their families, they require to spend the most of it on other things owing to the scarcity of land and the poor soil, which maybe has not been uncultivated or let out for the last twenty or thirty years. In many cases we find three or four crofters, and perhaps a cottar or two, on one small croft which would be too small to support one family, and not even that; but when the people are thus crowded it also spoils the grazing of their township. For example, in the township of Saasaig there are only ten crofts, but there are twenty-one families, and on one of these ten crofts there are four families. Now each household requires the same amount of peats, which are cut every summer in the grazing. Now you see the four crofters which occupy the one croft will need as much peats as would almost do for the half of the township if each householder had a a full croft. The population of the small parish of Sleat is about 1800 souls, and when we find two Englishmen occupying eight sheep farms in Sleat, the rest of the people must be very much crushed upon each other. There is not the least doubt that the people would benefit by getting more land, and I think the Government ought to give the matter their immediate attention, and replace the poor Highland crofters in the straths and glens from which their forefathers were cruelly evicted.

(Signed) PETER MACDONALD.

8035. Are you in any employment?—I am a merchant.

8036. You have a shop?—I have, my Lord.

8037. What do you sell, groceries?—Groceries principally.

8038. And have you a licence for anything?—No, except for tobacco.

8039. The only other question I want to ask you is this. You say there is one croft in Saasaig where there are four families?—There is, my Lord.

8040. Which one is that?—No. 10.

8041. Who is the crofter?—There are four Macinneses on it.

8042. What are the names?—Lachlan Macinnes, widow Agnes Macinnes, widow Duncan Macinnes, and widow Ewan Macinnes.

8043. And have they separate houses?—They have.

8044. And separate fires?—Separate fires, separate holdings. Isleornsay, Skye.

8045. Do they cultivate the land in common or have they each a patch of their own?—Each has a patch of his own. Peter Macdonald.

8046. Within the limits of the croft?—Yes, my Lord.

8047. Have they each stock?—They have, my Lord.

8048. *Mr Macleod.*—You said that you are a sub-tenant of your father's. You are not then paying the rent to the proprietor direct?—No, but to my father.

8049. Being in that position have you ever made an estimate as to the number of sub-tenants in this parish or in the whole of Skye?—No.

8050. Would you be able to give us the number if you had time to think about it—the number say in this parish of Sleat?—Not in the meantime, without considering the matter.

8051. But supposing that you had time to consider it?—I believe I could.

8052. You could supply us with that information?—Yes, through time.

8053. Then would you supply it?—I could in some days.

8054. Thank you. Then, as to the township of Saasaig, what farms does it march with?—There are three townships, Kilmore, Ferrindonald and Saasaig. Knock Farm is on the one side, and a great part of Ostaig on the other side of Kilmore.

8055. Your township grazes with the farm of Knock?—No, with the grazing of Teangue.

8056. Would it be possible to extend your grazings without removing the tenants there?—No, I don't think it would.

8057. And you agree with the previous witness as to the places where you think the crofters could cultivate to profit?—I quite agree with Mr Macinnes.

8058. And with Mr Macpherson?—And with Mr Macpherson.

8059. *Mr Mackintosh.*—What stock of your own do you keep?—A horse, a cow and a stirk.

8060. What rent do you pay to your father?—One third of his rent.

8061. Do you cultivate the land separately from your father?—Yes, I do.

8062. Can you mention any other sub-tenant of the same class as yourself in the parish of Sleat?—Not in the meantime.

8063. Do you know of one at all? You have been all your days in Sleat, do you know of any other sub-tenant in Sleat?—Not in the meantime.

8064. *The Chairman.*—He said so; it is quite a frank answer. *The Witness.*—I don't know of any in the meantime; there may be some, for all I know.

Donald Macgillivray

DONALD MACGILLIVRAY, Crofter, Aird (58)—*examined.*

8065. *The Chairman.*—You hold one half of lot 9 Aird?—Yes.

8066. I see it extends to 2 acres 3 roods arable, 1 acre 1 rood 3½ poles outrun, and half a share of 2770 acres hill pasture divided into 19 shares. The former rent was £3, 16s. 8d.; and the fair rent is £2, 11s. You heard the statement made by Mr Myles Macinnes?—Yes.

8067. And you also heard the statement made by Donald Macpherson, Saasaig?—Yes.

8068. Do you agree with these statements?—Yes.

8069. And do you think they fully set forth the case for the crofters in this district?—Yes.

8070. May we take you as resting your case upon the statements which these witnesses have made?—Yes, I suppose much about the same; but we have been dealt with worse than some, because two small townships have been taken from us in my own time.

8071. What are these?—Caradale on the Point of Sleat.

8072. Do you remember that occurring?—Yes, myself.

Isleornsay, Skye.

Donald Macgillivray.

8073. Are these places included in farms now?—One has been cleared again and put into Tormore.

8074. Which is in Tormore?—Caradale.

8075. And the other one?—The other in Point of Sleat. It is under crofters.

8076. I think all the old townships in this locality now forming parts of farms that would be available for new holdings have been mentioned?—Yes.

8077. You do not suggest any other township?—No.

8078. How many crofters have you in Aird altogether?—Thirty-eight, in nineteen crofts; there is another croft with eight or nine families (*A voice* "Ten").

8079. A croft in Aird?—Yes, the twentieth croft holds ten small crofters but no grazing.

8080. What is the name of the man?—There are ten of them.

8081. Is there any principal holding?—No, they are all the same; they have equal shares of it.

8082. Can you give me the names?—Yes.

8083. What are they?—Myles Macinnes, Mrs Matheson, Mary Beaton, Angus Robertson, Donald Macgillivray, Mary Macintyre, Donald Macgillivray again, Catherine Gillies (but she is dead a few weeks ago), John Beaton and Donald Macleod.

8084. Have they separate houses?—Yes.

8085. And separate fires?—Yes.

8086. But no grazing?—No grazing.

8087. Have they separate patches of arable land?—Yes.

8088. Have they stock?—Well, they will be keeping a cow, but they have got no grazing for it; they have neither grazing nor hill pasture for sheep or cattle.

8089. Have they any sheep?—They might have a few, but no grazing for them.

8090. What farm or farms march with Aird?—Tormore, from sea to sea, from the one end to the other.

8091. Any other farm?—No, Tormore marches with Aird from one side to the other.

8092. *Mr Shaw Stewart.*—How do the men in this croft that you speak of get their livelihood?—I cannot tell much about them; they get their livelihood by working through the world.

8093. Do they go to the south for work?—To the south.

8094. Every year?—Yes.

8095. *Mr Macleod.*—Have you got any sheep?—Yes.

8096. Have you got them in common, or has each tenant his own?—Each has his own.

8097. You have not a stock in common?—No, every man has his own quantity.

8098. How many sheep go to each croft?—Twenty-six to each croft. There is no whole croft.

8099. A man with half a croft will have thirteen?—Yes.

8100. Don't you think it would be better to hold them as one stock?—I don't think so.

8101. You think it better to hold them as at present?—I think it would be fully as well.

8102. You don't think that you suffer from the family which is stronger getting advantage of the weaker family?—Well, I don't think so.

8103. There are no tenants in the township who have more sheep than their souming?—Yes, we are souming the sheep every year, and any one who has more than the souming buys the grazing from his neighbour.

8104. That is how you do it; but don't you think you would get a better price for the sheep if you had them all under the one mark and they were all of the same kind?—I don't know how we could do that.

8015. But don't you know that if you are able to sell a few hundred sheep, having all the same mark and pretty much the same appearance, they will sell better in the market than a dozen, or more small odd lots?—I daresay they would, but there would be more expense.

8106. How would there be more expense?—By keeping a shepherd or two shepherds. Isleornsay Skye.

8107. But don't you think that if you had larger holdings that would employ more of your time than the holdings you have at present, it would be more profitable to have a shepherd?—We are certain sure of that if we had more holdings, but we have not plenty of holdings to keep him. Donald Macgillivray.

8108. So that your position is this, that whilst you are in favour of each crofter holding his own sheep at the present time, if you had the sort of holding you would like to have you would keep your stock in common, you would have a club stock?—We would keep them whatever way we thought best.

8109. I want to get your opinion?—What was the benefit of me now to go and pay my share of 13 sheep.

8110. Supposing you had 50 sheep, or 100 sheep, what view would you take of it then?—They might do as well; the whole stock on the place might.

8111. But you think an individual stock would do just as well?—I think it would.

8112. You do not see any disadvantages?—No, not I.

8113. Then about this croft that has ten families on it; has that come about by subdivision, or have they been placed there?—I believe they have been placed there at first. They were not paying rent at all at first.

8114. They were not paying rent at all?—Not a shilling.

8115. And they settled down there, did they?—Yes.

8116. Has any of those places been vacated in your memory?—Yes, a man was put in his place.

8117. How did they come there; did they come in without the permission of the estate or with it?—Not at all.

8118. With the permission of the estate?—Yes, with the permission of the factor, I believe.

8119. They came in there?—Yes, every place that they got benefit.

8120. There was another tenant put into it?—Yes.

8121. *The Chairman.*—I doubt that very much, but I am not going to take up time pursuing the examination.

8122. *Mr Mackintosh.*—Would not the extension of a railway to Mallaig greatly benefit you and all the other crofters in the parish of Sleat?—It would, but it would not do any good in the case of more land.

8123. *The Chairman.*—If you got more land you do not want a railway to Mallaig?—We will take more land first, we have been asking more land for the last three years. We gave the factor here a chance, and we gave Mr Maclachlan here a chance, for Capisdale, part of Tormore.

HUGH MACDONALD, Calligary (52)—*examined.* Hugh Macdonald.

8124. *The Chairman.*—What number are you in Calligary?—No. 1.

8125. Did you get your rent fixed by the Crofters Commission?—No. The croft is divided into five shares.

8126. And has Angus Macdonald or Macinnes one of them?—Yes.

8127. And John Macgillivray the other?—No, there are the two of us here.

8128. You heard the statement made by Mr Myles Macinnes?—Yes.

8129. And the statement made by Mr Macpherson of Saasaig?—Yes.

8130. Do you agree with these?—I quite agree with them.

8131. And do they set forth the case for the crofters in this district very distinctly?—Yes, I think so.

8132. Have you any addition to make?—No addition at all.

8133. The only other specific question I would put

Isleornsay, Skye. Hugh Macdonald.

is, can you mention the name of any other old township formerly occupied by crofters besides those already brought under our notice?—No, I don't know of any.

8134. *Mr Sutherland.*—You said the croft was divided into five shares?—Yes.

8135. Who divided it?—The proprietor, I suppose, or the factor.

8136. It was one croft at first and now it is five, is that so?—I think so.

8137. And it was done by the proprietor?

8138. *The Chairman.*—The answer is, "the proprietor, I suppose," these were his words.

8139. *Mr Mackintosh.*—Was that croft No. 1 Calligary ever held by one tenant alone?—Not that I am aware of.

8140. Was it not formerly occupied by the Armadale farm labourers?—It went under that name at one time.

8141. (Question repeated).

8142. *The Chairman.*—He said it went under one name; he means that as an affirmative answer.

8143. *Mr Mackintosh.*—You are aware that that was a lot that was held by men who worked on the Armadale Home Farm? Don't you know that?—I have given you my answer.

8144. *The Chairman.*—Does it consist with your knowledge that that croft was formerly occupied by the farm labourers?—Yes.

8145. *Mr Mackintosh.*—What was done with the sixth share recently?—I cannot say, indeed.

8146. Was not the sixth share, formerly held by Widow Stewart, divided among the other five?—The fifth share was divided among the four. This croft was divided into six shares till two of the tenants, Widow Stewart and John Maclean, died last year. Widow Stewart's share was divided among the four, and Maclean's is not divided yet. His brother, who is one of the four, is claiming it.

8147. It was the sixth share?—The sixth share is not divided yet.

8148. Was not the land held by Widow Stewart divided among the others?—Yes.

8149. And she was one of the six?—Divided between five.

8150. *The Chairman.*—Gentlemen, I wish to make an explanation before we resume. The Secretary has received a number of letters in which claims are made by individuals for particular portions of land, or land situated in particular places. I wish to say that we are not here to consider claims of that kind; we are here to investigate generally under terms of the remit, and not to consider individual claims by crofters or cottars for particular portions of land. Accordingly we do not propose to examine witnesses of that kind. Our desire is rather to take evidence from delegates, persons who have been appointed by townships to give evidence with regard to the township, and I hope the distinction will be quite understood. If any crofter present or any cottar present desires to ask any explanation about the matter, I will be glad to answer his questions.

I will give you an example of what I mean. We have here, for instance, John Macgillivray from Calligary who makes a personal claim, and Malcolm Macpherson from Calligary who also makes a personal claim. These are not the kind of witnesses, and what they desire to put forward is not the kind of evidence we have come here to receive; and therefore it is not intended to call either of these persons. But if any one has any doubt about the matter, or would like any further explanations, I will be happy to afford them if I can.

Jonathan Macdonald.

JONATHAN MACDONALD, Achnacloich (65)—*examined.*

8151. *The Chairman.*—You hold one-half of lot 7 Achnacloich?—Yes.

8152. I see the holding has 2 acres 0 roods 3 poles arable, 1 rood 24 poles outrun, and half a share of 470 acres divided into fourteen shares; the former rent was £2, 1s. 10d., and the fair rent is £1, 8s. Have you a written statement?—Yes.

Isleornsay, Skye. Jonathan Macdonald.

8153. Would you read it?—STONEFIELD. This township was formerly occupied by five tenants, who, we understand, were very well off. It is now divided into fourteen small crofts, nine of which are between twelve families. This is due to making room for evicted tenants from Ostaig and other places. To put the township in a fair way, the half of the tenants will have to be removed. The most suitable places for crofters from Stonefield would be some of the extensive farms of Mr Kennard which lie in the neighbourhood, and which were occupied by crofters. We feel convinced that we would all benefit very much by removing some of the population to suitable places. Although there are some in the township that do not apply for more land, the removal of some of the rest would benefit them as well.

If necessary, the delegates will give the names of those that require more land, and of those that need it most.—Signed on behalf of the tenants of Stonefield, JONATHAN MACDONALD.

8154. Can you give us the names of those who you think need more land?—Yes: Alexander Macinnes, No. 4; Donald Macdonald, No. 5; Jonathan Macdonald, half of No. 7; Donald Macdonald, No. 8; John Macdonald, No. 9; Alexander Macdonald, No. 13; Malcolm Macmillan, No. 13; Alexander Macdonald, No. 14.

8155. That is eight altogether?—Yes.

8156. Out of fourteen?—Yes.

8157. Explain how you selected these names, and left out the other six?—Well, the most of these have half crofts.

8158. Is your township of Achnacloich congested?—Yes.

8159. Is the land run out?—It is mostly run out, but it is long tenanted.

8160. It has been tenanted for a long time?—Yes.

8161. Have tenants from other townships been put in there?—Yes; my father and grandfather were evicted from Linigarry.

8162. Is that now part of the farm of Ostaig?—Yes.

8163. Were there other townships on Ostaig?—Yes, Kilbeag.

8164. Do you know how many crofts were there?—I am not exactly sure, but I think it was five.

8165. Can you mention the name of any other old township in Ostaig?—No, there was another township—Glencru, they call it—on Ostaig farm.

8166. Now forming part of the farm?—Yes, the home farm.

8167. Can you say how many tenants were there?—No, I could not. Gillen and Ostaig lie alongside of us; there is only a burn between Ostaig and us.

8168. Are you able to say whether, when tenants were brought in from Ostaig to Achnacloich, the Ostaig crofts were extended in any way—more land granted in respect of additional persons coming in?—There was less land given to them than they had in Ostaig.

8169. Do you mean by more people being put on it, or was any land taken away?—No.

8170. I suppose you mean the land became less by the increase in number?—Yes.

8171. How far is the land which formed these townships in Ostaig from the Ostaig farm steading?—About a mile.

8172. Not nearer?—Well, I could not say exactly.

8173. It is a quarter of an hour's walk, is it?—Yes, about that.

8174. And in your opinion is that land to which you refer in Ostaig suitable for crofters' holdings now?—I think it is.

8175. Do you think the land could be cultivated to a profit?—Oh yes, it could; they were well off that were in it before.

Isleornsay, Skye.

Jonathan Macdonald.

8176. You know the farm very well, I suppose?—Yes, every inch of it.

8177. What size of holding would you like to see formed in Ostaig upon the lands of these old townships?—I could not say; it would be according just to how crofts were made.

8178. Of course, but I want to get from you if I can your notion of what would be a proper size of holding on land with which you are well acquainted. What stock would you aim at having in a new holding formed in Ostaig?—We could keep a good stock on it.

8179. What extent of stock would you think of acquiring with a view to a holding that would enable you to maintain yourself without outside labour or fishing?—About six cattle.

8180. Six cows with their followers?—Yes, and a horse.

8181. And how many sheep?—Between 50 and 100 sheep.

8182. And the arable land necessary for that stock, whatever it amounts to?—Just so.

8183. *Mr Sutherland.*—There were formerly, you say, five tenants; now there are fourteen?—Yes.

8184. How long is it since the number was increased from five to fourteen?—At the time of making the crofts they made fourteen crofts: there were no crofts when the five tenants were in it; it was divided among themselves.

8185. And when the land was divided the tenants were increased from five to fourteen?—Yes.

8186. Not by the people themselves?—No, it was by the landlord.

8187. *Mr Mackintosh.*—Were the five former tenants holding from the landlord or were they subtenants of the tacksmen?—They were holding from the landlord: there were no tacksmen then.

8188. Was the landlord himself the tacksman then?—I suppose he was the landlord.

8189. Was the farm of Ostaig and Gillen not in the landlord's own hands when the crofts in Stonefield were cut?—No, I don't suppose they were.

8190. But the fourteen crofts in Stonefield were cut at the same time as the rest of the crofts in Sleat were cut?—I suppose they were cut before some of them.

8191. How many years since?—I could not really say.

8192. *Mr Sutherland.*—By whom was the sub-divisions made?—By the landlord.

8193. *Mr Mackintosh.*—That was in the year 1810 or 1811.

Alexander Macdonald.

ALEXANDER MACDONALD, 13 Achnacloich (34) —*examined.*

8194. *The Chairman.*—Your holding, being half of lot 13, covers 2 acres 3 roods 2 poles arable, and 1 acre 1 rood 17 poles outrun, with half a share in the pasture of 470 acres; the former rent was £2, 7s. 7d. and the fair rent is £1, 14s. I think you are one of those whose names were mentioned by Jonathan Macdonald as wishing more land?—Yes.

8195. You heard the evidence given by Jonathan Macdonald?—Yes.

8196. And you concur in it, I suppose?—Yes.

8197. Does it fully express what you desire to say on the matter?—Yes.

8198. There is one thing I did not ask the previous witness. Are there any cottars in Achnacloich?—Not in Achnacloich: there is one on the farm of Gillen.

8199. You have heard the other evidence given to-day?—Yes.

8200. And you concur in the evidence?—Yes.

8201. How do you earn your living?—In the south.

8202. You go south every year?—Yes.

8203. What do you labour at mostly in the south?—Just any labour.

8204. Is it on the railways?—Sometimes, and sometimes on an estate.

Isleornsay, Skye.

8205. Where do you get estate labour?—From Lord Breadalbane.

Alexander Macdonald.

8206. Anywhere else?—Yes, I was once in another estate too, in Glen Etive.

8207. Whose estate was that?—Mr. Graves from England.

8208. You go south every year?—Not just now. I am home a year now. I am only there myself now and I cannot go, but of course I have to try fishing or some other way of making a living, because I cannot leave home, on account of there not being another person at home that can do the work to be done.

8209. You have to stay at home to look after your croft?—Yes.

8210. What does your household consist of—are you a married man?—No.

8211. There is somebody else in the house with you, I suppose?—Yes, my mother.

8212. Anybody else besides you and your mother?—No.

8213. But you earn your livelihood and pay your rent, and in fact pay your way generally by means of labour in the south?—Yes, the croft is too small to enable me to live.

8214. And you are anxious to get a holding where you would have land sufficient to keep yourself going, pay your way, and make a profit?—Yes.

8215. *Mr Shaw Stewart.*—I suppose the kind of croft that you would call a good croft would be 15 or 20 acres?—Yes.

8216. And the stock that has been named before. You consider that you would be able to maintain yourself and pay your rent out of such a croft without going to the south or anywhere else for labour?—Yes, I would think so.

8217. And could you stock it yourself?—I could partly stock it.

8218. Not entirely without assistance?—No.

Alexander Macdonald.

ALEXANDER MACDONALD, Tarskavaig (35). (Examined in Gaelic through an Interpreter.)

8219. *The Chairman.*—Has your croft in Tarskavaig a number?—Yes, No. 14.

8220. Who is the crofter—is it yourself?—It is in my mother's name.

8221. Widow Christina Macdonald; 2 acres 2 roods 3 poles arable, 1 rood 37 poles outrun; share of 912 acres township pasture divided into thirty-one shares, and of 2530 common pasture divided between seven townships, or eighty-seven shares. The former rent was £3, 6s. 7d., and the fair rent is £2, 10s

8222. *Mr Mackintosh.*—Do you wish to note the names of the townships that participate in the common lot?

8223. *The Chairman.*—If you please.

8224. *Mr Mackintosh.*—Achnacloich, Tarskavaig, Tokavaig, Kilmore, Ferrindonald, Saasaig, and Teangue.

8225. *The Chairman.*—Thank you. (*To witness*) Have you any written statement?—No.

8226. You have heard the evidence given to-day.—Yes.

8227. Does the evidence, speaking generally, express your views on the matter?—Yes, it expresses our township's views.

8228. Would you like to make any addition? Have you anything to add that you think has not been referred to, or has been omitted?—I would only say that there are too many people in my township, they are congested.

8229. It is overcrowded?—Yes.

8230. And it would be to your benefit, you think, if a number of crofters were taken out and supplied with holdings elsewhere?—It would take the one half to relieve the rest. They were

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taken from Kilbeag and Cargill and Glencru, and crowded in upon us; also from Morsaig.

8231. When did the overcrowding take place?—When these townships were lifted.

8232. Can you give us the time, how many years ago?—There are some in our township who were born in Kilbeag.

8233. That will enable you to give us an idea of how many years ago?—It will be sixty years ago.

8234. Do you know when the crofts in the township of Tarskavaig were cut?—In 1810, as has been already stated.

8235. How do you earn your livelihood?—All sorts of work that comes my way.

8236. Labour work?—Yes; fishing and sailing and labour.

8237. And do you go south for the most part to get labouring work?—Yes, I go south: it is in the south I earn my wages, there I have done all the work I have ever done, except fishing.

8238. And you get the money to pay your rent by labouring?—Yes.

8239. How many families are in Tarskavaig?—Thirty-six families.

8240. Are these crofters, or partly crofters and partly cottars?—Every one of these has land. There is one cottar besides the thirty-six, and there are eight of the crofts halved.

8241. Was the division made by the crofters themselves, or by the estate; or partly the one and partly the other?—Perhaps some crofters were dividing their crofts, but the estate was doing the rest.

8242. Both causes were in operation?—Yes.

8243. And at all events are all these thirty-six families now asked for rent by the landlord?—Yes.

I had better read this statement which has been handed in.

Application and statement regarding the croft No. 3 Teangue.

We are in all thirty-three souls. Our part of the croft is only about 2 acres and have ten of a family on it, and I would take 10 or 12 acres for my family. I was appointed as a delegate for the township of Teangue, but had to leave for the fishing. Hence the reason of sending this letter in my absence.

(Signed) JOHN NICOLSON.

llan ampbell.

ALLAN CAMPBELL, Crofter, Teangue (67)—*examined.*

8244. *The Chairman.*—You hold one-half of No. 7 Teangue?—Yes.

8245. I see it extends to 3 acres 2 roods 3 poles arable, and 2 roods of outrun; the township pasture is 530 acres divided into ten shares, and you have also half a share in the large common of 2530 acres divided into eighty-seven shares. The former rent was £3, 14s., and the fair rent is £2, 10s.?—Yes.

8246. How many families are in Teangue?—Seventeen families paying rent.

8247. Are there any not paying rent—cottars?—One cottar.

8248. How many crofts are in Teangue?—Eight and a half crofts.

8249. How long ago is it since these eight and a half were divided into seventeen? it would be a gradual process, I suppose—They were divided gradually.

8250. But was it subdivision by the estate, or by the people themselves, or both?—The most, I believe, was done by the tenants themselves.

8251. Is the township in your opinion overcrowded?—Yes, there are four on one lot.

8252. What lot is that?—No. 3.

8253. What are the names of these four?—John Nicolson, Norman Nicolson, Donald Nicolson, and Widow Norman Nicolson.

8254. Are they all related to each other?—They are the one family. Isleornsay, Skye.

8255. Have they separate houses?—Yes.

8256. And separate pieces of land?—Yes. Allan Campbell.

8257. And very much pressed in upon each other?—Yes, very much; every one of them has a big family.

8258. Well, I would just like to get them. What family has John Nicolson?—He has seven or eight.

8259. And Norman Nicolson?—He has six at any rate.

8260. Donald Nicolson?—He has only himself and his son and his mother.

8261. And Widow Nicolson, has she children?—She is alone.

8262. What farm or farms march with the township of Teangue?—Knock.

8263. Do you remember—because a question has been asked to-day—do you remember when these townships on Knock that formed part of the farm were cleared?—No, I do not remember.

8264. Have you heard of such townships from people who are dead?—Yes.

8265. How many such townships were there?—I did not hear how many.

8266. Were there more than one?—Oh yes, more than one. We have a poor crofter in our township who has a big family; he has ten of a family.

8267. What is his name?—Alexander Nicolson.

8268. Is it the fact that John Nicolson of Teangue is away at the fishing?—Yes; he went away to England to the fishing there.

JOHN MACKINNON, Crofter and Fisherman, Camuscross (56)—*examined.* John Mackinnon.

8269. *The Chairman.*—Your holding, I see, extends to 2 acres 3 roods 1 pole arable, 1 acre 1 rood 33 poles outrun, and share of 462 acres common pasture divided into thirty-nine shares. Is that all the pasture?—That is all.

8270. The former rent was £2, 18s., and the fair rent is £1, 16s. Have you a written statement?—Yes.

8271. Would you read it?—

Statement by the Crofters of Camuscross.

In this parish there are forty crofter holdings besides eight cottars.

The souming of each croft is two cows and no sheep or horse, and the land would not do justice to half the souming. The township is enclosed on the seashore and surrounded by the tacks of Knock and Ord.

The township, according to the evidence given by Angus Mackintosh before the Crofters Commission four years ago, was in possession from time immemorial of the brae of Camuscross, which lands were taken from the township and are now part of the farms of Knock and Ord. Besides this curtailment of our township boundaries, the island of Oronsay in our immediate vicinity was taken from the township and added to Knock farm, and is at present occupied by Mr Macdonald.

It is the earnest desire of every tenant in Camuscross that the lands above referred to, the loss of which has made our township one of the poorest crofting townships in Scotland, should be restored. Those places would be a considerable extension of our arable land, as well as grazings, both of which are urgently required. Even with this addition it would be necessary to migrate one-half of Camuscross tenants to new holdings to make the remaining half comfortable.

Lands suitable and available for such holdings are to be found in the large farms of Kinloch, Knock, Ord, Ostaig, Tormore and Gillen, in each of which there are old crofting townships that were cleared, which would be gladly pointed out by delegates to the Royal Commission if asked.

(Signed) JOHN MACKINNON, 40 Camuscross.

Isleornsay, Skye.

John Mackinnon.

8272. *Mr Sutherland.*—The term souming was used. Who fixes the souming?—It was the landlord, with the assistance of those who were cutting out the crofts when the crofts were formed.

8273. Do you know what rule they proceeded on?—I cannot tell how the souming was fixed.

8274. Had the people any voice in determining that souming?—Very likely they were consulted.

8275. But you do not know as a matter of fact?—I believe that they were consenting parties—that they were quite agreeable to the souming that was fixed.

8276. And have they found in practice now that that was too high?—Yes; we know that if the complete souming was in the township one cow would eat the tail of the other.

8277. *Mr Mackintosh.*—Have you got the full souming in your croft?—Yes.

8278. Did you sell any corn crop this year?—Yes.

8279. And you have your full souming?—Yes, but they are young beasts.

8280. Do you know of any other people in Camuscross who have their full souming, who sell corn?—I know one more.

8281. *Mr Sutherland.*—Does the souming apply to the corn crop?—No, the souming is applicable to the grazing.

8282. *Mr Mackintosh.*—Is it not also applicable to what is required to winter the cattle?—It is no wonder a piece of land that gets such an enormous quantity of manure put on it yields a plentiful crop.

8283. *Mr Macleod.*—You said that only one of them besides yourself out of forty could sell crop?—Yes, of those who had full souming only one to my knowledge sold corn; but others sold corn who had not the full souming.

Lachlan Macdonald.

LACHLAN MACDONALD, Duisdalebeag (60)—*examined.*

8284. *The Chairman.*—You are a crofter and seaman?—Yes.

8285. You have two crofts, No. 4 and No. 5?—Two crofts, or two half crofts.

8286. The area is 3 acres 3 roods 22 poles arable, 5 acres 0 roods 25 poles outrun; township common, 710 acres divided into seven shares. The former rent was £13, and the fair rent is £7. Do you represent the township of Duisdalebeag?—Five of the tenants.

8287. How many tenants are there altogether?—There are seven.

8288. How many cottars?—None.

8289. Have you a written statement?—I have a kind of statement. I, Lachlan Macdonald, crofter and mariner, aged sixty years, and residing in 4 and 5 crofts, Duisdalebeag, at the request of five of the inhabitants of Duisdalebeag, do hereby give my statements for the township in writing for the guidance of your honourable Commissioners.

In the year 1876 the township of Duisdalebeag was divided into eight lots or crofts. In the year 1877 we were deprived of the best portion of our sheep run. It was added to the extensive farm of Ord, and no compensation or reduction of rent was given to us for our loss.

Previous to the year 1876, four of the crofts of Duisdalemore, a township of eight crofts marching with Duisdalebeag, had been cleared for the Mackinnon family. The cattle of those remaining crofters was put on Duisdalebeag pasture. Thus we have the cattle of two townships living on the pastures of one, and it is impossible for us to get on with any degree of pleasantness.

If the two townships were restored to their original marching, sixteen or seventeen years' experience of Duisdalebeag leads me to believe that the tenants of the two townships would cultivate to advantage. We now beg of your honourable Commissioners to restore to us this part of our sheep run of which we were deprived, and also that you will enlarge our present holdings, for which we are willing to pay a fair rent.

Isleornsay, Skye.

Lachlan Macdonald.

The portions of land we wish to have restored to us are in the hands of Mr. Donald Macdonald, Park, Nairn, late of Tormore, Sleat, Skye, and are situated in the middle of the township of Duisdalebeag. It can be assigned to us without causing Macdonald any damage or loss. If those portions of land referred to are not restored to us, we cannot live on our crofts to any degree of comfort, much less cultivate our crofts to advantage.

The outlay on houses and improvements done by me upon my small holding, I cannot estimate at a less figure than £450, besides paying an average of £18 annually for winter keep for my cattle. I have also paid £65 extra rent from the year 1876, until fair rent was fixed on my croft in 1889. My neighbours and I have spent in all a sum of not less than £1000 in houses and improving our lands on an average of £1 an acre for the whole of Duisdalebeag. We have had no assistance from our proprietor to erect houses or improve the lands. This outlay debars us from applying for crofts elsewhere.

We now sincerely hope that your honourable Commissioners will take our case into your kind consideration.

On behalf of my neighbouring crofters and myself, —I remain, gentlemen, your obedient servant,

(Signed) LACHLAN MACDONALD.

8290. Is the statement signed?—Yes.

8291. Is it written entirely by yourself?—Yes.

8292. How long have you been a seaman?—I was only about fifteen or sixteen years when I went to sea.

8293. And do you still go to sea?—I go to sea yet.

8294. Are you an officer or an A.B.?—I sailed in gentlemen's yachts for the last eighteen or twenty years.

8295. As captain?—Yes.

8296. *Mr Shaw Stewart.*—There is a large drop in the rent, from £13 to £7. I suppose that the loss of some of the sheep run was taken into account by the Crofter Commissioners when they lowered the rent?—Probably, but twelve years expired between the date 1877 and the sitting of the Commission.

8297. I beg your pardon, I thought you said 1887.

8298. *Mr Sutherland.*—You said you expended a sum of £1 an acre. Does that apply to the whole of your holding, both arable and pasture?—I understand the acreage of the whole township, arable and all, is about 1000 acres.

8299. And you have taken that into account?—I have taken that into account.

8300. What proportion of your holding is arable, and what proportion is pasture?—There was about 2½ acres on my croft.

8301. But in the township, putting it roughly, is a third of it arable land?—No, not that.

8302. A fourth?—I don't think a sixth; that is including arable and pasture.

8303. So that if you had made the calculation on the arable land, it would be a great deal higher, would it not, the rate per acre that you spent on improvements?—The calculation I made is about £1 an acre on the area of the township of Duisdalebeag.

8304. I want, if you can tell me approximately, how much it would amount to per acre, if applied only to the arable land. Would it probably be £6? We will take it so. Did you ever know a large farmer, a sheep farmer, improving his land to that extent in your experience?—No, I don't think so.

8305. *Mr Mackintosh.*—The witness stated that he knew of no large sheep farmer who expended such an amount on his holding; does he know of any large farmer that has fixity of tenure?

8306. *The Chairman.*—I disallow that question.

Isleornsay, Skye.

Alexander Macinnes.

ALEXANDER MACINNES, Drumfearn (46).
(Examined in Gaelic through an Interpreter.)

8307. *The Chairman.*—You hold one half of lot 3 Drumfearn?—Yes.

8308. The area is 4 acres 2 roods 9 poles arable, 2 acres 1 rood 37 poles outrun; hill pasture, 1342 acres divided into ten shares; the former rent was £4, 15s. and the fair rent is £2, 18s.?—Yes.

8309. You have no written statement?—No.

8310. But you represent the township of Drumfearn?—Yes.

8311. How many crofters are in Drumfearn?—Ten crofts, but they are broken: they are all divided except one. Some of these crofts have three families settled on them.

8312. How many have three families?—There are three on No. 8, and three on No. 9, and three on No. 10.

8313. Is the township overcrowded in that way?—Very much. When the crofts were cut in 1811 the township consisted of ten crofts, and before then it was occupied by five.

8314. You mean there were first five crofts and then there were ten, and these ten have been divided into nineteen?—Yes, I believe there are twenty-one families now.

8315. Are two of these families cottars?—It is one cottar that is in the place.

8316. I find we fixed fair rents for nineteen holdings there, and originally you say there were five and afterwards ten?—Yes.

8317. But while the families increased in number the land remained of the same area, I suppose?—That is so; while the families were becoming more numerous, the crofts were remaining the same, and the crofts were being subdivided continually.

8318. How did that subdivision come about?—The crofters themselves were dividing in some instances; when a son would marry, the father would generally give him a place to build a house in a corner of the lot, and in some cases crofters who had whole crofts had other families settled among them by the landlord—families that were evicted from other places.

8319. I think it is stated by Mr. Macdonald of Skeabost in his pamphlet that in 1733 there were three tenants in Drumfearn—Angus Robertson and two others—so that the statement of the case, if I comprehend it correctly, is this: Originally three, then five, then ten, and now, from whatever cause, twenty-one?—That is so.

8320. Is that correct, do you think?—Yes, I believe that is correct.

8321. The township is very much overcrowded?—Yes, quite enough to do to carry the one half.

8322. Suppose you were relotting the township, how many crofters would you put upon it?—Ten.

8323. And remove the others to separate holdings?—Yes.

8324. Could ten crofters live there and keep themselves and their wives and families without further assistance by labour?—Not without labour elsewhere, but they would be much better off than they are at present.

8325. And is it the desire of the crofters in your township, those who would like to get away, to have holdings where they could maintain themselves and their families, or holdings where they would require to supplement what they get from the croft by their wages or fishing?—There are some in our township who could perhaps keep a croft on which they could live entirely; but there are others who could not take a bigger croft than they have at present.

8326. Just explain a little more distinctly, why?—It is difficult to get money; they are as needy of money as they are of stock. The three things are required by them—money, stock and land.

8327. What I would like to get at is this:—Is it the feeling of certain crofters in your township that they would like to have holdings where they could live by their holdings, or would they prefer a sort of holding that required outside labour to keep them going?—The desire of those in our township is that they should have crofts that would keep them at work all the year round.

Isleornsay, Skye.

Alexander Macinnes.

8328. Do any of the crofters in your township go to the fishing?—Yes, a great number of those in our township; if they don't do that, the township won't keep them alive.

8329. It is by fishing mainly that they are able to pay their rents?—Yes, between fishing and every other earning that they can get. They make a little money on the sale of cattle, but it is by their earnings mostly that they make the rent. The rent is nothing so much as the buying of meal, the crop does not grow on their crofts and they have to live on bought meal.

8330. *Mr Forsyth.*—I want some information as to how this great subdivision of holdings took place at Drumfearn. I think you said it was done partly by the tenants themselves, and partly by the estate?—Yes, I said so.

8331. The tenants simply subdivided their own holdings?—Yes, the father and son would divide the croft between them.

8332. Then did the proprietor in every case step in and cut the crofts in two or more pieces?—No, but he sent the ground officer and divided crofts to accommodate families who were evicted from Kilbride. Peter Gillies in Drumfearn had a whole croft, and Angus Macgillivray had another whole croft; and when Kilbride was cleared for Mr Mackinnon of Strath, Duncan Mackinnon was taken from Kilbride and settled at Drumfearn on one of these crofts, on Macgillivray's croft; and Angus Robertson was put in along with Peter Gillies.

8333. These were done by the direct order of the proprietor or his agent?—Yes. Kilbride was at that time cleared, and the tenants were settled between Drumfearn, and Suisnish and Boreraig, and Teangue.

8334. And this was done by direct order of the proprietor or his estate agent?—I don't know if it was the landlord, but it was those who were administering the estate under him.

8335. It was by his agent if not by him—his ground officer or agent?—Quite so.

8336. *Mr Mackintosh.*—You have a general knowledge of the ground. Would not the extension of a railway to Mallaig greatly benefit the crofters and others in the district?—I am not accustomed to railway work, and I have not seen much benefit that it has done in the country.

8337. I may state, my Lord, that we have not had a *bona fide* fisherman here to-day, or I would have put these questions to him.

Lachlan Macdonald.

LACHLAN MACDONALD, Duisdalebeag (*recalled*)—*examined.*

8338. *The Chairman.*—I think you said you represented five out of seven tenants?—Yes.

8339. Was five the number that applied to the Crofters Commission?—There were six.

8340. How is it you represent five and not the other two?—One of the other two is in the hands of the proprietor; the present tenant has only got it from year to year, and I had not his consent to appear for him; and the other, the eighth lot, is held by Mr Mackintosh here. If I said they should get more land, I believe Mr Mackintosh the factor would say no.*

8341. Mr Mackintosh is the occupant?—Yes.

* Mr Macdonald has, since the date of the examination, forwarded the following amended answer to question 8340: "Croft No. 7 is in the hands of the proprietor, and let to George Ross, march-keeper, Kinloch farm, from year to year. I have no authority to represent croft No. 7. Croft No. 8 is occupied by the Heirs of Mr Alexander Macintyre. If I were to apply for more land for No. 8, I believe Mr Mackintosh, the factor, would tell me that the present occupants are making poor use of what they have. If, however, the whole township of Duisdalebeag is restored to its resident tenants, we are open to let them all have equal shares of the pasture and hill ground, rents to be fixed according to value of individual crofts and share in hill ground."

JAMES MACKINTOSH, Ostaig, Sleat, Factor for Lord Macdonald—*examined.*

8342. *The Chairman.*—I said I might ask you a few questions. You made a statement with regard to seven farms, viz., Strollamus, Liveras, Corry, Kilbride, Suisnish and Boreraig, Scalpay and Kyle?—Yes.

8343. The total area, as I have added it up roughly, occupied by these farms is 29,025 acres?—I believe that is so.

8344. You may take that as correct or very near it. Now, the area of Strollamus is 2203 acres?—Yes, about that.

8345. How much of that is old arable?—I think it is stated in the report.

8346. You say in the report that there are about 22 acres of old arable which are kept under permanent grass. Is that all the old arable?—That is all the old arable that we could see.

8347. On this farm of Strollamus?—Yes.

8348. That you could see? but you know the farm well; there may be old arable presenting such an appearance now that it is not easy to say whether it is old arable or not?—It is quite possible.

8349. Now, in the case of Liveras, you say that of 751 acres 53 are arable, kept under a regular rotation of cropping; how much of that is old arable?—I am not aware of any, except a small patch at Skinidin, at the march with Strollamus farm.

8350. What extent?—Not more than 3 acres at the utmost.

8351. You say there is no more than that?—No more. (*A voice.*—There is more than 100). The gentleman who is speaking is referring to the whole farm of Corry; it is Liveras we are dealing with.

8352. Never mind these interruptions; they are not ill meant. Are you quite positive in your opinion that there are not more than 3 acres of old arable there?—There may be.

8353. But your view is that that is all?—That is all that has come under my notice.

8354. Now in Corry there are 3687 acres according to your statement, of which 20 acres or thereby are arable?—Yes.

8355. How much old arable?—There is a considerable quantity of what was old arable; it is stated there.

8356. You mentioned 20 acres, but that is not what I referred to?—There is also some part of it that was at some time cultivated. It gives the extent there, or at all events it describes the distance in yards.

8357. Here it is "The farm along Kilbride and Swordale marches consists of good mixed pasture, partly low-lying and liable to be flooded along the Broadford river, part of which has at one time been under cultivation. There is also a strip of land stretching from the present dwelling-house in a northerly direction to the public road leading to Broadford, a distance of about 1300 yards and about 300 yards broad, that has at one time been under cultivation, and is now under fog and fern." Is the area of that between 70 and 80 acres?—I believe that will be about it.

8358. Then in Kilbride there are 1877 acres, of which 40 acres are arable at Kilbride House. Is there land on the farm which you would describe as old arable?—No, I have not seen any.

8359. You need not say you "have not seen," you know the ground very well?—But I have really not seen any more: the Strath glebe is there, and passers-by might not be aware of the boundaries of the glebe.

8360. But leaving that out of view, you do not think there is any old arable?—No, I do not.

8361. Then, in Suisnish and Boreraig the extent is 2088 acres, occupied by Mr Malcolm Macinnes, and you say there that at the mouth of Lochs Slapin and Eishort there are about 80 acres of land which had at one time been under cultivation, extending from one place to another, which you mention. Is that all the old arable there?—That is.

8362. Then in Swordale there are 1859 acres, and 65 acres are arable. Is that the whole old arable?—My attention is drawn to the fact that there is some old arable mentioned in Boreraig, which is part of the farm of Suisnish and Boreraig.

8363. I see you say, "At Boreraig, on the shore of Loch Slapin . . . there are about 50 acres of old arable, which is very much broken up by rocks, and with the exception of the shepherd's park, and about another 2 acres, is under green pasture." That is the whole old arable in Suisnish and Boreraig?—Yes.

8364. Then in Swordale, out of 1859 acres, there are 65 arable and permanent grass. Is there to your knowledge other old arable on the farm?—There is not to my knowledge.

8365. Then on Scalpay there are 6098 acres with parks at Scalpay House, and 70 acres partly cultivated and partly under permanent pasture, but soft and boggy. Is that the whole arable or old arable in Scalpay?—That is the whole, with the exception, I think, of a few plots among the rocks, and inaccessible places cultivated by the grazing tenant for cattle.

8366. Then in Kyle there are 9490 acres, of which 15 acres are arable near Kyle House, and about 23 acres under permanent grass at Lusa Bridge. Is that the whole old arable at Kyle?—I think there is a small bit at the head of Loch-na-Beiste: it is mentioned there, I think.

8367. "At the top of Loch-na-Beiste a small piece of old arable is still green." What is the extent of it?—A few acres, not more than 4 or 5 at the outside. Of course we consider Ashaig as part of Kyle farm; there is no reference made there to the old arable on Ashaig.

8368. Now, going back to Strollamus farm, is the farm under lease?—The lease expires at Whitsunday.

8369. Of this year?—Of this year.

8370. And what is to become of the farm?—It is being relet by the landlord.

8371. On a written lease?—On a written lease to a crofter.

8372. To a crofter?—Yes.

8373. At what rent?—Within £5 of the present rent.

8374. That is?—£55 is the new rent: £60 is the present rent.

8375. I will ask, if you are at liberty to state, who the crofter is?—Donald Mackinnon at Strollamus. Of course the transaction is not quite concluded, but it is as good as settled.

8376. He is under the Act of Parliament?—He is.

8377. And he is to pay a rent of £55?—Yes.

8378. Is that a lease for a term of years?—A ten years lease.

8379. Going next to Liveras farm, is that under lease?—It is.

8380. For a term of years?—For a term of years.

8381. Expiring when?—There is a lease of fifteen years, I think, with breaks at seven.

8382. How long has the lease to run before it is out?—About ten years yet.

8383. And the rent there?—Is £60.

8384. Taking next Corry farm, is it under lease?—The tenant has not signed his lease, but——

8385. Is it a case of a tenure that would constitute a lease?—I think it would.

8386. Well, we need not go into the legal question. But he is by way of holding under a written lease for some years?—Yes.

8387. And some years have still to run?—Yes.

8388. What is the rent there?—The rent is £100.

8389. Then in Kilbride, is it under lease?—It is.

8390. For some years?—For some years. I think three of these leases expire about the same time, Corry, Kilbride, and Liveras.

8391. When?—In about ten years.

8392. What is the rent of Kilbride?—£70.

Isleornsay, Skye. — James Mackintosh.

8393. Then in the case of Suisnish and Boreraig farm, is it under lease?—It is.

8394. To Mr. Malcolm Macinnes?—Yes.

8395. How long has it to run?—About eleven years.

8396. What is the rent?—£125.

8397. Then is there a lease of Swordale farm?—There is.

8398. With some years to run?—Yes.

8399. What is the rent?—£124. That is not the rent stated in the lease; there was a reduction given to the tenants who held under old leases, and the tenant of Swordale also got a reduction.

8400. What was the rent of Swordale before the reduction?—30 per cent. more.

8401. Is the reduction given there in accordance with the reductions in the crofters' rents in the surrounding district?—Just about the same.

8402. Then as regards Scalpay Island, it is under lease to Mr. Ryrie for a term of years?—Yes, expiring in 1894.

8403. Is that a lease of the island alone, or a lease of the Kyle farm?—It is a lease of the island alone.

8404. For sporting and grazing?—For sporting and grazing.

8405. What rent does he pay?—£330.

8406. For the island?—For the whole island, including two small islets off it, Guilleman and Longay.

8407. He is also the tenant of Kyle farm?—Yes.

8408. And the shootings?—And the shootings.

8409. And he holds it under a written lease?—Yes.

8410. Expiring when?—About nine years hence.

8411. What is the rent there?—The rent is £440 for the whole subjects, shooting and grazing, and including Ashaig.

8412. You were asked a question yesterday, and your answer was that if you got the money expended by successive governments on Commissions you could better improve the condition of the crofting tenants in the Highlands than by any other proceeding. Is that your view?—I am sorry if I said "than by any other means," but "than they are at present," the condition could be improved.

8413. Did you intend that as a piece of impudence or what?—Well, I was perhaps a little annoyed at so much cross-firing levelled against me, and perhaps for once I lost my self-control.

8414. Do you wish it to stand upon record?—No, I do not.

8415. *Mr Sutherland.*—You withdraw it?—I do.

8416. I am glad to hear it, as that obviates the necessity for my putting some awkward questions.

8417. *The Chairman.*—I do not intend to ask you further about it, but I think it is a pity that a sentiment of this spirit should have escaped a responsible officer on this estate. However, you withdraw it?—I do, my Lord.

8418. Your practical acquaintance with this estate dates from 1886.—No, from 1888.

8419. But I suppose you have no doubt that in the past there has been, from whatever cause, a process of congestion arising in various townships?—No doubt about it.

8420. In many townships?—In many townships.

8421. And with a tendency to continue, but at a less rate?—Well, of course it is not allowed now.

8422. I know, but it went on at all events in the past?—It did.

8423. Due in part to the action of the tenants, and in part to the landlord?—Yes, certainly, due to both causes.

8424. And its effect has been injurious?—It has.

8425. Because at the time when the process was going on, no land was being added to the crofters, while the number of crofters or cottars was increasing, at least as a rule?—Well, as a rule; but there have been cases where crofters obtained more land.

8426. But the congestion has proceeded at a much greater rate than the giving of land till the time of the Crofters Commission?—Yes, I daresay it has.

8427. You would not desire, I am sure, to see that system perpetuated?—No, I would not.

8428. And its existence in the estate constitutes a danger?—Undoubtedly it does.

8429. For which, if possible, some remedy should be devised?—Surely.

8430. Now would not the formation of holdings upon grazing lands be one remedy?—Yes, that would be a remedy.

8431. To a certain extent would not it in your judgment be an effective remedy?—It would, to a certain extent; I admit that.

8432. The restoration of crofters to land from which they had, from whatever cause (I blame no one), been removed or removed themselves would constitute a material relief to the congested township?—It would to the congested townships, but it would not be an advantage or it would not be a benefit: it would be a benefit to the congested townships, but there are certain parts of the country which were occupied by crofters which I do not think crofters would——

8433. Advantageously occupy again?—No.

8434. I quite follow your meaning there. But leaving that for a moment out of view, would not it be a double benefit, supposing they got land reasonably capable of cultivation, would not it be a double benefit to those who got such lands, and to the relief of the townships, if that process were carried out to a considerable extent?—It would certainly be a benefit to both if it could be done.

8435. I am not at all discussing at present the landlord's claim.—I quite understand.

8436. And is it not your opinion that there are considerable tracts of land within the area of the farms you have mentioned, affording facilities for such an experiment?—Well, with the exception of Corry Farm. Corry Farm possesses a certain amount of land that might with some considerable expense be made into arable, and it also possesses what I consider would be a fair amount of hill grazing for as many holdings as the arable land could hold. That is one place that I think of. But as to the farms of Kyle and Kinloch, the amount of grazing is so much out of proportion to the land that is now arable or to any land that could be made into arable that it could not be profitably occupied by crofters or by any person who depended in any way on cultivating land. I may state that the reason why I believe the farm of Kinloch has been left on the proprietor's hands is that there is no arable land. I have had several parties inquiring after it, and one or two came to see it.

8437. You mean there is a disproportion between the extent of grazing and the extent of arable?—A great disproportion.

8438. But supposing the arable of Kinloch—I am only taking it as a possible illustration—were assigned to as many crofters as skilled men might think fit to put upon it, with as much hill grazing as the arable required for a properly formed croft, might not the remaining hill grazing be properly dealt with by being assigned elsewhere?—No, I am afraid not.

8439. Why?—Well, the sea is the boundary on the one side. All the arable land lies at the head of Loch-na-dal—there are a few patches round the shore. But the hill ground extends back to the march with the Breakish hill, right over the top on to the road at Bealachode and on to Kyle Rhea. I consider that that land without any arable or low land about it, would be quite useless for grazing. The low ground is at Kinloch, at this end of it, and it is very useful in spring: in fact the farm has not got as much of it as it ought to have.

8440. But could the grazing not be assigned to other townships, leaving as much of it as is necessary for the arable that would be formed upon the low ground of the farm?—No, I don't think so.

8441. Why? I don't wish to press you unfairly.—My reason for it is this, the Breakish tenants have got the best stretch of ground between their arable ground

and the Kinloch march as it is. So that to give them what would perhaps fall to their share of Kinloch hill would make their grazing of an enormous extent; make it perhaps 10,000 acres.

8442. Too large to be managed?—Too large to be managed by crofters.

8443. I know your connection with the island is comparatively recent, but do you know anything of the details of the formation of any of these farms?—Not sufficiently well to give evidence on that point. I may be able to answer any question about them, as I have a fair knowledge of them.

8444. But I suppose it is the fact that these farms or some of them at least have from time to time been increased by encroachments upon what was formerly land in the cultivation and occupation of small tenants?—Well, in regard to the farms of Kyle, Kyleakin and Kinloch. I am not aware that either of these has encroached upon any land that was formerly held by crofters or small tenants.

8445. But you say affirmatively with regard to all the others?—Well, I will speak of each one.

8446. Please do so.—We will take then the farm of Ord.

8447. Is that one of the farms in your list?—Not in yesterday's evidence. Certainly Kyleakin farm and Kinloch were not formed at the expense of crofters' lands: neither was Scalpay.

8448. Take Strollamus?—I cannot say as to Strollamus.

8449. Liveras?—I have no record of crofters having ever occupied any part of the farm of Liveras.

8450. What is your belief?—I do not think they ever occupied it.

8451. Are you able to say so?—Well I have not looked into the question of Liveras.

8452. Corry?—I do not think Corry was occupied by crofters: I have never come across any evidence that it was.

8453. But you don't know?—No, I don't know.

8454. Kilbride?—There were crofters in Kilbride.

8455. Suisnish and Boreraig?—Yes, there were crofters there.

8456. And Kyle?—On Kyleakin, no, nor on Kinloch.

8457. And Swordale, what about it?—I am not aware of crofters ever having been there; I don't think there were ever any there.

8458. Now you have admitted quite candidly that the present state of matters, arising from whatever cause, is injurious to the estate?—It is.

8459. What remedy would you propose? I leave out of view your answer given yesterday, to which you do not adhere?—Certainly.

8460. What is your remedy, speaking as a man of skill and dealing with the matter in all seriousness, and with a desire either at your own hand or as advising Lord Macdonald, to take some steps if it be within his power—what would your proposal be?—I would favour the formation of small holdings in such places as would enable the occupiers to earn their living, as the most successful of them do now, partly on sea and partly on land.

8461. In short, you would advocate a development?—Of fishing industry.

8462. Of the present system?—Not of the present system exactly.

8463. You would develop and increase the number of crofter fishermen?—Certainly.

8464. Are you not disposed to view with favour any proposal for the assignment of land to crofters for grazing farms? I am not dealing at all just now with the question of injury to the farm or to the landlord, that is another matter.—I quite understand.

8465. But leaving these considerations out of view, are you not disposed to view with favour the assignment of land to crofters from grazing farms?—I would favour the giving of crofts of a fair size to crofters from the grazing farms; that is, crofts of not less than 15 to 20 acres of arable land, where a crofter, situated inland, would be fully employed on his croft all the year round.

Isleornsay, Skye. — James Mackintosh.

8466. And a corresponding extent of hill grazing?—Yes.

8467. And would you expect a man on a holding of that sort to be able to maintain himself in average circumstances?—Yes.

8468. And I suppose you would also say that there is such land within the area we are dealing with?—There is such land, if it could be obtained.

8469. Of course if it can be obtained?—Without serious injury to the remaining part.

8470. What rent do you have in view in describing the holding?—I would consider that a rent that a crofter might be expected to pay would be about 16s. 8d. for each cow's grazing if he had a holding, and a proportionate rent for younger stock.

8471. And his arable of course according to the quality of the particular land?—Yes, and so much for the sheep. I mean by cow, a Highland cow of course.

8472. Would crofts of that size if developed to a considerable extent operate a material relief to the congestion that exists?—No doubt it would, if there be an improvement in the agricultural depression.

8473. I assume that too?—If not, of course there is not the same chance.

8474. But I am afraid then all sorts of people would suffer in that way?—Yes.

8475. Are you in favour of a croft the rent of which is paid partly by labour and partly by the profits of the holding?—I am in favour of a certain number of them. All crofts should not be so, nor should all crofts be such as would maintain the crofters all the year round without going elsewhere

8476. You would have a gradation of holdings?—A gradation of holdings.

8477. Beginning with the fisherman's croft in point of size and going up to the large farm?—Yes.

8478. What would you desire, if you had the doing of it yourself, to see as the average rent of a crofter with a self-sustaining holding in this part of the island?—I think about £20.

8479. Would you not be in favour of holdings with rents as low as £10 to £12 as self-sustaining holdings?—No, I do not think that there can be any self-sustaining holdings at that rent.

8480. What rent would you like to see?—Well, some men might occupy holdings of the rent you mention and have well to do families elsewhere which would assist them in keeping the holding.

8481. Is that a good state of matters where a man depends on his family?—No, it is not a good state of matters; but of course, when people do become aged and not exactly fit to look after holdings, they become dependent on their families in many cases in this country.

8482. Do you think it a fair system, the system of holdings for which confessedly the rent is got elsewhere?—I think it is.

8483. You think it is fair?—I think it is. I don't consider that a man should have a holding to which he would require to attend perhaps when his labour was of most value elsewhere. I think about £3—that is the grazing for two cows—and a few sheep would be sufficient for any man who had to go away six months of the year—who left his holding for six months of the year.

8484. Now I pass to another matter. All the houses of crofters in this part of the island have been put up by the crofters themselves?—Yes, I may say in almost every case.

8485. And for long years the rents on this part of the Macdonald estate were not raised?—They were not.

8486. The improvements made, such as they were, were done by the tenants?—Yes they were, except that Lord Macdonald's ancestors spent a great many thousands of pounds in making roads in Skye.

8487. That I quite understand, I am speaking

more of individual holdings. In the individual holdings the improvements, such as they were, were effected by the tenants?—Yes.

8488. And there was not the system, which we found to exist in some other quarters, of aid bestowed in the way of lime or slates, except perhaps to a very small extent?—No, I don't think there was.

8489. On the other hand, in the case of large farms, the leases stipulate, don't they, for improvements by the landlord? in the first place, the dwelling-house and steading is put up by the landlord?—Yes, in most cases.

8490. And where there are improvements stipulated for in the lease the stipulation is for the most part mutual, certain improvements by the tenants during a nineteen years lease, and certain improvements by the landlord?—That is in the most cases the way.

8491. Now in estimating the difference or contrasting the difference between the rents of crofting tenants and the rents paid by tacksmen did you allow for that?—To a certain extent it was allowed for.

8492. To what extent?—The crofters' rents in this parish and the Macdonald estates were not raised from 1810, except to the extent of 7½ per cent., for a very long time. Now the rent of sheep farms rose considerably; and I must say for the farming tenants on the Macdonald property, that when the times were good, they spent a great deal of money of their own on their holdings, and the amount of hill ground—perhaps I am not following it exactly?

8493. No, I don't think you are following me. What I want to know is this: in contrasting the difference between the rents paid by crofters, and the rents paid by large farmers, did you allow for the matter of improvements?—Well, the rents paid by the crofters were fixed by the Crofters Commission.

8494. I am not dealing with that at all.—The present rent paid by crofters?

8495. I was pointing out to you at some length the improvements done by the crofters, and the improvements done by the large farmers. I say, when you compared these two rents, did you allow for the difference in the process and cost of improvements; or just frankly say you did not?—No, I did not.

8496. That is a frank way to deal with it. Now, suppose you allow for the difference, would not it make a difference of 20 per cent.?—I am not prepared to admit it would.

8497. But you are prepared to admit it would be a good deal more than nominal?—It would.

8498. Now, you heard the figures given to-day in some detail, and after, I have no doubt, careful calculation by Mr Myles Macinnes; contrasting crofting rents with farming rents.—Yes.

8499. Did you see any reason to dispute these figures, assuming the perfect *bonâ fides* of the writer?—I see no reason; the only discrepancy I could discover was that he understated the rent of Tormore, Gillan and Ostaig.

8500. We had that up already; Mr Macleod expiscated the matter, I think?—But I have this to say, that Mr Macinnes omitted to state that the crofters possess a great deal more arable land than the tacksmen do.

8501. In proportion?—In proportion. The proportion of arable land possessed by tacksmen in this parish is not more than 200 acres, whereas the crofters possess about 900 acres.

8502. Well, I don't follow you into that; that may be important. Now, would not you say that a crofter's rent ought to be on a rather lower scale than a large farmer's rent, because the large farmer lives by his farm, and the farm is formed on the footing that he has not only to pay his rent, but to make his childrens' way in the world; the crofter subsists partly by his holding, and partly by his wages in labour, at least for the most part. In such circumstances would you not say—*a priori* I mean—that the crofter's rent should be at a rather less rate than the farmer's?—No, I don't think it ought.

8503. Why?—I consider that when a crofter or any man depending on his two hands for labour to earn his living, possesses subjects which make a fair value, he is in a far better position if his rent is a fair rent, than a labourer who lives in the town.

Isleornsay, Skye.

James Mackintosh.

8504. I am not comparing him with the labourer in the town; I am asking you to compare him with the large farmer. Now, don't you think that a crofter who has to sustain himself partly by his labour, or fishing and partly by his croft ought to pay rather at a less rate than the large farmer?—No.

8505. Why?—I cannot see that he should.

8506. Do you give any reason?—I can see no reason why one man should pay less for a certain article than another, if it is of equal value to both.

8507. Oh, no; but you are mixing up things that differ. I am comparing the crofter with the large farmer. The crofter is in his position, and the farmer is in his. The crofter is a man with narrow means, and ekes out the good of his holding by fishing or labour; the farmer is an extensive capitalist (or was at least), who not only lives by his holding, but brings up his family and progresses in the world. Don't you think as between these two men, and as a matter of fairness, that the crofter, instead of paying at a higher rate, should pay at a lower rate?—I have no doubt he has been hitherto paying at a lower rate. Of course the farmer has a certain amount of capital.

8508. Take this view of it. You have admitted already that the crofter's land has, for the most part, been improved by himself; the farmer gets his farm in so much arable, so much grazing, such and such a dwelling-house, and such and such a steading, all compact and fitted, the one into the other, so that there is a sort of guarantee in the very condition of the thing, that with average years he will be able to work it to some profit, and in the past he did. He improves no land; he gets a thing ready to go on with, but he improves no land except under some stipulations in a written lease. Now, in these circumstances, don't you think a crofter who is improving his own land altogether, beginning with a small patch and making it gradually double and treble the size, should pay rather a less rate than the farmer? is not that common fairness, as well as common sense?

8509. You had better just say yes.—I am not prepared to say that the farmer pays less than the crofter.

8510. But you know you had a lot of figures given you to-day, which you are not disputing?—I am not disputing them, but I consider that the mode of comparison was not exactly what it ought to be.

8511. But, suppose that I am proceeding from data that are correct in point of fact—assume that for a moment; of course, what I am driving at would fall to the ground, if it is not correct in point of fact. But take your facts hypothetically from me; don't you think it only fair that in such a case the crofter should pay rather less than more?—Certainly, if the facts were as stated by your Lordship.

8512. Quite so. Therefore, does not this follow, that if the crofters in certain districts got new holdings assigned to them of the kind you describe, they should be called on to pay rather a less rate than the farmer is paying for that land? does not that follow?—The difficulty is to arrive at what the tacksman really pays for the land that crofters must be put upon.

8513. You are quite fair to raise that, but suppose the rate is proportioned. I don't know that it can be, but suppose it is proportioned to the piece of land assigned, arable and grazing. Would not you say that the crofter in this case ought to pay at rather a less rate than the farmer has been paying?—Well, I do not think he should.

8514. You do not think so?—No.

8515. *Mr Gordon.*—You stated in answer to his Lordship that there would be a difficulty in dealing with the remainder of such a farm as Kinloch, provided the low ground was taken from it?—Yes, there would.

8516. Do you mean by that, that you want the

low ground for the wintering of the high ground?—Yes.

8517. And consequently if the wintering ground was taken off the farm, the higher ground would be of little or no value to anybody?—Of no value to anybody.

8518. And there is not arable land or low ground in the neighbourhood that would be available for the high ground of this farm?—No, certainly not.

8519. I assume that the tenants here receive and expect the buildings at entry of their leases as in good order?—The tacksmen do.

8520. Do you bind them to keep them in good order, and deliver them over?—We do.

8521. Then they have that expense along with their rents?—Yes, they have to keep up the buildings.

8522. Can you tell me what is the total extent of land under farms in this parish?—I will give you the acreage of the principal farms in the parish.

8523. But you cannot tell me the whole? (*Mr Macleod.*—26,000 acres).

8524. Can you tell me how much is under crofts? (*Mr Macleod.*—About 15,000)—There are 41,994 acres in the parish belonging to Lord Macdonald.

8525. That would leave 15,000 to crofters?—I can give you the amount under crofters. The total acreage under crofters in this parish is 13,460 acres.

8526. I am asking you these questions with reference to the proportion of the rents. Can you tell me how many acres of arable land there are in the 26,000?—Not over 200.

8527. That is less than 1 per cent.?—Yes.

8528. And 939 acres in the crofts?—Yes.

8529. That is about 7 per cent.?—Yes.

8530. Seeing that there is only 1 per cent., or less, of arable land on the farms, while there is 7 or 8 per cent of arable land on the crofts, would that account to some extent for Mr Myles Macinnes's relative rentals?—It would fully account for it.

8531. *Mr Munro.*—There was one point raised here to-day by Mr Macinnes in his statement, which I should like to test from your point of view. Macinnes, in advocating the claims of the crofters to more land, said that Government ought to provide loans to enable them to stock their crofts and to erect new buildings. He also furnished us with four grounds of security—the first was the buildings; second, the stock on the croft; third, the game; and fourth, the County Council, which was to intervene between the borrower and the lender. Now, do you see anything defective in any of these securities, or in all four combined?—The buildings, of course, would be of considerable value, but I would not take stock as security for money advance, and I would not give money on security of stock.

8532. I assume that any money the Government advanced will be within the value of the securities. I assume, for example, that if a crofter were building a house worth £100, possibly £75 of that might be advanced, or £80?—Yes.

8533. You consider that a fair security?—But Mr. Gordon also brought out that one of the first claims on the proceeds of the stock should be the payment of the rent.

8534. And you will remember that Mr. Macinnes said that that should be made the first charge?—Yes, it should.

8535. Therefore the remaining stock on the farm *minus* the rent would be a first security to the State for making the advance?—Yes.

8536. You see no objection to a crofter hypothecating the stock on his farm as one of the securities for an advance?—No. Of course I am taking it for granted that you mean a joint stock of sheep?

8537. I do.—No, it would be an improvement on the present system.

8538. And do you consider that the crofter would be able now, supposing that he got a croft of the size already specified, on an average to pay back any reasonable loan made to him by the Government within a period of thirty years, principal and interest?—It depends a great deal on the price of stock.

8539. I admit that; but assuming a fair average of prosperous years, would you allow that he then should?—Of course, I think if a crofter cultivated such a croft as has been described with skill and energy, and kept good stock, he might reasonably be expected to pay the money back in thirty years.

8540. *Mr Macallum.*—With regard to the acreage of arable land in the farms *v.* crofts, no doubt that is an important element in considering the rent?—Certainly.

8541. Now you say that there are only 200 acres in the farms?—Not more than 200.

8542. Could these 200 acres be ploughed?—You may take it as ploughable land.

8543. Now take the 900 acres with which you are comparing these 200; could all these be ploughed in the crofts?—No, I cannot say that the 900 could be ploughed, but I stated that the 900 are under cultivation.

8544. But they are not land that could be ploughed?—Not the whole; certainly not the whole.

8545. Could you give any idea of the number of acres the crofters have that is ploughed?—No.

8546. But there is a great proportion of the 900 acres under crop that can only be cultivated by the caschrom?—The proportion that cannot be ploughed is not so great as the proportion that can; the greater part of it can be ploughed.

8547. I don't want that at all. Is it not the case that the greatest number of the 900 acres is cultivated by the caschrom?—No it is not.

8548. The most of the 900 acres are ploughed?—Yes, the most of the 900 acres in this parish are ploughed.

8549. Now, with regard to the 200 acres in the farms, you say that these could be ploughed. Can you give now the number of acres that were cultivated at some time or other in the farms?—No, I cannot.

8550. But don't you think there is a great number of acres, besides the 200 you gave, that were at one time cultivated?—It is quite possible.

8551. And the farmers have allowed these to get back to a state of nature?—Yes.

8552. So that if the land in tacks now were under crofters they would cultivate far more than 200, would they not?—They might.

8553. And they did at some time or other?—No, I don't admit they did.

8554. Do you really say that not more than 200 acres in the tacks were ever cultivated?—By crofters.

8555. But cultivated?—Yes, but not by crofters.

8556. Oh, well, sub-tenants; it does not matter what name we call them by, but was more than 200 cultivated?—No, not more than 200.

8557. But you have said that far more than that was cultivated?—At the one time.

8558. At one time or other; that is what I am asking?—There are a few acres perhaps more than 200.

8559. Did not you say there was a very considerable number of acres that was cultivated in some way or other at some time or other?—I don't know if it is considerable.

5860. Can you give any accurate idea then at all of the number?—No, I would state that there are 200 acres of arable land under cultivation in the farms at present.

8561. And you leave out of consideration the large portion that was cultivated at one time or other by crofters or sub-tenants?—I do not say whether it was considerable.

8562. But you leave it out of consideration, you don't include that?—No, I do not, but at the same time I will say that there are not 25 acres more.

8563. That was ever cultivated?—Yes.

8564. Then you are prepared to say that 200 acres was the utmost that was cultivated in the farms mentioned?—225.

Isleornsay, Skye.

James Mackintosh.

8565. In any way whatever?—Well, I am not going to go back in any way whatever.

8566. But that is the question. There are signs of cultivation all over the hills, and do you say that 200 acres will cover all the acres we see evidently bearing the signs of having been cultivated?—They have been cultivated in a way, lazy beds and such like; not by the farmers.

8567. By whom then?—By cottars and sub-tenants.

8568. Well, that is exactly what I wish to get at. May you not quite well admit that in the farms there is a large number of acres that was cultivated in some way or other by cottars, crofters, and farmers that you do not include in your 200 acres?—Well, I will admit there was by cottars, crofters, farmers, or others.

8569. So that it is not a fair comparison that you institute between the 900 and the 200?—That is the state at present.

8570. They cultivate 200 and the crofters 939?—Yes.

8571. But the crofters cultivate land which the large farmers would leave out and such land as they do leave out?—And the crofters cultivate better land than the farmers have to cultivate. In some cases farmers cultivate worse land than the crofters have.

8572. I don't wish to go into minute details as you have been so long under examination; but you mentioned a number of farms that were not made out of small holdings. Scalpay, for instance. Do you say there were no small holdings on Scalpay?—There were no small holdings. There were tenants in the employment of the tacksmen, allowed to cultivate a piece of the land as part of their wages, just as at the present time.

8573. And are you quite positive, that there were no crofters paying to the landlord?—I would be very much surprised if there were. I have not obtained such information.

8574. In Skeabost's return Kemball is mentioned as having four tenants. Are you prepared to say that that is wrong?—In the first place, I do not know where that place is.

8575. Well, I have been over Scalpay myself, and it is one of the names that are given Gemboil?—I don't know the name; I could not localise that place.

8576. Do you know Kenachtrich?—Yes, there is a place of that name.

8577. It is given also as a separate holding in Scalpay?—Does it state in Scalpay?—there may be similar names for other places.

8578. My clear understanding of it is that the township is in Scalpay. May it not be that in the other townships too—is your information so distinct that it may not possibly be that there were townships in these farms that you mentioned?—I think I may say that my information is such that I can safely say there were not.

8579. Then with regard to what you said about Commissions—I don't wish to enter into that, but don't you think really that the Crofters Act has done some good to the people of Skye? Have they not derived some benefit from the working of the Crofters Act?—Well, in some cases they have.

8580. And they are getting up houses?—But if you put that question to some of the crofters, many of them would conscientiously tell that it has not; they have stated it to me repeatedly.

8581. But you think it has?—It has in some cases; it has benefited the proprietor.

8582. I noticed you put a question to-day, suggesting as the reason why large farmers did not expend so much on their holdings as the crofters, was that the large farmers had not fixity of tenure. It is a desirable thing generally speaking, and will lead to people making improvements on their holdings?—No doubt if a man considered anything was his own he would treat it better than if he thought he had only the loan of it.

8583. Don't you think there was some need of some Commission then?—I appeal to you, my Lord, whether I should be asked the question.

Isleornsay, Skye.

James Mackintosh.

8584. I will not go into it. I do not object in the slightest to the way in which you have given your answers; I am much obliged to you for your answers, and I have not put any question to you to annoy you in the slightest. I think you have answered very fairly, and that we have no reason whatever to complain of the way in which you have spoken.

8585. *Mr Sutherland.*—With regard to the difference in the land, I understand that you said that an important element in the comparison of the rentals per acre was the fact that the crofters had more arable land in their area than the large farmers had in theirs?—Yes.

8586. Have you considered the origin of the arable land as an element? Of course the same question was put to you in a slightly different form by the chairman; have you considered that in one case the crofters made the land arable, and in the other case the farmer got it ready made. Is not that a very important element?—No, I consider that a great deal of what is now arable land held by crofters, was made when the occupiers of it were servants of the tacksmen, or cottars who were allowed to cultivate land as part of their wages.

8587. Your opinion is that they were shifted from one township and put in another?—No. There have been cases of that, but my opinion is that where cottars were allowed to settle down, and cultivate patches of land, and to give labour to the tacksmen in return for the privilege of cultivating the land, when these tacksmen from various circumstances gave up the land, the proprietor then formed these into townships in some cases.

8588. Take an instance—the case of Breakish, for example, which we see when passing along the road, I suppose it is Upper Breakish. Do you consider that any large farmer would cultivate that land under any circumstances whatsoever?—Well, I don't think I would cultivate it if I was a farmer.

8589. And do you think the people themselves cultivate it of choice?—I don't know.

8590. What would that land in your opinion be worth per acre when the people were settled upon it?—I don't know the condition it was in.

8591. Suppose it to be common pasture land, which I presume it was—a few pence?—I am not going into that.

8592. What do you think it is worth to-day; what, as a matter of fact, are they paying for it?—I really don't know what they are paying to-day; it will be found in the Crofters Commission Report.

8593. It is a few shillings, no doubt?—Probably.

8594. So that the difference in value between the two is given to it by the people's own labour?—No, I am not prepared to admit that.

8595. Are you prepared to admit that the value of the large holdings is considerably added to by the facts of the green spots being there? I think you have admitted that already.—Yes, certainly.

8596. Do you believe that those green spots were there naturally, or that they were the result of former cultivation?—There are certain green spots naturally in the country.

8597. And in the place from which people were evicted, are not these green spots there now, and giving value to the farm in which they now are?—I consider that any arable land in this country will not continue fertile very long; it will go back to heather and fog and bracken.

8598. But the part that remains still—there are traces of old cultivation on these farms, are there not?—Yes, there are some traces of cultivation.

8599. And they give a great deal of value to the grazing farms that already exist?—They add to the value of them.

8600. Yes, considerably. And I think you stated that one of the causes why Kyle farm was not so valuable was that it had fewer of those green spots

within its borders?—Absence of land fit for cultivation.

8601. And of land that had been cultivated?—Or land that had been cultivated.

8602. And is it not the fact that the land there was the result of crofters' previous industry?—No, they were not crofters.

8603. They were not grazing farmers, were they?—They were not crofters who cultivated that land.

8604. You mean crofters as now defined by statute. Do you make that legal distinction? We know that none of them existed before 1886.—I go a little further back, and say the beginning of the present century.

8605. So that the double value of land that is occupied now as grazing, and now as crofters' holdings, has been given to it by the labour of the same people?—No, the labour of the servants of the tacksman.

8606. They are not the same people at all? the cultivators did not give the value to the soil that it now has in either case?—There were not rent paying cultivators.

8607. I must say I do not see how that affects the question at all. A value is given to land in a grazing farm because of former cultivation?—Yes.

8608. And value is given to crofters' land now by their cultivation?—Yes.

8609. And you debit the people twice with the result of their own former industry?—I don't admit that the cultivation in every case of farms was done by crofters.

8610. *The Chairman.*—Have you a statement regarding Sleat similar to what you read regarding Strath?—I have. [It is given on page 208.]

I will now read reports by Mr Taylor and myself on farms in Sleat:—

REPORT on the farms of KINLOCH, ORD, KNOCK, OSTAIG, and TORMORE, the property of Lord MACDONALD.

KINLOCH.

This farm extends to 8340 acres, and is at present in the hands of the proprietor. It is bounded on the north by Breakish Common Hill, on the east by Kyleakin crofting township, on the south by the Sound of Sleat, and on the west by Loch-na-Dal, Duisdale and Drumfearn. At the old farm-house on the west side, and near the public road leading from Broadford to Isleornsay, as also near the present dwelling-house, there are a few pieces of land that were at one time under cultivation in connection with the farm, but which is now pasture. There are also some signs of former cultivation along the shore from near the mouth of Loch-na-Dal on to Alien, but the soil is thin and poor, lying on rock and mostly covered by natural birchwood, and not worth cultivation. No cultivation is being done on the farm, and with the exception of about 20 acres at the old farm-house and the present dwelling-house, there is no land that could be brought under cultivation.

With the exception of the parts mentioned the farm is composed entirely of moorland, all the green pasture being on the south-west side in the natural wood, and without which the farm would not be suitable for a sheep stock.

The part at Alien where the patches of old cultivation can be traced is three miles from the public road at Kinloch and four miles from Kylerhea, where the nearest public school is.

The ground is also very steep, and seaweed, I believe, is scarce and is at present claimed and boated away by the crofters at Isleornsay.

I do not consider any part of this farm suitable for crofters to cultivate, at any rate that could be profitably cultivated.

The dwelling-house, which is comparatively new, was recently added to and improved, and is now very suitable for the farm.

ORD.

This farm, as at present possessed by Mr Macdonald, extends to 6147 acres, and is bounded on the north and west by Loch Eishart, on the south by common hill grazings, and on the east by Camuscross crofting township and the farm of Knock.

The farm was fenced on three sides by the present tenant and is thoroughly enclosed, Loch Eishart as mentioned forming the fourth side. There is about 30 acres of arable land on the farm situated on both sides of the dwelling-house, part of which is regularly cultivated, and part under permanent grass, the latter being on thin and rocky soil and enclosed by a wire fence.

The only other part of the farm which has been cultivated is where a shepherd lives, and a small park at Morsaig where the soil is thin and poor, partly hard and partly wet, and would give a very poor return.

Along the shore of Loch Eishart, from Morsaig to near Ord House, there is a strip of green pasture mostly covered with natural birch, which with the glen along Ord River is all the green pasture, the remainder of the farm being moorland, a large proportion of which at the north-west side is bare rock affording very little grazing. At Morsaig, where the small patches of cultivation have been made, there is no road, the nearest road being that to Drumfearn, distant over a mile. Should this piece of inferior land be cut off the farm, it would not be sufficient to accommodate more than one or two families. We do not suppose, however, that any one would care to go to such an inconvenient place.

We see no other land on the farm worth cultivating unless a few patches along the Ord River in the direction of the present sheep fank, right in the centre of the farm, which could not be detached from the farm without entirely spoiling the working of it as a sheep grazing.

There appears to us to be a scarcity of arable and green pasture in proportion to the extent of hill grazing—so much so that it is doubtful if either sheep or cattle can be brought out to an average size.

The dwelling-house is good and suitable for the farm as at present occupied, as also the offices.

KNOCK.

This small farm, as at present occupied by Captain Kemble, extends to 1818 acres, of which about 40 acres are arable and 35 acres old cultivation now under pasture, the remainder being hill grazing. It is bounded on the north by the township of Camuscross, on the east by the Sound of Sleat, on the south by Knock Bay and the crofting township of Teangue, and on the west by the said township of Teangue and Ord. This farm was at one time much larger than at present, consequently the dwelling-house and offices, which are both superior buildings, are rather too good and commodious.

The farm is of a size that is not likely to be interfered with by the Commission of Enquiry, and, were it possible, should be added to so as to make the extent of grazing in keeping with the buildings.

Most of the arable land is fair good soil, and probably some portions not now under cultivation might be tilled without loss; but we cannot see room for any crofters, unless they were to get it all, and it would be a mistake to render useless the present dwelling-house and steading.

There is difficulty now in letting such a small grazing with such a large house, and were it reduced in size the likelihood is that a tenant could not be got, and that both house and land would be left in Lord Macdonald's hands.

OSTAIG and GILLEN.

This farm is at present occupied by Mr Kennard, who with the consent of Lord Macdonald sublets the portion known as Gillen.

MACDONALD ESTATES.

STATEMENT showing Extent of Arable and Pasture land, &c., held by the Crofters of each Township, the number of stock they are entitled to keep on the Common Grazings, the Fair Rent fixed, the Arrears ordered by the Commission to be paid, and the Arrears outstanding at 19th May 1893.

PARISH OF SLEAT.

Township.	Arable.	Outrun and Hill Pasture.	Total.	Common Pasture.	No. of Tenants.	No. of Lots.	Souming.			Fair Rent.	Arrears ordered to be Paid.	Arrears at 20th May 1893.	Remarks.
							Horses.	Cattle.	Sheep.				
	ac. ro. po.	ac. ro. po.	ac. ro. po.							£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	
Aird Point	17 0 37	188 0 26	205 1 23	...	5	5	...	10	70	6 4 0	7 12 0	1 10 0	
Aird	123 3 20	2818 3 6	2942 2 26	...	46	18	18	108	468	103 7 0	152 19 0	44 13 0	
Calligary	114 2 21	968 1 6	1082 3 27	...	38	18	18	72	...	70 8 4	59 4 0	19 18 6	Tenants of No. 1 Calligary have no share in common grazing.
Kilmore	36 1 4	242 3 36	279 1 0		8	6	6	24	72	26 7 0	22 15 8	4 16 0	
Ferrindonald	53 0 37	259 1 20	312 2 27		7	9	9	24	108	35 6 0	19 0 0	7 6 0	
Saasaig	77 3 12	301 3 4	379 2 16		19	10	10	40	130	47 3 0	61 2 6	30 9 0	
Teangul	76 1 25	545 0 15	621 2 0	2530	17	10	10	40	130	44 12 0	41 10 0	12 18 0	
Achnacloich	40 1 20	492 3 9	533 0 29		14	14	14	49	140	38 8 0	69 18 0	60 16 0	
Tarskaveg	102 3 20	948 1 24	1051 1 4		35	31	31	93	400	75 14 0	91 17 0	35 1 10	
Tockaveg	38 2 6	413 3 20	452 1 26		7	7	7	24	189	28 16 0	34 0 0	4 18 0	
Drumfearn	70 3 27	1424 1 33	1495 1 20	...	20	10	10	60	250	58 9 0	79 7 0	22 10 6	
Duisdalebeg	20 2 37	375 1 31	396 0 28	...	7	7	4	22	No fixed Number.	27 0 0	38 0 0	6 5 0	
Duisdalemore	31 2 36	380 1 13	42 0 27	...	5	5	5	30	do.	32 10 0	31 15 0	8 15 0	
Camuscross	96 1 8	416 2 2	512 3 10	...	39	39	...	78	...	75 16 2	91 4 0	22 5 0	
Kylerhea	38 1 30	214 2 7	252 3 37	...	13	11	...	22	No fixed Number.	18 19 0	24 0 0	5 5 0	
	939 1 20	9990 3 30	10,930 1 10	2530	230	200	142	696		688 19 6	824 4 2	287 6 10	
			2,530 0 0										
			13,460 1 10										

BROADFORD, 19*th May* 1893.

(Signed) JAMES MACKINTOSH,
Factor for LORD MACDONALD.

Signed) JOHN TAYLOR, Land Surveyor

Isleornsay, Skye.

James Mackintosh.

Ostaig extends to 3984 acres, of which about 90 acres are arable and permanent grass, and about 30 acres of old cultivation now green pasture. On the farm of Gillen, extending to 1740 acres, there are about 8 acres arable and 10 acres permanent grass.

The farm is let to Mr Kennard, is bounded on the north by the Crofters' Common, on the east by the sound of Sleat and Armadale Home Farm, on the south by the township of Calligary and farm of Tormore, and on the west by Cuillin Sound.

With the exception of the parts mentioned as arable, permanent grass, and green pasture, the whole farm is composed of moorland suited only for pasture and in no part adapted for cultivation. The 30 acres of old arable land now green pasture is situated near the centre of the farm, and were it better suited for cultivation than it is, it could not be detached from it without doing great injury to the remainder.

There is a good dwelling-house at Ostaig and a suitable steading. There is also a dwelling-house at Gillen and small steading.

TORMORE.

The farm is at present occupied by Mr Kennard and extends to 3895 acres, of which only about 20 acres are arable and permanent grass. The farm is bounded on the north by Gillen, Ostaig and Calligary, on the east by the Sound of Sleat, on the south by Aird of Sleat, and on the west Cuillin Sound.

There are two places on the farm where some cultivation has been done, viz., at Capistal and Caradal. The former place is at the march of the township of Aird, and is composed of steep rocky land, the only good bit being a small park of about 2 acres at present cultivated by a shepherd. I no not consider this place at all suitable for cultivation, and it is situated over a mile from the nearest public road. The second place, Caradal, is on the west side of the farm, situated at the head of a small bay near the entrance to Loch Eishart. The land is steep and rocky, with the exception of a few spots of apparently fair soil. I do not consider it a place where crofters could make a livelihood by cultivation, and it is besides outlying and distant three miles from the nearest public road.

If, however, this small point, extending to about 65 acres, were properly fenced off by a substantial wire fence from the top of Dalavil Bay to a point on Tormore Farm near Loch-an-Seilach, it would be a most suitable place for six fishermen with families. The small bay is very sheltered and suitable for hauling boats, it is besides situated at the entrance to Lochs Eishart and Slapin, which are considered two of the best fishing lochs on the island. If fishermen are to be accommodated as well as crofters, what has been mentioned is worthy of consideration. With the exception of the parts mentioned the farm is composed entirely of hill ground, a good proportion of which is nice mixed grazing, but none of it, so far as we see, is fit for cultivation.

The farm is compact and fenced on the south side.

The dwelling-house and grounds were much improved at a large outlay by the late tenant, as also the whole buildings, which are very suitable for the farm, and about the most desirable residence in the island to be got in connection with a sheep grazing.

Note.—In the parish of Sleat it is very noticeable that the greater portion of the best arable land is now in possession of crofters, and one of the greatest disadvantages the grazings have is the want of a proper proportion of arable and grazing land to enable them to keep what is considered the safest and best paying stock, viz., a mixed one of cattle and sheep. Should the small pieces of arable and green pasture at present let with the sheep farms be taken from them, the remainder would almost necessarily have to go along with it, as few tacksmen would care to be in possession of only the bare moorland, where they could keep neither cows nor horses for their own use or the use of those in their employment.

Isleornsay Skye.

James Mackintos

(Signed) JAMES MACKINTOSH,
Factor for Lord Macdonald.

(Signed) JOHN TAYLOR,
Land Surveyor.

BROADFORD, *May* 19th, 1893.

8611. *Mr Myles Macinnes.*—I would like to ask Mr Mackintosh one or two questions. I ask him if he is prepared to say as a practical man that there is not more than 200 acres just now on the farm of Knock that could be ploughed to-morrow, although it is not used?—I am quite prepared to say there are not 200 acres on the farm of Knock that could be ploughed to-morrow.

8612. Is there 200 acres on the farm of Tormore?—Certainly not, on Tormore and Gillen.

8613. Is there not 200 on the lower part of Kinloch that could be cultivated?—Well, if you go into peat bogs——

8614. *The Chairman.*—Just answer the question?—No, there is not.

DUGALD MACLACHLAN, Banker, Portree—*examined.*

Dugald Maclachla

8615. I have been asked to hand in a document with regard to Glen-Haultin, a copy of the Trust Deed. The document is supposed to be in possession of Mr Alexander Macdonald, as agent for the trustees, but I produce a copy of it.* [App. A, p. 210.]

8616. *The Chairman.*—Made in your office?—Yes.

8617. Will you certify the copy?—I will.

8618. Have you compared it?—I have. Then along with that I also produce another document which was asked of me; a note of the account of Glen-Haultin sheep stock valuation as at Whitsunday 1885, giving the details of the sheep stock. [App. B, p. 211.]

8619. I am anxious to see that. Have you a copy of it?—No, I produce the original.

8620. You are going to keep the original?—Yes, it is not mine to give over. I produce also another document which was asked of me, a note of the bills and of transactions as they were carried through with the bank, beginning with July 9, 1886, when they were discounted, and showing the state in which they are at present: from which it appears that the tenants paid altogether in the shape of interest either to the landlord or to the bank £180, 16s. 1d. That is interest alone; and of that sum there was paid to Lord Macdonald £9, 14s. 4d. on the value of the stock between the date of the delivery of the stock to the tenants and the date on which the payment of the money was made to Lord Macdonald. The rest is interest paid to the bank. [App. C, p. 212.] I also produce a separate detailed note of the various sums of interest so paid. [App. D, p. 212.] The tenants also reduced the principal sum by £206, 1s. 10d., in addition to paying the amount of interest I have stated.

8621. What was the rate of interest?—The rate was about 5½ per cent., the overdraft rate on renewals.

8622. That is an excerpt from the books of the bank?—Yes.

8623. And is correct, to your knowledge?—Absolutely correct: signed by the accountant of the bank and by myself.

8624. *Mr Munro.*—That is £400 paid altogether in addition to the rents?—Yes.

* See Question 2483.

[ADJOURNED.]

[The following are the Documents produced by Mr. Maclachlan at Isleornsay on 20th May:—

APP. A. *Trust Deed by the Tenants of Rhenetra and Keistle.*

We, the undersigned tenants of Rhenetra and Keistle, in the parish of Snizort, Isle of Skye, considering that Mr. Lewis Mitchell, Kingsburgh, Mr. Clow, Cuidrach, Mr. D. L. Ross of Cromarty, Mr. James Macdonald, Skirrinish, and Mr. John Mackay, Home Farm, Portee, have agreed to become security for us for payment of the sum of one hundred pounds sterling each, towards payment of the price as valued of the sheep stock of the farm of Glen-Haultin, presently occupied by the Rev. Angus Martin, and that at the term of Martinmas next: Therefore we, the said tenants, do hereby consent and agree, that the said sheep stock on the said farm of Glen-Haultin, which we have taken as yearly tenants from and after the term of Whitsunday next, shall be handed over and delivered to Mr. Lewis Mitchell, Kingsburgh, and Mr. Donald Clow, tenant, Cuidrach, as trustees for the following purposes, viz.: First, To hold and manage the said sheep stock for behoof of the said securities until the sums which they may be called upon to pay, or may pay, as the price of the said sheep stock shall be repaid to them with interest due thereon, and also that they may hold the said sheep stock so that the Right Honourable Ronald Archibald Lord Macdonald may be repaid and reimbursed *pari passu* with the said securities of any sum which he may have to pay and disburse to the said Rev. Angus Martin as the price of the said sheep stock, the said sheep stock being held in trust by the said trustees for behoof of the said Lord Macdonald for any sum he may disburse as aforesaid, until he is repaid in the same manner and *pari passu* with the other securities. Second, To manage the said sheep stock and to make all necessary and usual disbursements, hire servants, purchase materials, and perform all usual and customary acts, including also dismissing of servants, which they may consider necessary or expedient in connection with the management of the said sheep stock. Third, To convey the said sheep stock to the said tenants upon their being relieved in full of their cautionary obligation, and upon Lord Macdonald also being repaid as aforesaid, and upon all sums due under the said cautionary obligation, and under this Trust Deed, including all necessary disbursements in connection with the said cautionary obligation or in connection with the said sheep stock, declaring that the said trustees shall be entitled to hold the said sheep stock in trust as aforesaid, until they are fully relieved as aforesaid, not only of the said cautionary obligation, including interest which they may have to pay, and disbursements and advances as aforesaid, for the said sheep stock to be incurred in the management thereof, and of the said farm of Glen-Haultin, with power to the said trustees to take over the said sheep stock at valuation by arbiters and an oversman, or by agreement in the usual manner, with authority to the said trustees specially to take the said sheep stock at the prices which may be fixed by, and under any reference which may be entered into for the valuation of the same between the said Rev. Angus Martin and the said Lord Macdonald or his factor without the necessity of a second valuation between the said Lord Macdonald or his factor and the said trustees; and further, we, the said tenants, bind and oblige ourselves severally to repay, to the said cautioners and to the said Lord Macdonald, the respective proportions effeiring to our shares of the said sheep stock and others which they or any of them may make on our behalf in connection therewith: In witness whereof,

(Signed) D. A. MARTIN, *Witness.*

(Signed) WILLIAM MACKENZIE.
23rd May, at Kemaleyre.

(Signed) ALEX. MACDONALD, Notary Public.
23rd May 1885, at Eyre.

(Signed) DONALD × LAMONT. (his mark.)
(„) MARY × MACINNES. (her mark.)
(„) JOHN BEATON.
(„) LACHLAN MATHESON.
(„) KENNETH CAMPBELL.
(„) RODERICK × MACINNES. (his mark.)
} 21st May, at Rhenetra.

(„) FLORA LAMONT.
(„) ALEX. LAMONT.
(„) CATHERINE × MACLEOD. (her mark.)
} 23rd May.

(Signed) ALEXANDER LAMONT.
(„) JOHN × MURCHISON. (his mark.)
(„) CATHERINE × MACLEAN. (her mark.)
(„) JAMES × GORDON. (his mark.)
} 23rd May 1885.

(Signed) RONALD MACDONALD, *Witness.*
(„) ALEX. LAMONT, *Witness.*
(„) D. A. MARTIN, *Witness.*
(„) WILLIAM MACKENZIE, *Witness.*

PORTREE, 20*th May* 1893.—I hereby certify that the foregoing, being a copy of the Trust Deed referring to the sheep stock of Glen-Haultin, and mentioned in my evidence before the Royal Commission (Highlands and Islands, 1892), is a true copy.

(Signed) DUGD. MACLACHLAN.

APP. B. *Note of Account of Glen-Haultin Sheep Stock Valuation as at the Term of Whitsunday* 1885.

148 ewes and lambs, at £41, 10s. per 21,	£292 9 6		
Less shots, at 13s. 4d. per 20,	8 10 7		
		£283 18 11	
49 eild ewes, at £28 per 21,	66 13 4		
Less shots, at 13s. 4d. per 20,	1 18 10		
		64 14 6	
53 ewe hogs, at £27 per 21,	68 2 10		
Less shots, at 2½ per 20,	2 16 9		
		65 6 1	
34 wedder hogs, at £18, 10s. per 21,	29 1 5		
Less shots, at 3 per 20,	1 9 1		
		27 12 4	
34 three-yeared wedders, £32 per 21,	51 16 4		
Less 1 shot in 34,	0 17 3		
		50 19 1	
34 two-year-old wedders, at £26, 10s. per 21,	42 18 1		
Less 2 shots per 34,	1 8 8		
		41 9 5	
3 tups, at £2, 10s. each,		7 10 0	
2 do., at 18s.,		1 16 0	
3 do. hogs, at 21s.,		3 3 0	
Two-year-old tup, at £1, 10s.,		1 10 0	
Shepherd's house at Glen-Haultin, valued at		1 15 0	
Do. smearing-house, valued at		0 8 0	
			£550 2 4
SHEPHERD'S PACK.			
12 ewes and lambs, at £37 per 21		£21 2 10	
2 eild ewes, at £1, 4s. 6d. each,		2 9 0	
4 ewe hogs, at £20 per 21,		3 16 2	
4 wedder hogs, at £16 per 21,		3 0 11	
3 three-year-old wedders, £1, 10s. each,		4 10 0	
3 two- „ „ at £1, 5s. each,		3 15 0	
Byre belonging to shepherd, valued at		0 12 0	
Wooden partition in dwelling-house, valued at		0 6 0	
Window at		0 2 6	
Door at		0 2 6	
			39 16 11
			£589 19 3
Off difference in sheep delivered, &c., say			0 10 3
			£589 9 0
Interest thereon from Martinmas 1885 to 1st Feb. 1886,			7 2 0
1886.			£596 11 0
Feb. 1. By cash,			400 0 0
			£196 11 0
June 7. Interest thereon to this date,			3 7 9
			£199 18 9
Off interest miscalculated,			1 10 5
			£198 8 4
July 9. Interest,			0 15 0
			£199 3 4

(Signed)	JAMES GORDON.	(Signed)	RODERICK MACINNES.
(„)	CATHERINE MACLEAN.	(„)	KENNETH CAMPBELL.
(„)	JOHN MURCHISON.	(„)	LACHLAN MATHESON.
(„)	ALEXANDER LAMONT.	(„)	JOHN BEATON.
(„)	CATHERINE MACLEOD.	(„)	MARY MACINNES.
(„)	FLORA LAMONT.	(„)	DONALD LAMONT.

The foregoing is a correct account of the stock of sheep and effects on the farm of Glen-Haultin taken delivery of by us on behalf of the tenants of Eyre and Keistle, and of the securities for the price of said stock, all as fully referred to in the Trust Deed executed in our favour in reference to the matter.

(Signed) L. MITCHELL.
(„) D. A. CLOW.

1885.			
Marts.	Valuation of stock now due,		£589 9 0
1886.			
Feb. 1.	Interest due to Lord Macdonald to date, when £400 paid to account by Caledonian Banking Co., Limited,	£5 9 9	
June 10.	Interest on balance of £189, 9s. due to Lord Macdonald from 1st Feb. to date,	3 9 7	
July 9.	Do. do. do. do.	0 15 0	
June 10.	Interest due to Caledonian Bank on the said £400, from 1st Feb. to date,	7 15 6	
July 9.	Do. do. do. do.	1 12 0	
			19 1 10
			£608 10 10

July 9. Total price of stock, with interest to date, apportioned as follows:—

	Bills due 12th Dec. 1886.
D. L. Ross, Esq., Cromarty,	£93 12 6
Alexander Macdonald, Esq., factor for Lord Macdonald,	93 12 6
Louis Mitchell, Esq., tacksman, Kingsburgh,	93 12 6
D. A. Clow, Esq., tacksman, Cuidrach,	93 12 6
James Macdonald, tacksman, Skirinish,	93 12 6
John Mackay, Esq., Home Farm, Portree,	93 12 6
Rev. Joseph Lamont, Snizort,	46 15 10
	£608 10 10

PORTREE, 23*rd July* 1886.—Received the sum of One hundred and ninty-nine pounds 3/4d. sterling, being balance of price of Glen-Haultin sheep stock.

ALEX. MACDONALD.
23/7/86.

£199 3 4

APP. C. *Glen-Haultin Bills.*

BILLS DISCOUNTED 9TH JULY 1886.		BILLS CURRENT AND PAST DUE AT 4TH MAY 1893.		
Tenants' Acceptances—				DUE
To Alex. MacDonald, p.	£93 12 6	To Jas. Mackintosh, p.	£90 0 0	9th June 1893.
„ D. M. Ross,	93 12 6	„ D. M. Ross (dec.),	80 12 6	12th Dec. 1886.
„ D. A. Clow,	93 12 6	„ D. A. Clow,	90 0 0	9th June 1893.
„ L. Mitchell,	93 12 6			
„ J. MacDonald,	93 12 6	„ J. MacDonald (dec.),	80 12 6	12th Sept. 1889
„ John Mackay,	93 12 6	„ J. Mackay,	16 4 0	9th June 1893.
„ J. Lamont,	46 15 10	„ J. Lamont,	45 0 0	9th June 1893.
	£608 10 10		£402 9 0	

Principal Sum due to Bank at 9th July 1886,	£608 10 10
„ „ „ „ 4th May 1893,	402 9 0
Showing a reduction of principal p.	£206 1 10
But there is at present due on the two overdue Bills interest amounting to	£43 3 0
Making the present indebtedness to the Bank,	445 12 0
The total discount and past due interest paid on the Bills is	151 19 11

And the rate of interest, being that chargeable on Accommodation Bills, would average about 5½ per cent.

E. E.
(Signed) R. R. MACKENZIE, *Accountant.*

CALEDONIAN BANKING CO., LIMITED,
PORTREE, 4*th May*, 1893.

APP. D. *Note of the whole Sums of Interest paid by the Tenants of Glen-Haultin on the price of the Sheep Stock of that Farm from Martinmas* 1886 *to 4th May* 1893.

1. Interest paid to Caledonian Bank on Bills for the Sheep Stock discounted by them per separate Statement,	£151 19 11
2. Interest incurred to Caledonian Bank on payments to Account of Sheep Stock made before discounting of the Bills per Valuation Account,	£9 7 6
3. Interest incurred to Lord Macdonald on price of Sheep Stock from date of delivery, Martinmas 1885, till price advanced by Caledonian Bank,	£19 8 8
	£180 16 1

(Signed) DUGD. MACLACHLAN,
Solicitor and Bank Agent, Portree.]

CALEDONIAN BANKING CO., LIMITED,
PORTREE.

TENTH SITTING.

BEAULY, JUNE 13, 1893.

Present:—

DAVID BRAND, Esq., Advocate, Sheriff of Ayr, and Chairman of the Crofters Commission, *Chairman.*
MICHAEL HUGH SHAW STEWART, Esq., M.P.
ANGUS SUTHERLAND, Esq., M.P.
JAMES NOEL MULLER FORSYTH, Esq.
GEORGE GORDON, Esq.
Rev. MALCOLM MACCALLUM.
JOHN MACLEOD, Esq.
HENRY MUNRO, Esq.
WILLIAM MACKENZIE, Esq., *Secretary.*

COLIN CHISHOLM, Namur Cottage, Inverness (80)—*examined.*

Beauly. — Colin Chisholm.

8621. *The Chairman.*—Where is your place of abode?—Inverness, at present.

8622. But you were formerly on the Chisholm estate?—I was born and brought up there, and remained there until I was over 20 years of age.

8623. Have you a written statement to submit?—I have a few memorandums.

8624. We will be glad to hear them.

I have been asked to tender evidence to this Royal Commission on Deer Forests. On former occasions, my opinion has been given without hesitation or reserve on this subject. More than 20 years ago I spoke publicly, and since that time I have written repeatedly, against what appears to be gross misappropriation of some good arable land and a great deal of splendid hill grazing. From that time till now, not an acre nor an inch of land has been withdrawn (so far as I know) from the extensive deer forests of the glens of the parishes of Kilmorack and Kiltarlity. Thus the cause of complaint has not been removed; the grievance still remains unaltered, only intensified by length of duration. Therefore I cannot change my former statements, nor alter my old prescription in endeavouring to expunge from the Statute-Book the obnoxious law that enables one man to say to another—'I will neither cultivate 'nor reclaim one acre of land for the benefit of man, and 'I will not allow you to do so. No, but I will set apart 'thousands of cultivated and uncultivated acres of land 'for wild beasts.' That such is a part of the law of our country, and that it is largely acted on throughout the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, admits of no doubt. For instance, let me briefly refer to changes which took place in my own time in Glencannich. As I was born, and brought up, and remained in the said glen till I was over 20 years of age, my memory is quite clear about Glencannich. The whole of the glen, except one small farm, is at present a deer forest. In my early recollection there were thirty-three tenant farmers and twelve families of cottars in the said glen, making a total of forty-five families, all of whom I was personally acquainted with. That these people were as comfortable as the generality of Highlanders were, about the first five decades of the present century, seems to admit of no doubt. They educated their families tolerably well. In my own time there were seventeen Glencannich men who held commissions in Her Majesty's Army. There were also in my time nine Glencannich men in holy orders; they were clergymen in the Catholic Church. A detailed list of the names of these twenty-six men, their rank, where they were born in the glen, and where twenty-three of their number died, may be seen on page 2766, Vol. IV. of the Crofters and Cottars Commission of Inquiry in 1884. Three of the clergymen are still living and in active service. In my humble opinion, this list will show that they were abreast of their neighbours in social position and general intelligence. However, the management of former proprietors cleared out every one of the forty-five families that I have seen in Glencannich. The remaining farm, now occupied by the widow's son, was not an exception. The factor on the estate at that time took possession, and added it to four other extensive farms and grazings he had in Glencannich. It was when the late James Sutherland Chisholm came home from America, and succeeded to the estate, that he restored the farm from which he had been evicted nineteen years previously to the father of the present tenant. I remember the time when a former proprietor of Strathglass requested his tenantry (by a call at the door of the Strathglass church by Roderick Fraser *alias* Rory Gow, who was wood ranger and ground officer at the time) to meet him at Cannich Bridge Inn, to enter on arrangements for new leases of their holdings. The men gladly assembled at the appointed time and place, but the proprietor did not come to the meeting. Towards the afternoon his factor came, and stated that he had no orders to enter on any arrangements with them. I was present at the time and heard the message delivered. The men were greatly disappointed, and justly surmised that some undercurrent was operating against their interests. In a few days after this fruitless meeting it transpired that the best farms in Strathglass were let on lease to strangers. The native tenantry would have been glad to give as much, if not more, rent for the land. They were not a penny piece in arrears at the time. They were anxious to keep their holdings, and I will prove that they were able to pay for them. When the late Thomas Alexander, Lord Lovat, heard of the treatment by their own proprietor, he entered on negotiations with the only sheep-farmer on his estate, and arranged to take the sheep at valuation. His lordship sent for the evicted tenants, and placed them in the farms and grazings vacated by the same flock-master in Glen-Strathfarrar. They took possession at the following Whitsunday; the stock was valued to them, and at the ensuing Martinmas every penny of the price of the stock was duly paid by the new tenants. This proves their ability to have held their own, had they been allowed to remain in their native district, Strathglass. Some 14 years afterwards, his lordship rearranged the largest arable farms on his estate, and converted them into ordinary holdings. I remember some of them well, for I have seen twelve ploughs together at work, the property of one man in the plain of Strath Beauly here. Every tenant that his lordship took to Glen-Strathfarrar was taken down from the Glen and reinstalled in arable farms on his lordship's estate. The odium of having cleared the brave native population out of Glen Strathfarrar rests with Archibald, youngest brother of General Fraser, son of Simon, Lord Lovat, who was beheaded on Tower Hill. Glen Strathfarrar has been a deer forest since it was cleared by Lord Thomas Alexander in 1845. It has been a forest nearly all the time, for part of it was a forest then—Gleninchlochel. As I spoke of the crude management of former proprietors, and I might include factors on the estate of Chisholm, it will be necessary to explain how the tenantry on that estate could take additional farms and stock them. The explanation simply is, that Alexander, The Chisholm who died in 1793, left a widow, Elizabeth, daughter of Dr Wilson of Edinburgh. At the time they married he made a fair settlement on her in case of widowhood. He left for her the option of a certain sum of money annually, or the rental accruing from a number of club-farms. Through the good advice of her only child, Mary, who married James Gooden, merchant, of London, Mrs Chisholm made choice of the joint-farms and kept them intact, and kept the tenants on these farms in easy circumstances until the day of her death, which took place 33 years after the death of The Chisholm, her husband. During the whole of that time this kind, considerate, and excellent Edinburgh lady never turned a man out of house or farm; nor did she ever deprive a man of an acre of land. It was the great good sense of this lady, and the sincere attachment of her daughter, Mrs Gooden of Tavistock Square, London, that enabled the men, when deprived of their old farms, to invest in larger and better ones on Lord Lovat's estate. I remember the time when there were eleven

Beauly.

Colin Chisholm.

farmers and twelve cottars in the Davoch of Clachan. The grazings here are good, and the arable land so fertile and productive, under the tenantry particularly, that this davoch used to be called the Granary of Strathglass; but is now, and has been for some years back, added to the estate and deer forest of Guisachan and rented from The Chisholm. I recollect a number of warm-hearted hospitable tenants on the estate of Guisachan. So recently as 1855 there were sixteen tenants and six cottars or dependents. They had 62 cows, 24 horses, and 4200 sheep among them. There is a printer's error in the number of sheep in the Minutes of Evidence of the Napier Commission. At page 2768 (11 lines from the top), instead of 420 it ought to be 4200 sheep. Lord Tweedmouth admits this to be the right number (see questions 5362 and 5367, *Game Laws Report* in 1873, p. 220). Lord Tweedmouth took all their holdings into his own hands. From my earliest recollection the Half-Davoch of Knockfin and the most of the glen of Affaric were united as one large sheep farm, in the hands of two brothers from the south of Scotland. It is now, and has been for some years back, a deer forest. This forest, beginning about a mile above the bridge of Cannich, and extending to Cnoc-a'-chuaille (the boundary between Strathglass and Kintail), is about 24 miles in length and about 2 miles in breadth. It was William, The Chisholm, first husband of Lady Ramsay, and herself, who cleared the people out of the Half-Davoch of Knockfin and the glen of Affaric. These evictions took place about the beginning of the present century. The first large party of the evicted left Strathglass in 1801. The second party of them went away in 1803. They settled principally in Nova Scotia, Prince Edward's Island, and in Cape Breton Island. They gave the name of their Highland home to their residences in their adopted country. In Cape Breton Island there is another county of Inverness. The said William and his wife, Lady Ramsay, left two sons. Both the sons succeeded, one after the other, to the estate and chiefship of Chisholm. Between William, Lady Ramsay, and their two sons, they nearly squeezed the whole native population out of Strathglass. It was Alexander William, the eldest of the two sons of The Chisholm and Lady Ramsay, who turned the people out of Strathglass when they went to Glen-Strathfarrar. By this cruel and injudicious act, and the manner in which it was carried into effect, he deserved the contempt of his neighbours, he incurred the anger of the people he evicted, and lost the confidence of those who remained on the estate.

I have now shown by whom and when the glens of Strathglass were cleared of the native population. They were cleared to make room for sheep, and now that the *furor* for sheep is beginning to subside, the mania for deer is taking its place. For instance, we read in the public prints that an American 'Mr Winans, by the simple process of outbidding all competitors, has turned nearly 250,000 acres in the counties of Ross and Inverness into a deer forest.' Some say 260,000 acres, or an area of about 400 square miles. In the first place, I have no hesitation in stating that some of the grazing lands in this extensive forest will compare favourably with, if not excel, the best hill grazings in all Scotland. I have seen superior cattle and sheep reared in this glen. I have also seen heavy and splendid oats, potatoes, and turnips raised on the dells and fields of my native glen.

I go occasionally to the West Coast, and wend my way through Glencannich. From the road I see the heavy crop of natural grass waving on the hillside and meadows, half-tame deer browsing at ease among crumbled walls, and empty but substantial houses still standing at intervals in the glen. Let us hope these houses may soon be required to fulfil the purposes for which they were originally built. It is evident that the eye of the Government is on the landed proprietors of the Highlands. How they can justify themselves in cutting off from the use of man these enormous tracts of land is beyond my comprehension. It seems to me to be morally wrong, and as it is the work of the *classes* without the assent of the *masses*, how can it be legally right?

Beauly.

Colin Chisholm.

In answer to question No. 5947, p. 241, *Game Laws Report*, in 1873, I heard the late Mr Ellice of Glengarry saying in a committee room of the House of Commons:—'The great depopulation was in the years 1780 and 1790, when the colony of Glengarry was founded in Canada by the number of people that were sent out from Scotland in order to obtain their low-lying crofts for sheep in winter.'

In another point of his evidence Mr Ellice said:—'I may mention one single case that I am well acquainted with. When the depopulation began in 1780, a particular estate fetched £700 or £800. The people were then cleared off to make way for sheep. They had turned out 700 to 800 fighting men in the Rebellion, consequently the population could not have been under 5000 or 6000.' With the introduction of sheep to Glengarry, and the dispersion of its brave and faithful population, commenced a series of complications and embarrassments that ended in the sale of the whole large estates of Knoydart and Glengarry. The present Mrs Ellice is the fifth owner of the estates of Glengarry in my own time. The late James Grant of Corrimony soon followed the Glengarry plan. He turned the people away and introduced sheep. Finally the estate was sold, and has since been re-sold, and is now in possession of the third proprietor of my time. Next in turn the estate of Guisachan was partially cleared of its hospitable native population by William Fraser of Culbokie. He introduced sheep-rearing to his glens. His grandson sold the whole of the estate, and it is now in the hands of a third proprietor. The Chisholm, William, and his wife Lady Ramsay, left two sons. The father and the two sons succeeded, one after the other, to the extensive estates of Strathglass, and they in turn were succeeded by James Sutherland Chisholm, and his son after them. Those five proprietors probably left about 5000 deer in Strathglass. To Archibald, youngest son of the Lovat of 1745, belongs the odium of having cleared the native population out of Glen-Strathfarrar. Lord Lovat, the grandfather of the present young laird, is fully entitled to the honour of having converted Glen Strathfarrar into a residence of safety and security for the evicted tenantry of Strathglass in 1831. Not only did his lordship give them 14 years' lease of the glen, but he made himself responsible for the payment of the whole stock—some thousands of sheep delivered at valuation by the outgoing tenant to the new tenants. At the ensuing Martinmas every penny of the price of the heavy sheep stock was paid by the new tenants. With regard to eviction of farmers, I may mention that during the 41 years of my time passed in England I have neither heard nor read of a farmer that was threatened or evicted on English soil but one. That one exceptional case took place on the estate of Lord Darnley, near Gravesend. However, as soon as his neighbours ascertained the true state of the case, they raised such a chorus of indignation that the landlord soon acquired—nothing else than acquired—a better knowledge of his own position, and the farmer was instantly reinstated in his farm. What a contrast between this solitary case in England and all the rapacious evictions that took place during that time in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland.

My belief is that land was given to man to make it support the greatest possible number of human beings in the greatest possible degree of comfort and happiness.

The law that enables a man to say to another:—'I will not cultivate one acre, and I will not allow you to do so,' is most unnatural and most iniquitous in its results. By taking advantage of the said law, society in the Highlands—I might say in Scotland—has been dislocated. And as the owners of the land in Scotland were the cause of that dislocation on them, the *onus* of reorganisation and restoring the people rests entirely on them. Equity and every manner of fairness demand that our landed proprietors should be compelled, and that immediately, to restore the land to the people.

8625. Can you give me the names of townships that

have been cleared from the land of which you have been speaking?—On my own glen I can give them.

8626. What is the name?—The first name I remember is Coire-nan-cuilean.

8627. Any others?—Yes, the next is Ardtaig, and the next is Mullardoch West.

8628. Was that a township?—It was the residence of a comfortable farmer.

8629. I am asking you for townships occupied by crofters or small tenants?—I am telling you that every one of these was occupied in my time by tenants such as in England are known by the name of yeomanrymen, that paid fair rent, every one of them; and I class them as farms. I will come to the townships by and bye.

8630. You wish to give us the names of farms?—The names of farms where I saw the people—single as well as townships.

8631. Well, I will be glad to have both. Now, in the first place, give us the names of farms?—Do you mean the club farms or the single farms?

8632. Either club farms or single farms?—We'll begin with Coire-nan-cuilean.

8633. Then you mentioned another?—Mullardoch West.

8634. The next one?—Mullardoch East, then Shalavanach a township, Leitrie a township, Luibguish a single farm. Glaschorry, I have seen tenant after tenant there.

8635. Is that a farm?—It is a single farm. Then Ariuarich is a single farm. Then Carrie, a club farm. Some of the lands are out of sight of the Commissioners. They can't see the lands unless they leave the road. The next township club farm is Muckrach.

8636. That is a club farm?—A club farm. Next Dalriach.

8637. That is a farm too?—That is a single farm. Then Craskie; that is a single farm now, but it was a club farm before. The next is Tombuie.

8638. Is that a farm?—That was a club farm; there are two Tombuies, but they were joined together in my time—Tombuie Beg and Tombuie More.

8639. Well?—Then there was a farmer opposite Tombuie, Blackcroft you may call it.

8640. That is a farm too?—That was a single farm. The next farm was Ruinahuaig, a single farm; only it was a farm on the other side, but it was not a club farm. There was one farm on both sides of Ruinahuaig. That contains the whole glen of Glencannich. There was a crofter, of course, on Torbeg. Now I am done with the names of the farms in Glencannich, but I have seen crofts occupied by little men that I don't mention here.

8641. Were these little crofts you mention located upon the farm?—They were farms of their own, independently of the other man's.

8642. These were not townships?—No, I mentioned every one of the club farms. Coire-nan-cuilean was a club farm, to begin with.

8643. Are you able to mention any other places that were formerly occupied either as single farms or as townships, or as club farms in the district of which you have been speaking?—Well, I remember perfectly well when the low lands of Guisachan were occupied by comfortable farmers. I mention them in the paper here, and Corrimony on the other side of the hill—it was cleared of the people to make room for sheep. The result was that the estate came to the hammer.

8644. Was there a township at Corrimony?—Several townships.

8645. Just tell us them?—Tulloch of Corrimony, Carnoch of Corrimony. Glen-Coron, again, was either attached to those farms or separate tenants of their own,—I cannot tell you which,—but the Glen of Coron was cleared at the same time.

8646. Any others you can mention?—Certainly there are. I would not wish to begin with them now, but if your lordship thinks proper to have a final examination of this business in Inverness, as your predecessor in Commissions had, I will be very glad to give you the names of everyone I knew to have been a farm.

8647. These lands of which you have been speaking just now, how are they occupied?—As deer forests, except one little bit of farm in Glencannich. Except that Lord Tweedmouth has the good sense to keep a deal of cattle among his forest, that is the only difference.

8648. What are the names of these deer forests?—The first one that I mentioned is Glencannich, then Glenaffaric and Half-Davoch of Knockfin. I don't know whether Guisachan comes here or not, but his lordship has it in his own hands. There are both cattle and deer on it. Glen-Strathfarrar, of course, is a deer forest, as I have mentioned.

8649. Now, in your judgment, these lands are capable of being now occupied by tenants?—Yes.

8650. Is there land capable of being made arable land as well as grazing?—I state in this paper that I have seen the finest oats I ever saw, south or north in England or Scotland, growing on the dales of Glencannich,—the finest potatoes and the finest turnips; and I think that is conclusive. If any of the gentlemen would find out that the number you took down will not make the number that I mentioned here, on purpose I left out the names of two small men: one place called Coiredubh. There was a small single tenant there (Black Coire), and the other one I saw a tenant on was Lubnandamh—one of the lodges now.

8651. Are any of the lands which you have been describing now under wood?—Yes, on the south side of the water, a great deal of wood; and in one or two parts—one part particularly—on the north side is full of fine pine wood. There would be no difficulty whatever in building houses among the crumbled walls of former houses, when they begin to rebuild them. The wood is at the door for them, ready to be used.

8652. *Mr Shaw Stewart.*—You have spoken of the general standard of comfort sixty years ago, and you said that the people you remember were as comfortable as the generality of people then?—I did.

8653. How does that compare with the standard of comfort of the present day?—If you tell me where everyone of the people are now, between London, Aberdeen, Edinburgh, and wherever they are,—if you tell me the state of the people where they are now, I would be able to answer you.

8654. Then you do not know the state of the people now, generally speaking?—How could I, when they are dispersed and sent out of the country?

8655. But I am not speaking of those very people; I am speaking of the generality?—And what is the generality? If you speak of the generality in the glen I was describing, you will find some half a dozen gamekeepers and one little farmer; and if you call that the generality of people, I have a different name for it.

8656. You don't quite understand what I am asking you. You spoke generally of the standard of comfort sixty years ago. I am comparing the general standard of comfort sixty years ago with that of to-day. People are not content to-day with only the necessaries of life that they had sixty years ago; they want more to-day, don't they, generally speaking?—That is news to me, and I don't believe it.

8657. Then you refuse to admit that the general comfort of the present day throughout the country is higher now than it was sixty years ago?—Of the country? Tell me what part you are speaking of.

8658. The Highlands and Lowlands?—But I am confining myself, strictly speaking, to what I saw in Glencannich. Now tell me where the people are who were there, and what comfort they have.

8659. *The Chairman.*—Mr Shaw Stewart is not here to answer questions but to ask them.—I will be very glad to answer all questions, but I will ask one favour of you: when my questions are over I will ask the favour of your lordship, or of one of the Commissioners, to allow me to ask a question here and there that I think ought to be answered. I will not ask it while I am here: I know my duty too well for that.

8660. *Mr Shaw Stewart.*—I should like to make my point clear. Sixty years ago did the people you speak

Beauly. Colin Chisholm.

of live in slated houses?—Not one of them, but they were in very comfortable houses.

8661. Do not people prefer nowadays, when they can, to live in slated houses,—the crofters? They prefer slated houses to the old black houses, when they can put them up?—There was no want of them in my time at all.

8662. No want of what?—No want of slated houses. They made their own houses, and very comfortable they were.

8663. They were not slated houses?—Not one, until the factor slated one or two for himself.

8664. Now, what I want you to answer me is this: Do not crofters now, when they get security of tenure, put up slated houses when they can?—I should hope they will, if they ever get security of tenure. Nothing of that kind has dawned on my unfortunate part of the country yet.

8665. But is it not to your knowledge that it is done through the Highlands where the crofter has got security of tenure?—I never saw one.

8666. Oh, well, I have.—It may be so; I have no doubt of it.

8667. Now, with regard to their food: Would they be content nowadays with the same food that they got sixty years ago?—You want me to speak of their stomachs.

8668. Yes, it is an important part of man, is it not?—Well, the fact of it is this. The most of what they required—I might say the whole of it, but the most of it—was grown by themselves. They were not beholden to any extravagance or any delicacy that you seem to hint at in my time at all. They were fine healthy strong men, living on the produce of the land they cultivated themselves.

8669. Do you think the people in the present age would be content to live on the oats that they raise themselves?—On the oats that they raise?

8670. Yes?—Most certainly they would, if they had all the other stock on their farms that they had along with that, in order to make their living of it, as they used to do.

8671. Now I want to ask you this?—Very well, go on.

8672. You are going back to the time when you were about 20 years of age?—Yes, and more.

8673. Well, after that time were you away from the country?—Forty-one years only.

8674. Were you in a good position, during that time, to judge of the varying circumstances affecting agriculture in this country while you were away?—I never pretended that.

8675. Have you paid much attention to the rise and fall of prices of various kinds of stock in recent years?—I have been repeatedly watching the prices and examining and taking note of them in Smithfield Market. I don't know whether you ever were there or not.

8676. But your profession did not bring you into contact with practical agricultural affairs?—Certainly not, certainly not.

8677. Well now, you told us you wished, which I hope we all do, the greatest possible amount of people to live in comfort and happiness on the land?—That would be my prayer, and was my prayer from my boyhood.

8678. But if they were placed on land they could not cultivate to profit, there would not be much comfort or happiness?—To profit? When you speak of profit, would you tell me the conditions on which they are to have it?

8679. I would rather you gave me your idea?—But I can't answer these questions; make your questions intelligible to the whole assembly here.

8680. It is not my business to make statements; it is my business to ask questions?—Very well, ask them, but make your questions clear.

8681. I am doing my best to make it clear to you?—Very well then, do, pray, and I will do my best to answer you, with the greatest pleasure.

8682. Now what I mean by cultivating land to profit is being able to stock their land, keep up their houses, pay the rent, and, if necessary, repay any loan that may be advanced, besides maintaining themselves and their families?—That would be very good if you had people that could do that. Beauly. Colin Chisholm.

8683. *The Chairman.*—Just wait till you hear the question.

8684. *Mr Shaw Stewart.*—Do you think that people could be placed on the lands you mention and cultivate those lands to profit in the sense I have stated, without any pecuniary assistance?—I don't for a moment, far from it.

8685. Then might I ask you this: Where is the pecuniary assistance to come from?—I will tell you that by and bye.

8686. I would rather you told me now?—The pecuniary assistance?

8687. Yes.—Well, in the first place, I state in this paper that the cause of the dislocation of society in the Highlands particularly, and almost all over Scotland, was the landed proprietors of the country. The greed for rents made them, as it were, overstock the market. They turned men away who were in a good position; and there would be no need to go to any other source but themselves to have stock and comfort. Is that what you want?

8688. No. I am speaking of the future, not of the past.—How can we speak of the future without taking account of the past; tell me that.

8689. I do not say that we can, but judge from your experience in the past. You have just told me that these lands could not be cultivated to profit without pecuniary assistance?—They could not stock them, I told you that; but I did not say cultivate.

8690. But you agree with my definition of cultivating lands to profit?—Yes, by having grazing and arable lands together. But are you going to ask me where the funds are to come from?

8691. Yes.—Very well, go ahead.

8692. I have asked you that.—I tell you, then, in my opinion, that the first duty of reorganisation lies on the shoulders of the proprietors that disturbed the people. Let them see the people in such a position as they were in when, through greed of rent, they turned them out, and we will have the funds then for them directly.

8693. But the proprietors you speak of are all dead?—But the land is there. It is in possession of some proprietor.

8694. Then do you mean that a proprietor, if he has bought land within recent years, is to find the money to place the people on this land?—His share of it; but I have no doubt the good sense of the Commission and Parliament, when they have to do with it, will see the difference between long-standing forests and new ones. It would not be justice, in my opinion, to visit all alike, but visit them according to the criminality of their proceedings.

8695. Then I understand that these people cannot be placed on these lands that you mentioned, to cultivate them to profit, without pecuniary assistance, and you have no better plan to propose than that assistance should come from the proprietors of the present day?—To begin it. It is quite possible that the Government of the country might do this.

8696. That is what I want to know?—It is quite possible: listen to me. It is quite possible that the Government of the country might take the use of the money of the ratepayers of the country to stock these lands or to assist the tenants to begin on them; but I cannot for a moment suppose that Government, Whig or Tory, would ever consent to leave the present or any future landed proprietors in a position to throw the people about as if they were nothing.

8697. I can understand your point. But if the Government is to help the people, that means they must advance them money?—Advance part of it.

8698. Part of the money?—Part of the money.

8699. For stocking, and so forth?—Yes.

8700. How are the people to repay this loan?—To get the other part of it?

8701. How are the people to repay this loan that may be lent them by the Government?—They repay it as other loans. Other loans are granted by the Government every year. In my lifetime I remember loans being granted, and they had to be repaid by time and by easy interest.

8702. Easy interest?—Yes, exactly.

8703. But you think that they would be able to maintain themselves, pay rent, buy stock, put up buildings, and repay this easy interest without difficulty?—Easily. I don't say a word about buildings. I say that the proprietor ought to be the builder of every house and office on the farm.

8704. Oh, the proprietors are to put up the houses?—The proprietors, by all means. Let them put up the houses as well on the farms where they scattered the people.

8705. Now you have spoken of lands being made into forests: were not most of these forests sheep farms before they were turned into forests?—For a while they were; but in Glencannich we had the black cattle and sheep and goats—great flocks of goats they had at that time.

8706. But the most of the lands now under forest were first of all put under sheep, were they not?—They were not.

8707. After the clearances that you speak of?—After the clearances of 1831 they were put under sheep for a while, and then when sheep-rearing was showing a deficiency and was not paying the shepherd, he gave them up, and then there were no tenantry but to throw them up to wild beasts. That was the way it was done.

8708. Then the clearances were made not so much for forests as for sheep?—I think I may admit that you are right there.

8709. *Mr Sutherland.*—The land of which you spoke is roughly included, I think, within the watershed of the Beauly and its tributaries?—Oh no, there is Glengarry: I told you something about Glengarry, and I told you something about Corrimony; they come into the river Ness.

8710. That district drains into the valley of the Ness?—Yes.

8711. But all the other lands are included in the watershed of the Beauly and its tributaries?—Every inch of them.

8712. And the climate is good?—The climate is good; and to show you that it is good, I believe some of the cultivated land in the forests will be found to be somewhere about 400 feet above the level of the sea.

8713. But the names of the places you gave us where there was cultivation and occupation before: some of them, I understand, were larger farms, and some others were smaller farms, where they had grazing in common: is that so?—Yes, you are quite right.

8714. So that both are now available so far as old cultivated land is concerned?—Exactly so, but I will tell you this in answer to that question. In all my experience I always saw farmers making choice of a bit of land on their own account. As to the club farms, that may do where it can be done; but through the island and the country I suspect I could mention one part on the west coast where that would not suit. But it is not my business to turn out of my own district.

8715. I wish to ask one question with regard to the standard of comfort. You would like, no doubt, to see the standard of comfort of the people raised?—Most certainly, but I never expect that people would ask their comfort to exceed the comforts of the men that were there before.

8716. So satisfied are you of the comfort there was at the time?—Yes. There would be no bargains with such gentlemen as that (pointing to Mr Shaw Stewart).

8717. I think that there is a good deal of agreement between you and Mr Shaw Stewart on that point, and I wish to make it clear. That is why I ask the question. In making an estimate of the comfort, do you think that it is the right or the proper thing to compare the comfort on the one side of what it was 80 years ago, and on the other side of what it is to-day? The comparison ought to be equal, ought it not, in time as well?—My experience of the comfort and experience of all my friends I left behind is this—that they were as comfortable then as they are to-day, wherever they are, and they would not wish to be more comfortable than they were then. Beauly. — Colin Chisholm.

8718. But provided they did wish to be more comfortable, are not the means of obtaining that comfort easier to-day than they were 80 years ago?—I don't know it.

8719. For instance the railway?—Pooh! What was the use of a railway for a man in Glencannich, where he made his own meal, reared his own potatoes, fed his own wedders, and where I saw them killing their cattle about Martinmas for the winter supply.

8720. That is, so far as the supply of his bodily comfort is concerned?—So far as the supply of his bodily comfort is concerned, I really don't see that there is the slightest difference between to-day and the time I am speaking of.

8721. But, at any rate, I take it that you think that the state of the people ought to be compared with the general state of Scotland at that time, and not with the state of the people of Scotland at the present time, to make it fair?—I will not travel over all Scotland at all: tell me any of the people who,—there may be people who never tasted a morsel of their own growth of beef or mutton, or their own potatoes or oatmeal or anything; there may be thousands and millions of them. But I am speaking of the people I saw there, and the utter necessity there is of reestablishing the people and strengthening the kingdom. Where is the patriotism of the kingdom?

8722. My point is this: that, provided they went back there again, they would be as well as they were at that time?—And as happy.

8723. And they would get the benefit of whatever improvements civilisation might have added since?—Get what they can.

8724. Now, as to the nature of the ground there and its capability of being cultivated to profit. You have no doubt on that point, I understand?—Not the least, if you make the rent in such a way as to enable them to cultivate it to profit.

8725. Is it your idea, then, that the rent ought to be left to a public tribunal to fix?—Most certainly; but on the other hand I would never consent to what I have often seen proposed, nationalisation of the land. I would never be one to that, and if you like I will give you my reasons for it.

8726. I wish to ask you a question about the cattle. You, I think, very properly made a point of good cattle being raised?—And sheep.

8727. Is it not a fact that the Guisachan herd of cattle is famed over the country?—So I believe.

8728. And is it, in your opinion, a proof of the fitness of the place for rearing good cattle?—It depends altogether on the view you take of it. Here, for instance, as to the man in Guisachan. I believe his lordship is a wise and good landlord; that is my firm belief. He allows the people to remain there till they die, but not one will follow them when the present stock of people go. Apply that to all Scotland or any other kingdom. Where would your defences be if you make that a general rule?

8729. Well, but with regard to the fitness of occupying to profit: as we have to look out for land of that kind, you think that the existence, don't you, of a herd of cattle like that in such a place is proof that it is capable of cultivation by small tenants?—I never doubted it.

8730. Then another element you spoke of was the readiness with which timber was got in this locality?—You have only to cut it and just float it across the water, and there it is at your door.

8731. It would be a very important element in building new homes?—A most important element. The stone of the old walls is crumbling, and timber grows on the ground on the other side. You will see that if you go to the glen.

8732. Are you aware of the precise terms of the remit to this Commission?—Not I.

8733. Well, I may put it to you that we are asked to look out for such land as is at present occupied as a deer forest or as a grouse moor or for other sporting purposes, or is now occupied for grazing, not in the occupation of small tenants, which is capable of being advantageously occupied by crofters or other small tenants?—Yes.

8734. Are you of opinion that all this land you have referred to to-day comes within the scope of this remit?—Every inch of it—if you give them fair terms of the land; every single inch of it.

8735. *Mr Forsyth.*—With reference to Strathglass and Glencannich, are there men from the neighbourhood who are ready and willing to take small holdings or small farms there?—There are no men there, not one man except watchers and gamekeepers.

8736. Then do you think that these places should be laid open to offers from strangers?—I do.

8737. And on what terms?—If you will allow me I will give you the answer to that which I made to the present Lord Lieutenant of the county. He asked me the very same question before Lord Napier. I told him to make the lands available to ordinary tenants, and to advertise them, and that he would soon have plenty of offers. That is what I told Lochiel.

8738. Then, with reference to these proposed small holdings in these straths, you think that for them the present proprietor should put up houses?—Most certainly.

8739. Should he provide capital for stock also?—His share of it, and the lion's share, too.

8740. With reference to the putting up of houses, you say there is wood near. Supposing that wood did not belong to the same proprietor?—But it does, every tree of it.

8741. Then he should take his own wood?—Take his own wood. Every other farmer that I ever formed acquaintance with in England had his house and offices built on his farm.

8742. And then, having done this, he should take any offers generally for tenants?—That would be very favourable for the landlord, and I think it would be the fairest thing for all parties, but I have no doubt some of the old people would be very anxious to get back again.

8743. And then you think that the rents of these offerers should be fixed by an impartial tribunal?—By all means, not by factor or landlord. The less they have to do in fixing the rent the better it is for themselves and for the people.

8744. But, you see, there is some difficulty here. He is to take any offers, and then the rent is to be fixed by an impartial tribunal?—Will you allow me to tell you what they do in Germany under present circumstances? When the late rascal, Napoleon Buonaparte, went to Germany, the Germans were amazed to see their young men, and the smartest young men they had in Prussia, flocking to the banner of Napoleon. They endeavoured to ascertain the cause, and face it out; found out that it was the land, and the land only, that would attract their own men out of the country. This is what they did. They sent a Commission, as you and your brother Commissioners are here, throughout the whole country; parcelled out the land into farms, and kept the men in their own country. That stopped them. Now, do the very same thing, and if you really mean to do business as you ought to do, you will find that if the lands are set apart as farms, and that you advertise them, you will have plenty of offers for them.

8745. That is what I want to get at—'You will have plenty of offers.' I want to know how you reconcile this. The offer, you know, is a question generally of competition. I want to know how you can reconcile the question of a competition with the fixing of rent by an impartial tribunal?—Well, I think I will make it plain to you that the Prussians fixed the rent. They pointed out the farms, fixed the rent, and the men had it. If you had a favourite brother or grieve in your service, no doubt you would wish him to take advantage of this farm; but it is not my business to enter into these things at all. I tell you what they did in Prussia, and I think it would be a capital example for this country.

8746. Then you want the rent fixed beforehand by an impartial tribunal?—Beforehand, by all means. If you make it a competition, the man that has little money will ruin it for himself and his landlord.

8747. Then, supposing you have now got your farm with the rent fixed, and the buildings put up by the proprietor, how do you propose to select your tenant, because you have no longer competition to go on?—To select the tenant?

8748. Yes?—On that point I would most certainly give a voice to the Commission, and even to the proprietor that performed his duty to the tenant. I would not restrict it to one man or to one party.

8749. Then you think that a Commission, or a Commission along with the proprietor, should be employed in the selection of tenants for these fixed rents?—Certainly.

8750. You think there is no difficulty in that?—I don't see the difficulty in it.

8751. There might be a large number of applicants for farms at these easy rents. I presume the rents would be fair or easy rents?—Exactly so. The country is wild for them in another place.

8752. And would you give any preference to men in the immediate neighbourhood?—Well, I think the descendants of men who were there for generations, and that were ill-used in turning them out, ought to have preference. Provided that they were in a position to make good their engagements.

8753. Then don't you think that it would be advisable that there should be some evidence as to the ability of the men to work the holdings?—Well, such men as a gentleman here—I think there is a gentleman, perhaps, in the company that is at the head of a bank; he might give you a very good idea how safe it would be for the land. I think there is a Mr Mackenzie here that obliges us in many respects, a banker.

8754. But you would have offers from outsiders, men from a distance?—Very well.

8755. Would you give no preference to the local men?—I told you to the descendants of those that were there from time immemorial. Their forefathers fought for the land, and have kept the landlords at the time of fighting in possession of the land, and hence they are entitled, without a question, to have them.

8756. And you think there would be no difficulty in this plan of yours?—I don't see it. I wish you would try it; there is Mr Mackenzie.

8757. *Mr Gordon.*—You were well acquainted with this country about 60 years ago?—Yes.

8758. You stated, I think, that there were twenty-three tenant farmers in the valley of Glencannich and twenty-two cottars?—Yes.

8759. Did you ever hear of them being bothered with frost up there in that country?—And snow too. I have been in both, sometimes very heavy snow.

8760. Did you ever hear of their corn being frosted there?—Well, no, I have not, except in so far as this is concerned. Coire-nan-cuilean is the highest club farm I mentioned. Well, when cattle were plentiful, the farmers there encircled their cattle for a certain time on the hill, and they turned over every bit of that hill, and, of course, they had oats growing in it; but it was rather late, and the snow and frost caught them. In Coire-fearna (I know the place), it was out over the Christmas; but fine weather came, and every stook of it made a peck of good oatmeal for them afterwards.

8761. That is different from the frosted corn nowadays. But do you think that sheep could be safely wintered in these parts of the country?—They were, and they are at this time. How did Mr Robertson?——

8762. He was in a different watershed up at the top of the hill?—Coire-nan-cuilean is much more sheltered, if you come to that.

8763. Has Mr Robertson's farm not some lower ground, then a good part of the hills of Glencannich?—Not at all.

Beauly. — Colin Chisholm.

8764. Whereabout is Coire-nan-cuilean? — It is the very brae of Glencannich at the west end of Loch Mullardoch; and Mr Robertson's farm is nearly 200 or 300 feet above it.

8765. Was there some farm up about Luibnadamh about your day?—Yes.

8766. Were they not bothered with frost on the ground there?—I never heard of that; they may have been.

8767. Well, that is in regard to Glencannich. Now you told us in regard to Guisachan that there were sixteen tenants and so many cottars?—Yes.

8768. Do you remember the name of the township that they were in?—Yes, every one of them.

8769. What was the name of them?—The name first and foremost is Cougie. Then there is Cnocanacrae, to the west of Guisachan. Then there was Mid-Guisachan, Baile-'chladaich, Ach-a'-bhlair, and Tomich. You will find all these places in print in Lord Napier's report.

8770. Were these townships, or were they individual farms?—The first of them in the glen might have been called individual farms, because they were occupied by a tenant of the name of Cameron, in fact two brothers of them, but the others, Cnocanacrae in my time was only one farm, and Guisachan again was one farm. Baile-chladaich was a club farm; Ach'-a'-bhlair was a club farm; Tomich was a club farm; Achnaheglish (East and West) were both club farms.

8771. You have told us about Glencannich, and you have told us now about Guisachan, but you have said nothing about Glen-Affaric. Do you remember any houses on Glen-Affaric?—Oh, scarcely any, except shepherds' houses.

8772. Well, for the last 60 years I may take it that Glen Affaric has never been occupied by any tenants except for sheep grazing?—From 1831?

8773. You were born in 1831, were you not?—Oh, I was seventeen years old then.

8774. Would you remember before 1831?—Perfectly.

8775. Go back beyond 1831, and tell us if you ever remember seeing any houses at all in Glen Affaric?—None except shepherds' houses.

8776. Then there were no crofts and no arable land in Glen-Affaric in your day?—The crofts were there, but whether they had arable land I am not sufficiently acquainted with it to tell you. But I know you will find a great many crofts there.

8777. As regards The Chisholm's property outside Glencannich, with the exception of the farm of Knockfin, occupied by the Williamsons, there were no other tenants within that fine property in your time?—Well, in my very early recollection there was a small speck of the glen of Affaric called Lub-na-gairbh-fhearna.

8778. That is near where the lodge is?—Far beyond the lodge, past Coulavie.

8779. Near Alltbeath?—Scarcely as far as that.

8780. But, in point of fact, you don't recollect any arable lands or crofts or small farms in Glen Affaric?—No, except these.

8781. Knockfin grazings went in over to the edge of Loch Affaric?—Yes, to the forest.

8782. Can you tell us whose shepherds it was that you remember seeing in the place?—I remember seeing numbers of shepherds.

8783. Do you remember their names?—Numbers of them.

8784. Whose shepherds were they?—They were shepherds of the men that had farms. The first shepherd I ever remember there was Ewan Rankine, and his son after him.

8785. Who was his master?—Mr Chisholm of Fasnakyle.

8786. Then the only arable land in your day was down at Fasnakyle on the side of the Glass river?—No, they had arable land in Achagiad. The west end of Loch Beneveian you will find plenty arable land.

8787. I have been there, but I have never seen arable land?—Oh, you had better go if you want to find good grazings and good share of level lands waiting for the strong arm of the labourer to cultivate it, and to reclaim it.

8788. Would you not be a little afraid of frost in Glen Affaric?—Not the least if I were living on good terms of rent. Oh no. Beauly. — Colin Chisholm.

8789. Mr Sutherland asked a question about the cattle upon Guisachan farm. I at once agree with Mr Sutherland that it is a very creditable thing to see such fine animals in that part of the country; but are you aware whether these cattle are kept on the produce of the country or on other produce?—I should be very sorry to give you an answer to that.

8790. But I would like to get an answer; if you say you don't know, that is enough?—I don't. There is a great deal of cake and stuff coming to this country that I know of.

8791. But you believe there is a little cake goes up there occasionally?—I should not wonder, but I am not surprised at the cattle being good.

8792. It accounts for the cattle being rather superior to what you would expect to find in the district?—Yes: well I will tell you another reason for it. He got a third from the descendants, or rather from the last cattle of Mr M'Combie of Tillyfour—the best stock of cattle.

8793. I have no doubt the present cattle owe their good qualities, to a large extent, to the man that is in charge of them?—Just so. Now that we mention Mr M'Combie's name, would you allow me, my lord, to make a little quotation, and I will return to this gentleman?

8794. *The Chairman.*—No. If there is anything wanted of that kind afterwards, we will give you an opportunity.

8795. *Mr Munro.*—You have favoured us with an exceedingly long and interesting statement, and you have also answered a good many questions, so that I shall not detain you long. Your age, you have told us, is over 80?—Yes.

8796. I take it, from your extreme age, that you do not yourself expect to participate in any benefit or advantage that may accrue from a reconsideration of existing circumstances in Strathglass and Glencannich?—I do not expect the value of a pinch of snuff, not for myself personally, from all the Commissions I ever saw about land.

8797. Then I suppose that it is purely patriotic motives that have brought you here to-day, and with a desire to benefit others who may be coming after you?—That is the very reason, and there is another reason too. Through my long service in Her Majesty's Customs I have what can keep me in bread and cheese all my lifetime, if I take care of it, and I want to do whatever little lies in my power for all the people of the country that have so generously consented to keep me in my old age. If you call that patriotism, I am full of it.

8798. But, Mr Chisholm, I take it that your desire is to see Strathglass, Glencannich, and these other glens as you remember them when you left them 60 years ago?—If God in His mercy would grant it, I would be very thankful.

8799. And you have no doubt in your own mind that these glens should be repeopled, provided they get them on fair terms?—Not the least doubt of it.

8800. You have been absent from Strathglass for a very considerable time?—41 years only.

8801. And you still cherish some love for your country, as you did long ago?—I found that the love of country never abated in me; it was quite the reverse, and I believe that every man that leaves a happy part of a country can never forget what it is.

8802. Have you ever, in your absence from the country, met other Highlanders who were influenced by a strong desire to return to their native glens and straths?—Hundreds of them.

8803. You have given us details of people from Strathglass and Glencannich who have risen to prominent position in the army and in the church, and other professions. Now, am I to understand from that that you gave us that statement to show that the people then occupied such favourable circumstances that they were in a position to bring up their sons

Beauly. Colin Chisholm.

to follow up these professions?—That is the very reason that I have given for it. They were in such a position as to enable their families to take their part in the army and in the church. And while the two bishops, John and Æneas Chisholm, were at the head of the Highland College in Moidart and Lismore, they sent splendid teachers to Strathglass and Glencannich. In my opinion that would account for the desire of the young men of that district to enter the church or follow the profession of arms.

8804. You have given us a very considerable list, and you could add to that number?—Add to it materially. That is the reason why I mention these bishops.

8805. Do you remember what effect the depopulation of these glens and straths had upon the towns around here, such as Inverness and Beauly?—I cannot tell you that it had much effect on them, but I know for a fact that a good many of them came down to Inverness and to other parts.

8806. But I presume you are prepared to admit, as a matter within your own knowledge, that tenants from these places were in the habit of coming to these towns with the produce of their farms, selling the produce and returning with purchases from Inverness?—Repeatedly, and I have seen it done.

8807. And the towns certainly have suffered from the depletion of the population in these places?—Well, I should say so, living there across the sea and other parts, but so far as getting a living on their land at home that is so.

8808. Any misfortune which has occurred to the people in this neighbourhood would no doubt be owing to this fact, that under the old conditions the farmers were in the habit of wintering their sheep from Strathglass about Beauly here and about Inverness?—And the Black Isle, and some in Aberdeenshire.

8809. And that, of course, is unknown now?—No.

8810. Now you mentioned about the produce of ground on Strathglass, and you have known of good samples of oats being produced there?—I have.

8811. Were there many meal mills in Strathglass?—Seven only. That is from Aigas west of the railway. I will mention them. Meal mill at Aigas, Eskadale, Erchless, Culligran, Inchully, Guisachan, and Moor of Comore, I think the only one that grinds meal now out of the whole number.

8812. Were there many crofters in Strathglass?—Well, that depends on the meaning you attach to a crofter.

8813. Well, men paying not above £30 of rent?—Just so. Some of them, in my recollection, numbers of them, paid less than £30. But in rearrangements of farms, again, those that I saw paying £30, they had actually taken farms where they paid more than £30 a year. Now, I don't call them crofters at all. In England, where I spent part of my time, they would go by the name of yeomanry, not crofters.

8814. Now, on the question of poor rates. Do you remember what the poor rates might have been on Strathglass before the depopulation took place?—No, nor any other man, for there were no poor rates.

8815. Mr Shaw Stewart put a question to you regarding giving pecuniary assistance to enable the people to retake the lands in these straths and glens. Now I am not quite sure that you quite understood Mr Shaw Stewart's question. Supposing that a tenant can be got to take a small farm in the strath or glen, what amount of assistance would you expect he would require to enable him to enter into possession,—to stock the farm, and to build his house?—It would be presumption on my part if I were to enter on these things, being so long out of the country. It would cause mere awkwardness and trouble. I can talk of how they are now, but the idea of my mentioning about rents or assistance is beyond my power to give. That must be left for men who know land.

8816. So that you are not in a position to offer us any suggestions on that point?—Well, no; but what I said to the gentleman was that I would certainly expect the proprietors of the land to have the lion's share of providing for the funds, simply because they dislocated the people in possession, and are well able to make good their promises.

Beauly. Colin Chisholm.

8817. Where would the people come from, supposing that there were no more deer forests in Strathglass? Where would the people come from to take possession of the land; can you give us any assistance in that direction?—From wherever God and good men may direct them. If you like, let them come from Lewis, or from Harris, or any other part: but give the names if there be any of them who are the descendants of those who helped to get it.

8818. How could we make a selection now of such men?—That is for wiser men than me to say.

8819. Do you think it entails a hardship on farmers in the neighbourhood of deer forests who used to get their turnips and wintering when sheep occupied land now afforested, and does that depreciate the value of the lands in the forests and in the neighbourhood round about?—I should say it must do that; but I told you I would rather keep clear of rents and values. That will be the work of superior hands among farmers and among other people. But what I maintain is this, that it is a hardship and a gross misappropriation of land to deprive people of their holdings that were able to pay for them. And I consider it even an oppression of the poor. My church tells me—one moment, my lord—my church tells me there are four sins that call for vengeance at the gate of heaven, and oppression of the poor is one of them.

8820. You look at these questions, I think, mainly from how it affects the people, and not from the landlord and tenant point of view?—They have the greatest interest of all to rectify it.

8821. Then would you consider that if the glens were put as they originally were, even the landlords would benefit?—By far, not in pocket only, but in reputation, and in every sense of the word. They are becoming the byeword of the nations.

8822. *Mr William Burns*, Solicitor, Inverness, Agent for Mrs Chisholm.—Would you tell us what your father's name was?—His name was Colin Chisholm. My grandfather's name was Colin Chisholm, and my great-grandfather's name Colin Chisholm. The latter left Leitrie, and fought at the battle of Sheriff Muir in 1715, and afterwards at the battle of Culloden in 1746. There they are now.

8823. Your father was tacksman of Leitrie?—He was, all his lifetime, until he came down to Phopachy.

8824. What date was that?—Well, upon my word, I don't know.

8825. Give us a notion. It is since 1830, I suppose?—Oh, God bless you, long long since then. It would be in the forties. [*To his brother.*] Do you remember, Duncan?

8826. It was after 1830. Now your father was tacksman of Leitrie at all events in 1812?—Yes.

8827. Did you ever hear that your father evicted the tenants of Leitrie?—No, I did not, nor any other one.

8828. Very well. Listen to this precept of removing, at your father's instance:—'Colin Chisholm and Colin 'Chisholm, junior, tacksman of Leitrie and Setter of the 'said lands, that they upon the fourth day of April current 'obtained Decree and Sentence of Removal at their in-'stance before Thomas Gilzean, Esq., my substitute, against 'Donald Macdonald and Angus Macdonald in Leitrie.' There is a precept to remove them, and they were removed upon that. Do you know that?—I know perfectly well that they never were tenants. I remember them both just as well as I remember you. Angus was one of the men that went to Ireland—volunteered to go to Ireland in 1798.

8829. Is it not the fact that they were removed at the instance of your father, and that they were sub-tenants of his?—Hear what I have to say to that. They were removed at the suggestion of Colonel James Chisholm, who wanted his nephew and his uncle to come near the church, and they were the nearest tenants but one to the church at Fasnakyle.

8830. But you have been accusing the lairds of removing tenants. I am calling your attention to a legal document under which people were removed at

Beauly. — Colin Chisholm.

your father's instance; you can read it if you like?—I have no doubt whatever but you can read things perfectly well.

8831. You say that these tenants were in easy circumstances, and they were as comfortable as the generality of Highlanders were, and you talk of the date as 60 years ago. I happened to pick out a rental of that very time you are talking about, 1823.—No, 1831.

8832. You have been telling about the easy circumstances about the beginning of the century?—I was.

8833. Did you ever hear that in 1823 the tenants you are talking of in Glencannich were £1505 in arrear of rent?—That is a dear lookout on them. I will tell you the story of them. You won't find one of my ancestors a penny in arrear.

8834. You are not aware of this, that your father was frequently in arrear?—He never was.

8835. And got forgiven. Well, we are going to prove it?—That is not true. He never in this world owed a penny.

8836. Who was Roderick Chisholm that was at Leitrie and Shalavanach?—That was a brother of old Colonel Chisholm.

8837. He was not a relative of yours?—He was very distantly related. Colonel Chisholm took him down to Comar, as he did the old man that was married to a sister. But to say, Mr Burns, that my father was in arrears, I defy all the lawyers in Inverness, or in the kingdom, to say that my father, or uncle, or grandfather owed a penny of rent on the day that it ought to be paid, when the sun went down.

8838. I will read you an entry from the rental I have just picked up of 1837:—'Leitrie and Shalavanach, Colin 'and John Chisholm, arrears outstanding on 23rd April '1836—£8, 5s.' That is erroneous, I suppose?—What is that?

8839. Colin was your father. He is entered in this rental—I must say it is not much compared with the others—£8, 5s. of arrears.

8840. *The Chairman.*—What was his rent?

8841. *Mr Burns.*—£120. *Witness (to Mr Burns).*—Your paper is erroneous; I will tell you why. That was a dispute about the building of the house. I know what you are driving at, but it was not an arrear at all.

8842. *The Chairman.*—He kept £8 owing to the dispute?—Owing to the dispute. His landlord, as a great stroke of liberality, gave his tenants £20 for building houses. Very well, my father built a house that cost him, I suppose, the best part of £100, and there was a dispute about some trifle—about the wood I think it was,—and my uncle John exactly was 41 years on the place that Mr Burns mentioned, and the sun never went down on his rent unpaid. He was turned out of it at the end of the lease, without asking whether he would give double the rent or whether he would give any rent at all. He found, like the other tenants of Strathglass, an asylum on Lord Lovat's estate.

8843. *Mr Burns.*—The lady was a Miss Wilson. Was she Mrs Elizabeth Chisholm, liferentrix of the lands of Chisholm in 1812?—She was.

8844. Then she is correctly described as 'Mrs Eliza-'beth Chisholm, last of Chisholm, liferentrix of the said 'lands' at the date when she obtained this summons of removing along with your father against the tenants of Leitrie?—She never did such a thing.

8845. She is correctly described in this precept—I am not asking you to prove them, but she is the lady that is mentioned?—I know she is the owner of the lands, and the best lady that they ever had; but I have come to the reason why Angus Macdonald and his father were removed, and Rory Chisholm also, by the same man.

8846. Now you state that the population of Strathglass at the same date was 5000?—I never said such a thing.

8847. *Mr Maccallum.*—He was referring to Glengarry.

8848. *Mr Burns.*—Do you say the population of Strathglass and this population here have gone down much since the beginning of the cenutry?—Well, I have said, and I say still, that there are no farmers there, and I don't know the population, or how they live, if they are there.

Beauly. — Colin Chisholm.

8849. Do you know the population was a good deal under 5000, both of Kilmorack and Kiltarlity put together, at the beginning of the century?—I know nothing of the kind. I spoke of the glen, and of what I have seen and what I now see.

8850. You said there were thousands of cultivated and cultivable land in Glencannich. Did you say that?—I did not.

8851. In what then, in something?

8852. *Mr Shaw Stewart.*—In Mr Winans' forests.

8853. *Mr Burns.*—Not in Glencannich. How much arable land in extent do you think there will be in Glencannich itself?—I give you the length in what we call Glencannich properly. It is just about 14 or 15 miles, and if you take from the top of one hill to the top of another hill, that is the extent of it. You cannot get over it.

8854. Mam Soul is the top of one of the mountains; you cannot cultivate Mam Soul?—Does it belong to any part?

8855. Will there be about 54 acres of arable land in Glencannich. That is what our measurement shows?—I say that is not the case. There is a great deal of arable land on the south side of Glencannich, through which you must drive if you are going to that glen, that never was taken into account by some who described Glencannich.

8856. But you say it is more than 54 acres?—Most certainly.

8857. Would you hazard a venture on the number of acres?—I won't do anything of the kind, nor do I think it is very safe for you, unless you have good measures.

8858. I cannot find these places of yours on the rental. You might go over them again. I don't find Coire-nan-cuilean on the rental?—Very likely, you would not find it now unless I told you. But you would find the place there, and the walls of the houses.

8859. *The Chairman.*—Are the walls there yet?—Yes.

8860. *Mr Burns.*—Was it a sheiling?—No, they were there winter and summer in my recollection.

8861. Was it a grazing?—It was a grazing.

8862. Was it a township or under one tenant?—There were a couple of the best tenants.

8863. Were they tenants of Invercannich?—At one time, before these men went there, that place was attached to Invercannich as a sheiling, but these men took it at about the beginning of this century as farms, and they remained there. I will give their names—Colin Chisholm and John Chisholm. Both went to Nova Scotia, and I correspond with their descendants to this day.

8864. Were they at Invercannich?—No, no, they were tenants of Coire-nan-cuilean.

8865. They were tenants of a tacksman, I suppose. Who was the tacksman?—They were the tacksmen themselves.

8866. But we don't find it in the rental?—I don't care what you find in the rental.

8867. Was Coire-nan-cuilean part of Comar?—At one time, but not at the time that I am telling you.

8868. This is 1870–77, Comar, including Coire-nan-cuilean, possessed in tack?—That is the place, but it is not the time that I am speaking of. I am speaking of the time that we find men there.

8869. Ardtaig, is that a sheiling?—It was a residence.

8870. Who lived in it?—Finlay Macrae, a good tenant; and he took a farm in Strathconan when he left it.

8871. It was part of Màm?—Never.

8872. We have Màm and Ardtaig in a rental in 1844, possessed by Allan J. Hunter; you did not know that?—No.

8873. Then Mullardoch, East and West; what were they?—They were in my earliest recollection attached to a club farm in Glencannich.

Beauly. — Colin Chisholm.

8874. Were they not sheilings, part of Comar?—They were not part of Comar.

8875. We were told there never was a club farm in Glencannich?—Who told you that?

8876. The rentals are telling us that; you don't believe the rentals?—I know what I say, and there are plenty who will prove it.

8877. Shalavanach, what was it?—A club farm when the people were removed to Glen Strathfarrar.

8878. Had not your father and your uncle Shalavanach as part of Leitrie? It is in that summons of removing?—My father never had an inch of Shalavanach. Your information is quite wrong.

8879. Our information we take from the documents '1826–27, Leitrie and Shalavanach, Colin Chisholm.' Was that your father?—That is wrong. It ought to be Peter Chisholm and John Chisholm.

8880. No, Peter Chisholm had a part of Leitrie and Shalavanach?—He never had an inch of Leitrie. Do you suppose I am going to believe what is quite an error on your part.

8881. Luibguish, what was that; was not that a sheiling?—That was one of the farms.

8882. Was there more than 3 acres of arable land there?—Well, I should say there was, but I am not so certain. There is a very good plot of arable land.

8883. Glaschorry, was there a house there?—House after house, and barn after barn. The finest oats, the strongest oats I ever saw reared (and I have seen some of the best I think in England and Scotland), were reared in Glaschorry.

8884. Was it let along with Leitrie?—No.

8885. Had not Finlay Chisholm Leitrie and Glaschorry in 1852 and 1853?—Oh, that may be but guessing.

8886. There is Craskie you have told us about: that is tenanted now by your nephew?—Yes.

8887. Well, you have told us about growing oats. Is not Craskie the best bit of ground in the glen?—I would not say that at all.

8888. Does Craskie try to grow oats now?—It did, and grew the best potatoes we had in the country.

8889. Why did he give it up?—That is more the business of a farmer.

8890. Did not Craskie give it up because it did not pay him?—It is possible. I do not know what are the reasons why, but I know this, that it was the safest place in all the country from frost, and grew the best potatoes there.

8891. But Craskie, I fancy, has not found it profitable at all?—It is possible. I do not know why he has ceased it.

8892. His rent is £30 now, but he does not grow oats now or for the last 4 or 5 years?—Oh, I don't know, but the last time I was there I can tell you I saw a beautiful field of turnips, and they would look to me like cakes, the tops of them eaten down to the earth with deer. And near his door they crossed the river, and there was a fence, an animal fence, and the deer went in, and actually ate every one of the best turnips there to the ground, and when they tasted the ground they stopped.

8893. You know there is a deer fence surrounding?—It is not good enough.

8894. *The Chairman.*—It has some holes in it?—It is full of holes.

8895. *Mr Burns.*—You have given us some figures about Mr Winans. Where did you get these 400 square miles?—I took them from the public prints, where you might have taken them.

8896. What has Mr Winans got now, if he has got anything?—That I don't know.

8897. He has not got Glen-Strathfarrar?—No.

8898. He has not got Kintail?—I don't know.

8899. You don't know how much he has now?—Well, I know that he has Knockfin and the south side of Cannich.

8900. You do not complain of Mr Winans turning any one out?—Not a bit of it: I am not aware that he ever turned a man out of his house and home.

8901. There has never been any action at his instance against tenants?—I never heard a tenant complain of Mr Winans, except that they complained that deer ate their crops, and I believe he was reasonable enough to give them compensation. Beauly. — Colin Chisholm.

8902. You told us that in 1884 Mr James Sutherland Chisholm brought back some tenants to the district?—He did.

8903. Who were they?—The father of the lad now in Craskie, one.

8904. The Chisholm was very good to him?—Yes, to be sure.

8905. Otherwise he might not have been able to get on very well?—Exactly so.

8906. James Chisholm went to Muckrach?—He did.

8907. What came over him?—You will find him at Mid-Craggie, on The Mackintosh estate.

8908. Did he become bankrupt?—I never heard that he did.

8909. But you do not know that he did not?—Oh, I never heard of it.

8910. And Æneas Chisholm?—Well, proceed.

8911.—He was at Invercannich?—He was at Invercannich.

8912. But that is not in Glencannich?—No.

8913. He has gone too, has not he?—He has gone to Inverness, and he will be very glad to drink a glass of toddy with you, and be quits.

8914. I have done it before; but whatever the reason, he and his sons have given up the holding?—Yes, they have.

8915. And his son has gone away to America?—To America.

8916. He is doing very well, I think?—Very well.

8917. Were there any others that came to Glencannich at the time when the attempt to restore the tenantry succeeded?—I mentioned the only two; the father of the lad at Craskie, and James Chisholm, were the only two.

8918. There was a man went to Breakachy, too: what happened to him?—I cannot tell you.

8919. At all events, these people were not turned out by The Chisholm. They went away for some cause; they were not evicted. I refer to the restored tenants?—Yes.

8920. *The Chairman.*—I am not going to keep you above a minute. I wish to point out to you that this document produced, showing an arrear of £8, 5s. due by Colin and John Chisholm for the farms of Leitrie and Shalavanach, is not an authenticated document; it is not signed by anybody, and I don't know how far it will have weight with us?—Thank you, my lord.

8921. *Mr Burns.*—We will put it in as an estate document; it is not authenticated in any other way.

8922. *The Chairman.*—Now there was produced a decree of removing, which I hold in my hands, at the instance of John Chisholm and Duncan Macdonald, joint tacksmen, and setters of the lands after mentioned, the Carrie grazings, and pertinents lying within the parish of Kilmorack and county of Inverness. The summons is followed up by a decree of removing, but we don't know from this document whether the removing was actually carried out or not?—I will make it clear to you. The men took the lands just at the height of the Napoleon war, and they gave an outrageous rent for them, or promised it. They had money, and they spent the money there, and that is the result. Duncan Macdonald went to Cape Breton Island with his family, and John Chisholm went to Breakachy. I was at two sales of these men; one of them, Duncan Macdonald, remained longer.

8923. You were explaining before, I think, to Mr Burns, why this process took place?—Not the one in your hand.

8924 You were asked by Mr Burns about this decree of removing at the instance of John Chisholm and Duncan Macdonald?—No.

8925. Oh, I beg your pardon. I am looking at the wrong one. The removing I mean is at the instance of William Chisholm of Chisholm against Donald Macdonald and Angus Macdonald in Leitrie?—Yes.

Beauly. Colin Chisholm.

8926. At the instance of 'William Chisholm, heritable proprietor of the lands and others aftermentioned, Mrs Elizabeth Chisholm, last of Chisholm, liferentrix of the said lands, and William Mackenzie, son and heir of the deceased John Mackenzie,' and so on.—Very well.

8927. What is the explanation of this process?—The explanation I gave Mr Burns—and I will tell your lordship as well as I can—simply is, that Donald Macdonald and Angus Macdonald never had more than a cow's grazing at Leitrie, but the young man went away as a substitute to the regiments raised at the time when the war was in Ireland, and in other parts. He was away 8 years, and Colonel Chisholm, the uncle of Angus Macdonald, wanted him to go with his father to the door of the church in Strathglass, at Fasnakyle. He came there, and he took another trusted friend that was in Carrie down to the same place, near the chapel. Then he took his own brother, Roderick Chisholm. Colonel Chisholm took him down, and gave him a farm. That is it.

8928. I see. Now, you gave us some important figures with regard to the lands occupied by Mr Winans?—Very well.

8929. You said that Mr Winans had 250,000 acres, covering an area of about 400 square miles?—260,000 I say after that. The newspaper report was as I said it, but they have 250,000, or some say 260,000 within an area of about 400 square miles.

8930. That is what he had some years ago?—That is exactly the statement in the public papers.

8931. Can you tell me upon whose estates these deer forests are situated?—Perfectly well.

8932. Just tell me?—Chisholm, first Lord Lovat, Matheson, and, I believe, Mackenzie of Kintail, lately, but I am not sure about that.

8933. I think that is quite right. Not more?—I think not. I don't know of more proprietors.

8934. But he had all these combined into one vast forest?—At one time.

8935. Had he land from Gillanders of Highfield?—I don't know.

8936. Was that land exclusively devoted to deer?—Every part of it.

8937. Were there not some parts of it devoted partly to sheep and partly to deer?—Not a bit of it at the time I refer to.

8938. Are some parts of it now devoted partly to sheep and partly to deer?—Stop a little, I am not aware that there is a single sheep on any spot of that land now, except Kintail there may be.

8939. *Mr Burns.*—Comar?—He had not an inch of what Comar is now.

8940. *The Chairman.*—Has he some sheep up in Kintail?—Do you mean Mr Winans?

8941. I mean Mr Winans?—Oh, I don't know about that, but I will tell you the names of the proprietors—Matheson and Mackenzie, I think, of Kintail, The Chisholm, and Lord Lovat. And this gentleman (Mr Burns) says Highfield also.

8942. Now I want to know, in the combination of these lands into one vast forest, were some sheep farms taken?—He took the very last of them himself. He took them over himself, and paid for them honourably.

8943. He took the farm, and took over the sheep, and turned it into a deer forest?—Just so.

8944. Can you tell me how many farms he treated in that way?—Yes, I think I can. They were not many. There was the farm of Beneveian and Gleann-nam-fiadh, and Achadh-Giat. They were the only ones he took over, and, of course, he took the farms from Williamson, and, I think, Williamson had Coire-nan-cuilean at one time, but he had Knockfin, and Mr Winans took over the sheep, and sold them, I think, to profit.

8945. And turned it into deer?—Turned it into deer.

8946. Are all these farms now fenced by him?—I was going to say not one, but I believe that there is a splendid fence built up between himself and Lord Tweedmouth. I don't think they were sailing very smoothly in one boat, and there is a large fence built between them all round the hill there.

8947. *Mr Burns.*—I think he has made a mistake there: was it not Lord Tweedmouth that took over Kerrow?—God help you, man! Don't you see I am speaking of Affaric; Mr Winans never had anything to do with Kerrow. Beauly. Colin Chisholm.

8948. He has it now?—God bless you, but that is a new thing. How long has he had it?

8949. It is about 12 years ago.—Do you mean to say that Mr Winans has Kerrow now?

8950. It is Knockfin.

8951. *The Chairman.*—Then is the witness right?

8952. *Mr Burns.*—He is right.

8953. *The Chairman.*—Has there been a large increase of deer upon the land which Mr Winans has taken under lease?—Well, I suppose so.

8954. At all events it is land given over exclusively to sport?—To sport and nothing else.

8955. Does it include large tracts of fine grazing and arable land?—Oh, I am not going to speak of the arable land in Affaric. I have been speaking of the arable land in Glencannich, and I suppose some of the other gentlemen round the room will speak of other parts. But I confine myself strictly to that glen.

8956. Which glen?—Glencannich.

8957. Now, is there land easily capable of being made arable land in Glencannich?—Yes, there is some land, and a great deal of it was arable before.

8958. And there is a great deal there, as I understand you to say, of land very suitable for grazing?—Oh, to be sure, some of the best grazing.

8959. Low lying land?—Low and high, particularly high land. Splendid grazing.

8960. Do you remember what rent Mr Winans paid when he had the largest amount of land under his control?—Oh no. I do not meddle with rents.

8961. *Mr Macleod.*—A portion, at any rate, of a legal document was read out to you, in which your father's name appears?—Mr Burns said that.

8962. You don't know anything about it, of your own knowledge?—Not at all; but I will tell you that it was Colonel James Chisholm that brought his sister's son and his father and his brother and his other sisters down.

8963. But tell me this. It would be quite possible for you to know about this?—Perfectly so.

8964. But you never, of your own knowledge, knew that your father's name had been put on that decree to put these people out?—Never.

8965. Well, it is only fair to you that the whole instrument should be read to you.—Very well.

8966. It says:—'William Fraser Tytler, Esq., younger, of Balnain, Advocate, Sheriff-Depute of the County of Inverness. To . . Whereas it is humbly meant and shown to me by William Chisholm, Esq. of Chisholm, heritable proprietor of the lands and others aftermentioned, Mrs Elizabeth Chisholm, last of Chisholm, liferentrix of the said lands, and William Mackenzie, son and heir of the deceased John Mackenzie, Colin Chisholm, and Colin Chisholm, junior, tacksmen of Leitrie,' and the rest has been read to you?—Yes.

8967. Do you see that the principal name mentioned there is, of course, that of the proprietor?—Yes.

8968. And it is quite a probable thing that your father's name was inserted in this instrument without his consent or knowledge?—I think it is most certain to be so, and I will tell you why. My father was a relative of the man that was spoken of here as removed, but William Mackenzie was not: he was a tenant.

8969. But you have no recollection of hearing any talk in your father's house about such a thing?—Never, and I have known Angus Macdonald and his father all the years after they removed.

8970. And you think it is a very likely thing that if your father was taking such a very serious step as to become a party to the removing of his own relative, you would have heard about it?—Yes.

8971. So that you think it is quite likely that his name would be inserted without his consent?—It is quite possible.

8972. *The Chairman.*—That concludes your examination.—Thank you, my lord; but you told me you

Beauly.

Colin Chisholm.

would give me an opportunity of saying something about Mr M'Combie, and it bears on the subject of my examination. I heard him saying, before a committee of the House of Commons, or rather in the Committee room, that the Game Laws of Scotland were in a manner a great curse to all the tenantry in Scotland. This is the way he proved it. He said: 'When a farm is taken in Aberdeenshire, the tenant comes and offers for it. The first thing that the proprietor asks you is, "Have you seen my game regulations?" "No," says the farmer, "I have not." "Well, then, here they are; read them." Well, the next question is—"Do you agree with them?" "I cannot agree with them." No; I won't accept your offer," says the landlord to the tenant.' That was what I heard Mr M'Combie saying before a committee of the House of Commons. Now I am done.

8973. Very well; thank you?—You have done with me, my lord.

8974. Quite done?—I am old, but I have no objections to carry this game on till 5 or 6 o'clock in the evening. I have seen five consecutive chiefs of the name Chisholm who were each in turn owners of Strathglass; add to that the "Fair Lady" and the present Mrs Chisholm, and the number will then be seven proprietors and eleven factors.*

[* Mr Chisholm supplied the following list of townships or farms in Glencannich:—

List of Townships or Farms on the south side of Glencannich, and Residents.

			Family
Alexander Og Chisholm,	Torrbeatha,	Cottar,	1
Widow Catherine Chisholm,	Tombui-mor,	do.	1
Archibald Chisholm,	do. do.	Farmer,	1
William Macdonald,	do. do.	do.	1
Alexander MacRae,	Dailriach,	do.	1
Farquar Mackenzie,	Coiredubh,	Cottar,	1
Christopher MacRae,	Ariuainach,	Farmer,	1
Donald Mackenzie,	Glaschorry,	do.	1
Donald MacGregor,	do.	do.	1
Roderick Chisholm,	Lubguish,	do.	1
Malcolm M'Rae,	Cruim,	Cottar,	1
Kenneth Chisholm,	Lubnameann,	do.	1
Ferchar M'Kenzie,	Lubnandamh,	do.	1
Alexander Chisholm,	Frianach-mhor,	Farmer,	1

List of Townships or Farms on the north side of Glencannich and Residents.

			Family
William M'Kenzie,	Mam,	Farmer,	1
Colin Chisholm,	Coire-nan-cuilean,	do.	1
John Chisholm,	do.	do.	1
Finlay M'Rae,	Ardtaig,	do.	1
Valentine M'Rae,	West Mulardich,	do.	1
William Chisholm,	East Mulardich,	do.	1
John Chisholm,	Shalvannach,	do.	1
Peter Chisholm,	do.	do.	1
Colin Chisholm (senior),	Lietrie,	do.	1
Colin Chisholm (junior),	do.	do.	1
William Mackenzie,	do.	do.	1
John Chisholm,	do.	do.	1
Rory Chisholm,	do.	do.	1
Rory Chisholm,	do.	Cottar,	1
Finlay M'Rae,	do.	do.	1
Donald M'Donald,	do.	do.	1
Duncan M'Donnell,	Carrie,	Farmer,	1
John Chisholm,	do.	do.	1
Donald M'Lean,	do.	Cottar,	1
Colin Chisholm,	Muckerach,	Farmer,	1
Alexander Chisholm,	do.	do.	1
Archibald Chisholm,	do.	do.	1
John Chisholm,	do.	do.	1
Roderick Chisholm,	do.	Cottar,	1
John Fraser,	do.	do.	1
Rory M'Donnell,	Craskie,	Farmer,	1
Duncan M'Rae,	do.	do.	1
Valentine M'Rae,	do.	do.	1
Alexander Chisholm,	do.	do.	1
Archibald Chisholm,	do.	do.	1
Donald Chisholm,	do.	do.	1
Christopher Chisholm,	do.	do.	1
Widow Ann Chisholm,	do.	Cottar,	1
Colin Chisholm,	Londubh,	Farmer,	1
Duncan Chisholm,	Ruinahuaig West,	do.	1
Matthew M'Pherson,	Ruinahuaig East,	Cottar,	1]

Duncan Cameron.

DUNCAN CAMERON, Church Park, Kirkhill (68)—*examined.*

8975. *The Chairman.*—Where do you stay?—At Kirkhill.

8976. Is that in Glencannich?—No, but I have been there. Beauly.

8977. *Mr Gordon.*—It is just opposite Beauly. Duncan Cameron.

8978. *The Chairman.*—You were formerly in Glencannich?—Yes.

8979. How long is it since you left Glencannich?—Twenty-four years.

8980. And do you belong to Glencannich?—No, I was born in the parish of Kilmorack.

8981. How long were you there, in Glencannich?—Between 8 and 9 years.

8982. Were you a crofter there?—No.

8983. How were you engaged there?—A sheep manager and shepherd.

8984. To whom?—To Mr Roberston of Aigas.

8985. Was he a farmer or a proprietor?—He was a farmer.

8986. What was the name of the farm?—He had the low farm of Aigas and Phoineas.

8987. Any other farms?—Beginning at the north side of the river, there is in Glencannich, Craskie, Muckrach, Carrie, and on the south side of the river, Dalreoch, Glaschorry, Luibguish, Luibairdtaig, Lub-nam-mang. I had to superintend them.

8988. Can you tell the stock that was there?—Mostly I could; I will come quite close to it. I have a copy of it at home.

8989. Perhaps you can give us an idea?—We delivered about 400 sheep when we delivered them to the present man at Craskie.

8990. What kind were these?—Cheviot ewes and lambs, and all the other ages; about the same again at Muckrach when we delivered them. The lease of that side of the water was out before the other side.

8991. Were there 400 there?—Yes, between Carrie and Muckrach.

8992. Then in Dalreoch?—There would be about 300 there.

8993. Glaschorry?—Another 300.

8994. Luibguish?—Another 300.

8995. All cheviots?—Blackfaced there.

8996. And Luibairdtaig and Lub-nam-mang?—400. We never had a shepherd there, but there were crofters there.

8997. That is 2100 sheep altogether, including cheviots and blackfaced?—Just so.

8998. How is that land occupied now?—Deer forests altogether.

8999. Is part of it high land and part of it low?—Part of it high and part of it low; good land, as it had been represented by the previous witness.

9000. Is it mostly high land or mostly low land?—We were wintering in every bit of the land, except the hoggs.

9001. When was that land turned into deer forest?—Twenty-four years ago.

9002. By whom?—It was Mr Peter that got it; he had the shooting at the time I left; he was at Fasnakyle, and he got the shooting on the south side of the water. Sir Greville Smith again had the north side.

9003. Are there any sheep on it now, or is it exclusively devoted to deer?—Since ever I left there was not a sheep.

9004. Now, on these lands you have mentioned, is there any arable land?—Yes.

9005. What extent of land?—I could hardly say to an acre. There will be about 15 or 16 of good arable at Muckrach.

9006. Anything at Craskie?—Oh aye, fully more than at Muckrach.

9007. 20, say?—Yes, 20.

9008. Carrie?—About 10.

9009. Dalreoch?—About 4.

9010. At Glaschorry?—About 8.

9011. Luibguish?—Between 3 and 4.

9012. And at these other two places (Luibairdtaig and Lub-nam-mang)?—Only about 3 acres between them.

9013. Old arable land?—Good arable land.

9014. Such as it is in extent, was it under cultivation at the time the land was turned into deer forest?—

No, except what we had under potatoes and a bit corn. I had the best potatoes that ever I saw growing in Scotland.

9015. It is all forest now?—All forest.

9016. And is it all fenced in?—Well, if it is not, it is just joining with the rest of Mr Winans' forest. Probably the outside of it is fenced, but it was not fenced when I left.

9017. You don't know the rent of it?—No, I don't know the rent of it.

9018. Prior to the time of its being turned into forest, had it always been sheep land?—No; it was under tenants before it was converted into sheep farms.

9019. Under small farmers and crofters?—Small farmers and crofters.

9020. Then do you know when it was turned into sheep farms?—No; I was not in the country at that time.

9021. But you say the process was first of all occupation by small tenants, then by sheep farms, and then deer forests?—Yes; it is easy seeing that.

9022. Are the walls still visible of the steadings and dwelling-houses?—Yes.

9023. And I suppose there are perceptible traces of land that had formerly been under cultivation?—Old rigs.

9024. Now, is there any other part of the Lovat estate of which you are able to speak?—No. I know the places, but I cannot speak properly, except where I had the management myself.

9025. And your management was limited to this portion?—Yes; to Glencannich.

9026. Well now, in your judgment, is this land of which you have been speaking suitable for occupation now by crofters or small tenants?—There is no doubt about it that it is.

9027. Do you say that the arable land there could be cultivated to profit?—With the hill along with it; take both altogether.

9028. A suitable amount of grazing with such land as could easily be made arable?—Exactly.

9029. And do you think a man could live there as a crofter or a small farmer without aid from outside sources?—Oh, undoubtedly, or else the ground had been spoiled at making the rent. Of course if he was too highly rented he could not live.

9030. But at a fair rent?—At a fair rent.

9031. Is Beauly the nearest town to this land?—Yes.

9032. How far is it from Beauly?—Twenty-one miles.

9033. And is there a good road the whole way?—A splendid road.

9034. Where is the nearest water-carriage to that glen?—Beauly harbour is the nearest place.

9035. Is there any one living in Glencannich now?—No, except a few keepers that Mr Winans has, and an old woman that was there from time immemorial. I believe she is about 100 years old.

9036. She was allowed to stay?—Allowed to stay.

9037. But, except her, there is nobody now but keepers?—No.

9038. Can you tell me how many deer would this land carry?—I cannot tell. The time the sheep were on it there were not so many deer then as after that.

9039. Were deer allowed to roam over that land before it was turned into a forest?—Oh yes.

9040. Along with the sheep?—Along with the sheep, and I heard some of the shooting tenants remarking this. I heard Mr Peter say that he did not know exactly where the sheep were, and whether he had the ground without sheep at all.

9041. Perhaps you are able to tell the area turned into forest?—I could hardly tell. There would be about 12 miles in length and about 3 in breadth.

9042. About 12 in length and about 3 miles in breadth?—Yes; of what we occupied of the ground there.

9043. What you superintended as a shepherd or manager is now under forest?—It is all under forest.

9044. Was there any other shepherd there along with you?—Oh, there were five of us. Beauly.

9045. Are any of the other men here to-day?—No; there are none of them here that I see. Duncan Cameron.

9046. *Mr Sutherland.*—You gave a statement of the land you thought was arable in these various townships. Did you refer to the land that you thought was under cultivation before?—Yes.

9047. Is there other land, then, that was not under cultivation before, but that might profitably be brought under cultivation?—Well, I could not say whether it would be profitable or not. There is plenty of land that could be taken in at some expense.

9048. But if it were used in conjunction with the grazing, would that not add to the value of the grazing?—I don't know: it might be quite as profitable to be left as it is with the grazing as to take it in.

9049. Have you any idea of the proportion that exists of it, acre to acre, comparing the arable and the grazing?—The arable is not in comparison with the grazing. Of course any man that was dependent on the grazing might have it, or the arable land, if he was to make something for a family.

9050. But you found no difficulty in rearing all these sheep upon the land when you were there?—Not in the least. There are plenty lambs. We put the hoggs always to wintering.

9051. *Mr Shaw Stewart.*—I have added up the arable land that you have given us in each farm, taking the fullest amount when you were in doubt, and it comes to 45 acres on these different farms?—Back or fore, I could not speak exactly.

9052. Quite so, but about 45 acres. How many crofters would that keep?—Oh well, but one in Craskie: it is a nice bit of farm. It is paying about £70 now. It will keep about 400 sheep. Muckrach again, that is just the same extent. I would make two nice farms of Muckrach and Carrie. There was just a march for other townships hill. You have the old hill after that, that they used to have. That is three. Well, again, Dalreoch is four.

9053. Do you mean only one in Dalreoch?—Not but one, and one at Glaschorry, and one at Luibguish, and one at Luibairdtaig.

9054. That is seven altogether?—Seven.

9055. So that if this glen was deforested, you would only benefit to the extent of seven crofters?—No, no.

9056. I mean this extent of ground, the land of which we are now speaking. If that ground were to be put an end to as a deer forest, it would benefit seven crofters only?—These would not be small crofts. In some of those farms you could put half a dozen crofts. Although you would divide the arable land, you could never work the land that way.

9057. But how would you propose to utilise this land?—That is the way. I would put it into seven farms.

9058. You consider that the arable land in each of these farms is not more than suffices for the grazing of the rest of the farm?—No.

9059. Well, now, would you have a system of club farms, or would you have single farms?—They might be put into a club farm. It would suit Carrie and Muckrach to be on a club farm, and I would put the other side of the water altogether to a club farm.

9060. *Mr Gordon.*—The south side or the north side?—The south side.

9061. It is mostly black ground?—Yes, black ground, suitable for cheviots.

9062. *Mr Shaw Stewart.*—Then they would be practically farmers—not crofters, but farmers?—Oh yes, farmers.

9063. Well, now, when you were on the land, did the sheep pay?—Yes, the sheep did pay at that time.

9064. Would they pay now?—According to the management.

9065. Yes, but also taking into account the fall in prices?—Oh well, that would be according to the way the ground had been rented. Of course there was an advantage in the time I was there. We were selling our cheviot wool at two guineas, and our blackfaced wool at £1. This year it is not the one-fourth of that. Well,

Beauly. — Duncan Cameron.

I consider again the rent should be down according to the value of the stock, or else people could not do so well on it.

9066. But then should the rent be on a sliding scale, low in bad years and high in good years?—I would think myself that that would be the best way both for proprietor and tenant. They would have a chance then.

9067. It would only be under those circumstances that they would have a chance of tiding through bad years?—It was just through that they would have a chance.

9068. How could they stock the land?—My idea is that the place itself would not be long in stocking it if they had a small capital to commence with.

9069. Do you know how many foresters and gillies there are now in that part of the glen?—On the ground that I mentioned there are only three.

9070. And when you were there, there were five shepherds besides yourself?—Yes, besides the other people we might employ at clipping time and smearing time, and the like of that. We always employ two men again for wintering the hoggs.

9071. Where did you get them from?—From the same locality.

9072. *Mr Forsyth.*—I think you said there were about 2100 sheep, partly cheviot and partly blackfaced, on this land of which you had charge. That was somewhere about the stock, all told?—Yes.

9073. Did you winter the hoggs at home; I did not quite gather that?—No.

9074. It would not winter the hoggs?—No.

9075. Did you require the whole of the low ground for the old sheep?—Yes.

9076. Were they mostly mixed stocks, or mostly ewe hirsels, or were there some hirsels with ewes amongst them?—Ewes and wedders.

9077. Had you the hirsels separate?—Yes.

9078. No mixed hirsels?—No. We had the old wedders together.

9079. You have been speaking as to the number of tenants that these places might hold in the way of crofters or small farmers. Now, supposing these men had the arable, which they would cultivate and would use, as they naturally would a great portion of the lower ground, for grazing cattle, would the remainder of the ground carry sheep at all in winter, old sheep?—Oh, undoubtedly it would.

9080. But of course a much reduced stock in that case?—Much would be reduced of the wintering.

9081. The wintering would be much reduced, and the stock would be much smaller?—Whatever was arable the shepherds were using it for hay for their cows and their own potatoes and a bit corn. I would not reduce one sheep for the winter.

9082. In spite of the summer stock of cattle on the ground? It is that point I want to get at very much. Don't you think that if the ground all round the arable was heavily grazed with cattle in summer and of course wintering out more or less in winter, would you not find that a great drawback in time, to keep the stock of old sheep in winter?—Undoubtedly, but we had no cattle there in my day.

9083. Exactly; but I am looking forward to the time when there may be crofters there with a large number of cattle. Do you not think it may be a question whether the old sheep—I assume the hoggs to be wintered each year—would not be rather badly off if the whole of the better ground were hard grazed by cattle belonging to the tenants?—Undoubtedly the sheep would need to suffer when the ground was eaten by cattle.

9084. Would they be able to winter up even a little higher on the hill?—There is ground there we used to winter on, and the highest was the best wintering we used to have, but there was a good deal of wood there.

9085. You found they held up well?—Yes, the woods on the top of the hill were our principal wintering.

9086. But still you think with me that there would have to be a heavy reduction taken off the number of the sheep if you had all these cattle on?—Undoubtedly. But that was the same to the tenant: if the cattle were to pay better than the sheep, why not?

Beauly. — Duncan Cameron.

9087. *Mr Munro.*—As a shepherd, you will have had considerable experience in the wintering of sheep. Now, do you remember if you were in the habit of sending down a considerable number of sheep to winter in the lowlands about here?—We only sent cows down here when we were at Glencannich.

9088. But you were in the habit of sending them down to winter here?—From Sutherlandshire.

9089. Do you know the farm of Comar?—Fine that.

9090. Do you know how it is at present occupied?—Yes.

9091. Do you know from report what is to be done with that farm?—The report is that the sheep have been valued over to Mrs Chisholm lately.

9092. Do you know how many sheep are on it?—8000.

9093. And are you aware that report has it that it is to be converted into a deer forest?—I cannot say: we heard that report first, but of course the shepherds that were there with the sheep before are engaged with Mrs Chisholm to the middle of October; whether longer or not, the sheep must be on the ground till then, at any rate.

9094. Is it the fact that tenants in the low ground, who cultivate to a very large extent, suffer loss by the depletion of sheep stocks in these farms?—To a great extent.

9095. Do you know that the old tenants in Strathglass were in the habit of having horses as well as cows and sheep?—I am aware of that.

9096. Are you aware that they were in the habit of cutting very considerable quantities of natural grass?—Oh yes.

9097. Now, talking of retaking possession of lands in these straths and glens, and the difficulties to be overcome in doing so, is it the case that stock of itself grows on these farms in course of time?—Undoubtedly.

9098. What did you begin with yourself, for instance?—I will tell you that. In my younger days shepherds were usually only paid in sheep: they got sheep instead of money wages. The first time that I went to service, though I could not do a man's work, I would be between 15 and 16 years of age. We call that a pack, what the shepherd gets in lieu of wages. My pack had been valued over to me: I had not a penny unless it had been on my back, and I might have a dog or two. They were valued over to me. I believe, if my memory does not fail in that, although it failed me in many other points, the valuation came to about £150 for my part. In 3 years I had them clear, and then the place cleared itself.

9099. Did you clear that off without any outside assistance?—None, and paid five per cent. to the master for interest of money on the stock till it was paid.

9100. What stock have you at present?—I am retired now. I am an old man.

9101. You have no doubt in your mind that, if these straths and glens were open to people, they would be readily taken possession of, and farmed on fair terms?—It is likely they would, but the people are out of the country that were fit to go there. People would need to have some experience how to work that place before they would go, or else there would be a few years before they would pay.

9102. But still, from your experience you are prepared to say that these lands could be advantageously occupied by competent persons?—Yes, I have no doubt of it.

9103. *Mr Maccallum.*—You are well acquainted with this land of which we are speaking just now, having been manager, and is it your opinion that it is not suited for small farms?—It is suited for small farms.

9104. And that the best use to which it could be put would be to divide it into small farms?—Small farms.

9105. Do you think, now, that these small farmers could be able to cultivate it to profit?—Oh, it was all owing to the way they were rented.

9106. If they were not too highly rented?—If the were not too highly rented.

9107. They would be able to make a living without any outside work?—Surely.

9108. If we had self-sustaining holdings?—Surely.

9109. Do you think there are people in this neighbourhood who would be willing to compete for getting these farms?—I question that, because a few were put away out of this locality. I don't see, unless it will be old men and young boys, and they must leave this place; there is nothing for them, but of course the land would take them back again.

9110. Supposing they were advertised as small farms, and that it was known they would be fairly rented, do you think people would apply for them?—Oh, I think so.

9111. Are you aware whether there is a strong competition for small farms generally. Have you any experience of that?—All the experience I have is that, if I see a croft in the public prints, there are more than sixty offers in for one croft.

9112. And do you think that, say with regard to the small farms we are speaking of, there would be a good competition for such as these?—I would think so, if it is so for the other crofts.

9113. But these are larger crofts?—But there is a class for the large crofts. It is easy to make them small by making a club farm.

9114. Now would these small tenants, do you think, if they got possession, increase the arable area?—There is no doubt about that.

9115. And it would pay them to do so, having the pasture?—Yes.

9116. The land, instead of having been divided into small farms, has been devoted entirely to deer forests. Now I would wish your opinion on this, as a practical man, whether the pasture has deteriorated when put under deer?—It is so; there is no two ways there. The pasture gets husky and dry, or it is not worked right. It is never burnt, and on that account again it is getting wild—the grasses that do grow—because it is not handled the way it should be. When I was in service and had to manage a hirsel, when I was taking a hirsel in hand I was bound in my agreement to have the one-seventh of my hill burned every year to make the grass to be natural, and it will take some years before that can be done over the forest. Therefore that grass that is natural now, is not so natural as it was when the ground was properly kept.

9117. You are clearly of opinion that serious injury has been done to the land by allowing it to go under deer?—Oh, a great injury.

9118. And, on the other hand, you think there would be a great improvement if it were put under small farmers?—The land would be improved.

9119. *Mr Shaw Stewart.*—One question as to the point of the deterioration of pasture. Does pasture deteriorate under sheep?—Not so bad as under deer.

9120. But does it deteriorate?—Yes, it goes back a little, but not so much as under deer.

9121. Then, seeing that most forests have been under sheep first, is it not rather difficult to prove the deterioration from deer? Is it not possible that some of the detorioration came on the land while it was under sheep?—Well, people of knowledge could make that out readily enough. There are two ways of accounting for that—that it would need to go faster out by the deer than by the sheep. The ground is never burned; the hill pasture is never properly handled unless it is burned so much yearly. But, since it was converted into deer forests, there would not be a spark of fire put to it. That accounts for it going wild sooner under deer than sheep. If it was under sheep, every one would try to make it as good as possible.

9122. Still it remains the fact that most of the land we see under deer has been some time under sheep?—Certainly.

9123. *Mr Forsyth.*—With reference to this deterioration, the pasture going bad, there are two kinds, I believe. There is the land going wild, and there is the old green land going under fog. In the one case the land goes wild for want of burning, and in many cases the green land gets under fog. Now, do you not think that it is possible that a fog land may recover, to a certain extent, if it is only lightly grazed by deer. It is a point I merely want your opinion on?—In ground that is badly fogged it is only the plough that will make it recover. It will take three crops, and then you will get plenty. Beauly. — Duncan Cameron.

9124. And there is no improvement in the fog land, although there are no sheep on it now?—No improvement.

9125. It just remains the same?—Remains the same.

9126. *Mr Macleod.*—The land that you are speaking of is on the south side of Glencannich?—I am speaking of both sides.

9127. Then is that the whole extent of the glen?—No, not the half of it; that is all I had to do with.

9128. I want to know exactly what you are speaking about. You say you are speaking of an area 12 miles long and 3 broad. That is 36 square miles. Then you gave us the stock. Then you said that there were five shepherds and yourself there?—Yes.

9129. You, of course, had a stock of cattle?—Yes.

9130. What cattle had you?—Oh well, the shepherds had only a cow a piece, and I had three.

9131. It was only one cow they were allowed—they were not allowed two cows?—One cow each.

9132. And you had three; that would be eight cows; and were there any horses there?—Not one. The master's horses were doing the work from the low farm.

9133. They were not being kept up by anything on this ground?—Not at all.

9134. Then this land that you spoke of has a certain area of arable land; what would you consider about the area of old arable land to be seen on this ground: would you put it about 45 acres?—About that.

9135. That is the land that the shepherds were there cultivating, or keeping for the purpose of cultivating?—Just a part of it; they were not requiring it all. They were taking the use of it, as much as a cow would need for wintering and for summering.

9136. Then the sheep were kept off it in summer, and allowed in in winter?—Aye; they were coming to the low ground in winter and kept on the heights in summer.

9137. Would you contemplate a mixed stock of cattle or sheep there, or do you think it would be more profitable to get a small holding with cattle?—I could not speak about that, because I had no experience, and I never saw the cattle tried with the sheep.

9138. But you had your own cattle: did they thrive well?—Sheep and goats, they throve uncommonly well. As an instance of that, when the land was converted into a deer forest I came down to the parish of Kiltarlity; I took one of the cows with me, and she would not milk within 3 pints per day of the milk she would give in the glen.

9139. Is that Scotch pints or English pints?—English pints. She would not do on clover as much as on the natural ground.

9140. But you would say that it might be profitable for them to have a fair souming of cattle as well as sheep there?—Oh yes; although I was to go there myself to-morrow I would have some cattle.

9141. And you think they would be just as profitable to you, to the extent that they would reduce the sheep stock—they would be just as profitable as sheep?—It just depends on the price of sheep stock, and cattle.

9142. But naturally, having knowledge of these things, you would work it accordingly?—Yes, I would need to do that.

9143. Did any of the shepherds or yourself ever grow any turnips?—Yes, I grew them myself.

9144. Did they grow well?—Uncommonly well. I saw them growing larger elsewhere, but I never saw better quality than grew there.

9145. Then have you any experience as to growing potatoes?—Oh yes, I had more potatoes there than ever I had elsewhere in the same extent of ground.

9146. Then did you ever grow any corn?—What I

Beauly. — Duncan Cameron.

had under potatoes one year I had under corn the next year.

9147. And how did it turn out with you?—Ever since I was in the way of getting corn in the winter time, I never got corn that would do as well.

9148. How many years had you that experience?—I had just 9 years of that.

9149. You speak from 9 years' experience?—Yes, in that locality in Sutherlandshire.

9150. In replying to Mr Sutherland, you said that the extent of old arable might be added to?—Oh, a great deal.

9151. That is, of course, provided you expend the labour on it?—Certainly.

9152. But you know land in the parish of Kirkhill that is not as good a subject as what it is up there?—They would make plenty of arable land if they had it in Kirkhill.

9153. And do you know people in Kirkhill and round about who would not be the least afraid to take the land, and to take it in, and who believe they would make a profit out of it?—Oh! if they could get the climate at Kirkhill.

9154. That is what I want to be at. Your own experience of all the crops was that they were better than you had ever seen?—There was a reason for that.

9155. Give us the reason?—The first potatoes that I put there—it was twenty-eight years since anything was put into that ground—they were just put down into that ground, which had only been harrowed when they were put down, and at the lifting of them they could not turn them with graips; they took their hands, and put it back the same way. I could never think, unless I saw them, that the potatoes grew on the ground. They were as clean as though they were in the water. You never knew how they grew, but they were there.

9156. You think that if the old land was put under cultivation again, they would produce very heavy crops for some years?—The potato land; it would be ploughed next year, and there would be about 2 bushels of corn. I kept a bit of it for turnips, and I know out of 3 bushels I got 10 bolls of meal out of the money. I never saw corn grown in any part of Scotland like the corn that grew over that ground.

9157. You paid the miller as well as getting 10 bolls?—Yes.

9158. There were 10 bolls of meal out of the 3 bushels of oats, besides paying the miller?—Yes, and if they had been careful in the threshing, and so on, I daresay it would be more. I was hurried myself, and could not get a man to do it.

9159. You spoke of the climate: you had nine years' experience of the climate, and that was the sort of crops you had?—Yes, except one year.

9160. What happened that year?—I lost my potatoes.

9161. With frost?—With frost; but it was in the low country too at that time. I was not in the way of using what was in the low country.

9162. Had you any turnips?—Yes, and good turnips.

9163. Could you tell us what year that was?—I could not, but I have a note of it at home.

9164. The turnips were all right?—The turnips were all right: the frost came before the turnips came out.

9165. Of course you know that there are certain lands that grow turnips better than other lands, but this land, as I understand, would grow turnip well?—Oh, it would grow them profitably.

9166. And if frost did come and interfere with potatoes, it would not interfere with the turnips in the same way?—I never had any experience but that it would.

9167. You never heard of turnips failing through frost, did you?—Not I.

9168. Of course all the experience that you have had has been as a sheep manager?—Yes.

9169. And you have been, of course, looking at these questions from the view of the larger farm rather than the smaller one?—Probably I was.

9170. *Mr Burns* (agent for Mrs Chisholm).—You said, I think, that all the lands in these places you had mentioned are now under deer, but Craskie is an exception. It is no part of the forest?—No, it is not part of the forest.

Beauly. — Duncan Cameron.

9171. You said that Mr Winans had Craskie, and Muckrach, and Carrie; I understand that is not Mr Winans but Mr Sydney Loder?—Well, it was Mr Winans who took them.

9172. Now you said something about wintering. What is your experience about wintering for the last ten years: are not all the farmers complaining that they cannot make money on account of the expense of wintering?—That is true enough.

9173. But has not wintering gone up very much during the last ten years?—I could not say. There was as fine wintering forty years ago as just now, and I paid as much for it.

9174. That is not what other people tell me. Is not wintering dearer now than it used to be a generation ago—a great deal dearer—in this locality?—Oh well, I daresay it is, because the few sheep that are in the country come long distances.

9175. Do you say that as a matter of fact, because it is not my opinion, and I have been dealing with sheep for the last twenty years. I had charge of Corrie and Knockfin, and it was dearer in my experience?—In some parts of the country.

9176. But between here and Aberdeen?—But take Ross-shire and the Black Isle and hereabout.

9177. *Mr Gordon.*—What did you pay for the wintering of your hoggs at that time?—When I was at Strathglass we had the wintering of them ourselves.

9178. *Mr Burns.*—What did you pay when you were there?—I had none: we were wintering on our own low country farm. We were wintering in Aigas and other places.

9179. You said something about a club farm in answer to one of the Commissioners. Have you had any experience at all of a club farm?—Yes.

9180. Where?—In Ross-shire and Sutherlandshire. I saw it on the Balnagown estate.

9181. Have you had personal experience?—I was at Strath Oykel.

9182. Are there any club farms in this district, east of Inverness?—I cannot say.

9183. You are not a tenant of Mrs Chisholm?—No, not I.

9184. And have never been?—No.

9185. Do you know any club farm from Inverness to Fort Augustus and round about Drumuie?—I am not acquainted.

9186. Did you ever hear of any club farm ever having been on this part of the country nearer than Strath Oykel?—There was Sir Kenneth Matheson's, at Alness, and also on the west of Ross-shire.

9187. You said that the heather is not burned in deer forests?—Not it.

9188. Have you had any experience of it?—I had.

9189. Of deer forests?—I had experience of the way they manage with sheep.

9190. But if I tell you that all the ground in this part of the country is regularly burned, under deer forests, can you contradict that?—I was for nine years in this place, and I never saw it.

9191. How long ago was that?—Twenty-four years ago.

9192. But speaking for the last fifteen years, do you know that everywhere here the tenant burns in the deer forest regularly?—Is that done by Mr Winans?

9193. Yes, by Mr Winans, and Mr Loder, and everybody?—I did not know of that.

9194. Talking of cattle: do you know any instance of a mixed sheep and cattle farm, where cattle are regularly grown like sheep, to be sold?—Kerrow. That is one.

9195. You know that in Kerrow the sheep part of it is kept entirely distinct from the cattle part of it?—I did not know.

9196. I know about Kerrow for many years. At least I helped to manage it: kept the books. Do you know that the sheep farm is a good way off from the cattle farm?—I am not aware.

Beauly. Duncan Cameron.

9197. With regard to the cattle that were up in Glencannich when you were there, they were, I suppose, the shepherd's cows and their followers?—Yes.

9198. They were not Mr Robertson's?—No.

9199. Mr Robertson had no cattle there, and he was the tenant of the whole place?—No.

9200. *The Chairman.*—You spoke of this land as capable of occupation by seven tenants?—Yes.

9201. Would you be favourable to the planting of crofters there, paying a rent of not over £30?—Yes; if they would club the hill, I would be favourable to that.

9202. Now suppose crofters to be there and club the hill, how many crofters do you think it would accommodate?—It would keep three crofters for every place well, taking the places on an average.

9203. Over twenty crofters?—Twenty-one crofters could live comfortably enough.

9204. And could they live there comfortably without extraneous assistance?—Yes.

9205. Working their pasture land by way of a club farm?—By way of a club farm. They could divide the arable land the way they like, and every man have his own share of the arable land.

9206. And you think these men could live there to profit, and carry on without extraneous aid?—Yes.

9207. What rent have you in view for say twenty or twenty-one crofters, upon that ground?—By the way that stock is going to-day, a person cannot pay above 2s. a head on every sheep.

9208. What stock of cattle?—I could not say. I have got no experience of that. We had no cattle on the ground as long as I was there.

9209. But whatever the number of sheep the land would carry, you would put 2s. on every sheep?—Yes.

9210. *Mr Gordon.*—With these twenty-one crofters that you put there, would you propose that they should live exclusively on the profits of their crofts, or do any other work?—If there were a family of them. I did not mean to have three or four idle in a family. I would have every man at work but one man.

9211. What would the one man do?—He would have only 2 acres of land.

9212. Take twenty crofters. At the general average of the country you would have 100 people to maintain. Do you expect to maintain that 100 people with the produce of these twenty crofts?—I believe Mr Chisholm gave you an instance of that. He put them nearly twice that number that were brought up in affluence there.

9213. Where was that?—The very places that you are questioning me about. You got it represented very clear by Mr Chisholm, only that I am behind him.

9214. Do you mean to say that Mr Chisholm or Mrs Chisholm had 100 people there at any time on that ground?—The witness I mean—Colin Chisholm—the previous witness. He knew all the straths about that place.

9215. It is you that I would like to get information from, because I have great faith in your statement?—Oh, there were no tenants in my day.

9216. And no arable land in your day?—And no arable land.

9217. But what I would like to get is your own opinion whether we could keep 100 people there without going out of the country to seek work?—Undoubtedly, if they were careful and thrifty, there is plenty of room for them.

9218. *The Chairman.*—The area of the arable land could be easily increased by the efforts of the people themselves?—Undoubtedly.

9219. Taking in land capable of cultivation?—Yes.

9220. *Mr Sutherland.*—You don't think 100 people too great a population on 36 square miles, do you?—No, I don't. There is plenty of room whatever.

Duncan Macrae.

DUNCAN MACRAE, Torgormack, Kilmorack (75)—*examined.*

9221. *The Chairman.*—You know about Glencannich, do you?—Yes.

9222. Did you reside in Glencannich at one time?—Yes, for 23 years. Beauly.

9223. How long ago is it since you stayed there?—I left it in 1881. Duncan Macrae.

9224. In what capacity were you there?—As a gamekeeper.

9225. To whom?—To Sir Greville Smith, the shooting tenant.

9226. Had you a house in the glen?—Yes.

9227. With some arable land and grazing?—Yes.

9228. Who occupied the ground there when you went there first?—It was a farmer of the name of Chisholm—Finlay Chisholm.

9229. A sheep farmer?—A sheep farmer.

9230. Was there one or more than one farm in the glen?—Yes, several farms.

9231. Large farms?—Yes.

9232. Have these farms been turned into forests?—The whole of them.

9233. Did that happen in your time?—Yes.

9234. What stock had Finlay Chisholm?—That I could not tell.

9235. You were a gamekeeper all the time, I suppose?—All the time.

9236. What extent of land was turned into forest in your time?—About 5 miles in length.

9237. And how broad?—Just the one side of Glencannich, which is about 2 miles broad, on an average.

9238. Only one side of the glen; was that north or south?—North.

9239. On the side of Craskie?—Exactly.

9240. All that land had previously been under sheep?—Yes.

9241. How many farms were absorbed for that extension of the forest?—I am not deep enough in English to understand the question.

9242. How many farms were taken up—were turned into forest?—Leitrie and Shalavanach.

9243. Any more?—Not at the beginning.

9244. Were these the only two farms that were taken up?—Yes, at the beginning.

9245. Then, later on, was there further land taken in?—Muckrach and Carrie.

9246. Is that the place called Loch Caa?—Very likely.

9247. These were separate farms?—Yes.

9248. And put into forest?—Yes.

9249. Can you tell me how many years elapsed between Shalavanach and Leitrie being taken into forest?—Not exactly.

9250. Are you able to say whether these lands would now be suitable for crofters' holdings, or any part of them?—The whole of the four places that I mentioned.

9251. The whole of the land occupied by the farms of Shalavanach, Leitrie, Muckrach, and Carrie?—Yes.

9252. Is that your opinion?—Yes.

9253. Is there arable and hill pasture which would be suitable in each of these?—Yes, of course.

9254. Both for cattle and sheep?—Yes.

9255. And, in your opinion, could a considerable number of crofters be settled there?—I should think so.

9256. Or would the land be better for large farms?—It would suit both.

9257. Has there been any other extension of forest than what you have mentioned?—Since that?

9258. Yes?—Yes.

9259. What extension?—Mullardoch, which Mr Winans occupied, and Coire-nan-cuilean.

9260. That was added after Muckrach?—Yes, to the same forest.

9261. After Mr Winans had come?—Yes.

9262. Now, what farms were upon Mullardoch and Coire-nan-cuilean. Was there Cosack?—There were two Mullardochs (East and West) and Ardtaig.

9263. How many farms were there in Mullardoch and Coire-nan-cuilean?—There were two Mullardochs.

9264. Yes; there were Mullardoch East and Mullardoch West?—These were separate farms.

9265. Were these all?—Except Coire-nan-cuilean.

Beauly. Duncan Macrae.

9266. Was it a separate farm?—No; it belonged to Mr Williamson, who occupied the two Mullardochs and Coire-nan-cuilean as a sheep farm.

9267. But in olden times it had been occupied as more than one farm?—Of course, but I did not see that.

9268. But the whole of that was added to the forest?—Yes.

9269. Do you remember in what year that was?—No.

9270. But in your time?—In my time. It is since my time that Mullardoch and Coire-nan-cuilean were added.

9271. And you left in 1881?—Yes.

9272. You know the land well, I suppose?—Oh yes.

9273. Is that land suitable for occupation?—Yes.

9274. Is there land capable of cultivation and grazing also?—Yes, on a small scale; but, of course, they all depended on the hill pasture more than on the crofts.

9275. There is some very high ground before you go far from Loch Mullardoch. I see there is Mullach-a'-Ghlasthuill, 2945 feet?—Yes.

9276. And Mullach-na-maoile, 2482 feet. Are the crops in that quarter not very subject to frost?—Yes, very.

9277. And blight in early spring?—Oh yes.

9278. Is there any wood there?—No, not much.

9279. Then are the seasons, as a rule, late in that quarter?—Yes.

9280. And the crops are late?—The crops are late, and very subject to rain.

9281. Is the rainfall heavier than in the surrounding country?—Yes, and than lower down the glen and the strath.

9282. What crops used to be grown there upon the arable land?—I grew oats, potatoes, and turnips.

9283. Successfully, or not?—Well, some years the frost would spoil my potatoes very much.

9284. Was that a common thing?—Oh no; owing to the season, as it might turn out.

9285. But I mean is the cultivation of the soil very precarious owing to the climate?—Yes.

9286. You think so?—I think so.

9287. Then would the land, in your opinion, be or not be suitable for occupation, taken as a whole?—Yes, it would be worth taking, of course.

9288. Is there a road there?—A very good road.

9289. Leading all the way down to Beauly?—All the way down to Beauly

9290. Can you tell me what is the average height above the sea of Mullardoch and Coire-nan-cuilean?—No.

9291. But taking it generally, is it very high?—Oh yes.

9292. I see the land on the verge of the loch is 788 feet, and a little bit up is 806?—Yes.

9293. Is there much mildew there?—No, I don't think there is. I have not found it.

9294. You had a croft, I suppose?—Yes.

9295. What was the size of your croft?—I think it would be between 4 and 5 acres.

9296. Of arable?—Of arable.

9297. And had you some grazing?—Oh yes, of course we had the forest to graze our cattle.

9298. And what stock did you keep?—Three cows and a pony; that was my order.

9299. And some sheep?—No sheep allowed.

9300. You were a gamekeeper, and you had to watch?—Yes.

9301. All the year round?—All the year round.

9302. And you had your croft into the bargain?—Yes.

9303. What was your wage?—£38 in the year.

9304. How many gamekeepers were there?—Three.

9305. Between Mullardoch and Coire-nan-cuilean?—And Muckrach.

9306. And Leitrie?—Exactly.

9307. And were these the only persons living there?—Yes.

9308. Nobody but the two other gamekeepers and yourself?—Well, there was a poor woman that lived there.

9309. We heard of her, I think, already. Do you know of any other land that has been turned into deer forest since you went into that quarter?—If I could recollect, I daresay there is. Beauly. Duncan Macrae.

9310. Can you recollect any?—The south side of Glencannich was turned into a deer forest since I was there.

9311. You mean Leitrie and Shalavanach, or do you mean Fasnakyle?—I mean Tombuie, Fasnakyle and Glaschorry.

9312. Were these turned into forests in your time?—Yes, Tombuie, Glaschorry, Dalrioch, Fasnakyle, Luibguish, Luibnadamh; that is high up.

9313. All that land on the south side of Loch Mullardoch?—Was put into deer forest in my time.

9314. In your time, but you don't remember it?—No.

9315. Was all that tract on the south side of the loch turned into forest at one time, or gradually?—Oh, gradually.

9316. And added to Mr Winans' forest?—Yes.

9317. That afforesting began after Mr Winans came to the north?—No, it would be before that; Mr Peter had it from The Chisholm.

9318. *Mr Shaw Stewart.*—Did you hear the evidence of the last witness?—No, I was at a distance.

9319. Well, speaking of these farms, he said first that they would make seven nice farms; and then later on he said they might perhaps hold more crofters than seven, but of course in that case the crofters would have much less arable land. I want your idea as to how many people could live in the glen now if they had some hill grazing and a few acres of arable land?—Should they add more to their arable land, I think pasture would pay better. It is cold bottom, and I don't believe it would produce without it was cropped.

9320. And I suppose the arable land is limited: there is not much?—Exactly.

9321. Have you any idea of the number of crofters that could live there?—I would not like to mention.

9322. Do you think, on the whole, they would be better as fair sized farms?—I think so.

9323. Where do the deer mostly winter in this glen?—According to the weather. In fine weather they would go high, and in coarse weather they would come low.

9324. Whereabouts is the best grazing?—There is no grazing there better than Coire-nan-cuilean; and Mullardochs, too, is very good.

9325. On the south?—On the north.

9326. *Mr Sutherland.*—Where is the exact spot where your house was?—Leitrie.

9327. That is south of Loch Mullardoch, farther down the river?—It is on the north side of the river.

9328. Quite close to the loch?—No, there is Loch Sealbhag between them.

9329. You were there twenty-three years?—Yes.

9330. Was it a sheep farm or a deer forest when you went there first?—A sheep farm.

9331. Were you gamekeeper on the sheep farm?—No, except for about eighteen months. I lived in Muckrach at that time.

9332. In what capacity did you go there first then?—As a gamekeeper.

9333. While it was a sheep farm?—Yes.

9334. And were you made a forester after it was made into a deer forest?—Yes.

9335. And you lived there, in all, twenty-three years?—Yes.

9336. And how many years in these twenty-three was your crop a failure?—Perhaps I might call it a failure every second year, or third whatever.

9337. What did the failure consist in—was it the potatoes only?—Well, yes.

9338. It was limited to the potatoes?—Yes, owing to the frost, or else they would grow as well as any place else.

9339. And is there anything in that particular locality where your land was that in your opinion led to the injury to the potatoes?—There is nothing that could be helped, I think.

9340. You did not hear the evidence that Mr

Cameron gave, that while he was there he had very few failures?—I heard that.

9341. And do you agree with it?—I saw the shepherd that was there before him going with a bedcover, himself and his companion to shake the frost off the crops.

9342. Did you ever see that at Beauly? (*Mr Cameron.*—Excuse me, gentlemen, but I was 5 miles below him, where the climate was better).

9343. Your oats and your turnips, were they a good crop?—Oh yes, pretty fair, but I would require to sow my seed very thick, for the ground would spue a good deal of it.

9344. Was your land well drained?—It did not require draining; it was gravel and sand bottom.

9345. But it was not drained?—No.

9346. There were no artificial drains there at all?—Not any.

9347. Do you think that the height above the sea had anything to do with it?—Certainly it should.

9348. Do you know the height at which land is cultivated above the sea generally in this country?—I do not.

9349. Would you be surprised to hear that land is very successfully cultivated in Scotland at 1300 feet above the sea?—I would not expect it, indeed.

9350. Do you know the height of Kingussie above the sea?—No.

9351. Then as to the size of the farms that were there: I think you expressed the belief, in answer to a question already, that this place is better suited for small arable farms than what are known as crofters' holdings; it is a matter of size, I suppose?—As for crofter ground, unless they would join—if they would, it would suit them very well.

9352. If they had their grazing in common?—Exactly.

9353. With common management?—Exactly.

9354. You are of opinion that if that were done, small holdings would be successful there?—I would think so.

9355. *Mr Forsyth.*—You have said that you consider Glencannich is more suited for grazing than for arable cultivation?—I know perfectly well that it depended more upon the grazing than the arable. The arable is a very good friend, of course, as far as that goes.

9356. Then, supposing there were small tenants there who relied upon the profits of their sheep on their club farm, in the event of a bad year when sheep were low or unhealthy, would there be any other means of livelihood there; could they get any work or help themselves?—Not any. The only work I saw there, and which could help them very much, was what cannot be done now—smuggling.

9357. Without the assistance of smuggling, you think in a bad year their gains from other sources than sheep would not be much?—It would be tighter, of course.

9358. Do you think that there would be a reasonable prospect of small tenants succeeding there with their whole livelihood to be obtained from sheep only, year after year?—By understanding about the rent.

9359. If the rents were fixed low enough?—Exactly.

9360. They would not have constant employment though, would they?—Oh no.

9361. If the arable was very small, and they were almost entirely dependent upon sheep, would not they have, as a mere matter of employing themselves, to go away?—Each place there would require one man continually employed on the hill looking after the cattle.

9362. Oh, you would have some cattle?—Of course, yes.

9363. There could not be many cows; they could not be wintered well, you know, unless there was some fair arable, and the people might be rather short of employment, would they not?—Oh yes.

9364. But still you think that they might manage to make a living there, with the help of their club stock?—I certainly do.

9365. And that they would keep themselves in work somehow?—Yes.

9366. In spite of all difficulties as to arable land?—Oh yes.

9367. *Mr Gordon.*—There were three farms turned into a forest when you were there, I think you said?—Yes.

9368. Do you remember how many sheep were upon the three farms?—I could not tell, because it was not my business, and I took no notice of it.

9369. I may take it that you are not very well able to speak of how many crofts you could put on the farms, being a gamekeeper?—Well, two would be very good in Craskie, or perhaps three; and Muckrach the same.

9370. But Craskie is a farm of £50 rent. They would not be very small holdings if there were only two in Craskie. Do you remember how many bushels of oats you were in the habit of sowing yearly when you were up there?—A quarter.

9371. And did you generally thresh the corn and mill it?—Yes.

9372. Do you happen to remember how many bolls of meal you had out of the quarter's sowing?—Not exactly.

9373. Would you have 14 bolls?—I would be glad if I had the half of it.

9374. You would not have expected to have 7 bolls out of 3 bushels?—Not at all.

9375. Were the oats occasionally frosted during the time you were there?—Oh no.

9376. It did not frost?—I was only a servant there for six months.

9377. You were a keeper there?—Yes.

9378. The oats were your own when you grew them?—Of course, yes.

9379. Well, you are able to tell us something about the quantity of meal that you had out of your oats?—Five or six bolls.

9380. Out of the quarter's sowing?—Five.

9381. You would have that as an average?—Yes.

9382. And were your crops generally safe; did they ripen pretty well?—Sometimes, but not if the harvest was late and wet.

9383. How many bolls of meal would you have had if the harvest was late and wet?—What I might have would not be of very great service.

9384. It would not be of very much use?—No indeed, only it would help the cattle.

9385. Did your oats make meal every year, as a rule?—Not at all: do you mean for my family?

9386. Yes.—Oh no.

9387. Did they not ripen sufficiently well to make meal?—Oh, quite well, as far as it went.

9388. But did the oats ripen every year sufficiently well to make meal?—I tell you, sir, that it did, in natural seasons.

9389. But how often would these unnatural seasons be?—That is the question.

9390. Would it be every second or third year that the oats did not ripen?—Yes.

9391. *Mr Maccallum.*—Do you mean to say that every second year the crops did not ripen, and that the crop was so badly injured that you got no meal?—That is a thing I could not say. It might stand over one, two, three years, and perhaps the third or fourth might go against me: I will not say how many years.

9392. And in these years that you consider bad, was the crop so bad that you could not make meal of the grain?—Oh never, what I could save of it.

9393. It was never a complete failure?—They had barns there—the farmers that were there before my time—and stakes stuck in the doors so as to allow the wind in, and they would stick a sheaf on each pin of these, and every sheaf that would get dry they would put it back in a rack. That was the way we were sometimes obliged to sell our grain.

9394. On account of the lateness of the season?—Yes.

9395. But did the frost, in any year that you were there, completely destroy your oats, so that you could make no meal of it?—The frost never destroyed my oats.

Beauly. Duncan Macrae.

9396. But sometimes the seasons were late?—Oh yes.

9397. *Mr Munro.*—At this time that you said your potatoes had been destroyed by frost, are you aware that that was peculiar to your own district, or do you know that the same complaint extended through a wider area?—The whole of the high glens.

9398. But did it extend to the low parts of the country as well?—No, I don't mean that.

9399. Now, without committing yourself to an exact number of farmers that you would place upon these deer forests, I suppose you are quite satisfied that it could be profitably cultivated by small farmers?—Certainly.

9400. *Mr Macleod.*—I do not quite understand your position. You have told us that you have no doubt but small tenants could live very comfortably there. You have said that several times?—Yes.

9401. And yet at the same time you tell us from your own experience that your crops have been a failure one out of every two or three years. Now, how could tenants be comfortable there if that would be the case?—They would have to take their chance of that, and depend on the grass on the hill for sheep and cattle.

9402. They would have to depend upon the sheep and cattle?—They mostly would depend upon that whatever; it is the only thing they have to depend upon.

9403. I think you said that the potatoes were affected by frost?—Yes.

9404. And that the oats were apt to be affected by either the lateness or the wetness of the season?—It was the wetness of the season that would cause the lateness.

9405. But in the years when the seasons would be wet and you would have difficulty in saving it, and you would not be able to mill so much, you would have usually a very considerable amount of straw, would you not?—Yes.

9406. You would have a larger amount of straw for your stock that year than in a dry year?—Not at all, not a sheaf.

9407. That was not your experience. Your experience was that you had more straw the year that you had the most grain?—Well, how could that be. The sheaf was about the same bulk as the one that was destroyed.

9408. Then you do think that it was entirely the climate that caused the crop to be so late?—Oh, not at all.

9409. What do you think it was?—The climate is high, certainly, but then it produces good crops at times.

9410. I presume that the rain would come in the back end of the season; it would be pretty late in the season when the rain would come?—Generally.

9411. Do you think that, by earlier sowing and the liming of the land, you could have your crops to ripen earlier?—It would be very likely. I never sow anything before the 12th of April.

9412. So far as the potatoes are concerned, you don't think that anything could be done to cure the frost coming upon them?—I could never understand that there was.

9413. You never heard of it?—No.

9414. Then you grew turnips there, did not you?—Yes.

9415. How did they succeed with you?—Very good.

9416. Would the turnip crop have been, perhaps, on the whole, the best crop you would have? Was it less liable to failure?—I did not use to sow them often, but the last year that I was there I limed a piece of the land and sowed turnips there, and I had as nice turnips as you could see. Perhaps you could see larger, but they were sound and solid, and as numerous as anywhere.

9417. You saw others that grew turnips, I daresay, there?—Yes, a few.

9418. Not much? They were not growing much turnip at that time as a matter of fact?—They would rather sow potatoes or oats than turnips, because they grew a good deal of hay to support their cattle.

9419. Would you say that the turnips were less liable to fail than the potatoes?—I found them so. Beauly. Duncan Macrae.

9420. And of course you know that a turnip crop is more valuable to a stock farmer than any other crop, very often?—Oh yes.

9421. Do you quite see, yourself, the apparent contradictoriness of your evidence? On the one hand you express a very strong opinion in favour of putting small tenants in this locality, and on the other hand you express an equally strong opinion as to the probability of the crop growing?—Well, the small tenants would require the crop growing as well as large tenants.

9422. Certainly they would, but then if it won't grow?—That is a thing a person could not tell.

9423. You say that you have no doubt whatever that small tenants would succeed there?—I do.

9424. But at the same time you say that the crop is very liable to failure?—According to the frost.

9425. *The Chairman.*—Suppose you were offered a croft, fairly rented at £30, up about Mullardoch and Coire-nan-cuilean, would you undertake to carry it on?—I could not tell.

9426. *Mr Burns.*—You are not a tenant of Mrs Chisholm's?—No.

9427. You never were, I suppose?—No.

9428. You told the Commissioners that there were four farms at Mullardoch and Coire-nan-cuilean; were they all in the possession of one farmer when you went there?—Yes.

9429. There were four names, but one farmer. Who was the farmer, do your remember?—Williamson.

9430. That is Williamson and Brown, tenants of Knockfin?—Yes.

9431. They were part of Knockfin when you went there, all these places?—Yes.

9432. Then the same with regard to Tombuie, Glaschorry, Dalrioch, Luibguish and Lubnandamh. They were all in one tenant's hands too, were they not?—Yes.

9433. Do you know what Luibnadamph means in Gaelic?—I could not be certain.

9434. Is it 'the stag's hollow'?—Either the stag or the ox.

9435. Was there a tenant in Muckrach when you went there, or was it Williamson and Brown too?—There was a tenant in Muckrach.

9436. Who was there?—Donald Robertson.

9437. What happened to him?—He came down to Eskadale.

9438. Did he give the place up?—I don't know.

9439. Who was in Carrie?—That was into Muckrach.

9440. You know a good deal about deer; do deer require wintering ground. They require low ground as well as sheep, I suppose?—Oh yes.

9441. You cannot have a good deer forest without wintering ground for the deer?—Certainly not.

9442. And if you take away the low ground, you will not do any good to the deer, I suppose?—It could not be expected.

9443. Now there was a story about mills. Were there any mills on the Chisholm estate except the Cannich one?—Yes.

9444. Where?—I saw a mill at Comar in Cannich, and a mill in Culligran.

9445. But that is on Lord Lovat's, up at the top end of the place?—There was one at Tomich again.

9446. And that is on Lord Tweedmouth's. If there were small tenants settled up in Glencannich, they would be the better of work to help them through—of other things besides their farms?—Yes.

9447. Can you suggest anything to the Commissioners, what they would work at if you put an end to the deer forests, except their own farms and the smuggling?—Is there anything else you think they could get to work at.

9448. *The Chairman.*—Is there any work available to crofters or small tenants up there?—Not up there.

9449. Did you know Muckrach when these lands were turned into forests. Was it for want of low

ground, or simply to extend the forest?—I think it was to extend the forest.

9450. There was no want of low ground for the subsisting forest at the time when these additions were made?—Not that I am aware of.

DUNCAN CHISHOLM, Waterloo Place, Inverness (about 70)—*examined.*

9451. *The Chairman.*—Do you know about Glencannich?—I know about Glen Strathfarrar and Glencannich.

9452. We will take your evidence just now with regard to Glencannich. What is your age?—So far as I know—there was no record or register kept—but I believe I run about 70.

9453. You live in Inverness now?—Yes.

9454. When did you leave Glencannich?—In 1838.

9455. Had you been there during all your youth, in Glencannich?—Yes, previous to 1838.

9456. What part of Glencannich did you reside in?—In Leitrie.

9457. That is on the north side of the river?—Yes.

9458. Are you a brother of the first witness, Colin Chisholm?—Yes.

9459. And you have heard the evidence given about Glencannich to-day?—Yes.

9460. Does your experience enable you to say that you agree?—Not with the whole of it—with all that I heard from the witnesses.

9461. You agree?—No, not with the whole of the witnesses.

9462. Where do you differ mainly?—In the extent of arable.

9463. Can you give us the extent of arable in these different farms. Suppose you begin with Craskie?—Well, I never measured it.

9464. Then is it that you don't know the extent of arable?—I have a good idea. I ploughed Leitrie, sowed it, and harrowed it.

9465. What was the extent of arable there?—Well, I should say there are from 50 to 60 acres. I will be safe in saying 50, but it has come under heather now.

9466. But you have ploughed as much as that?—Yes.

9467. With a pair of horses?—A pair of horses, with my father's ploughs.

9468. Do you know the arable in any other part of Glencannich—the extent of arable that was in your time?—I have seen it ploughed, sown, and reaped.

9469. Where?—Well, I have seen Carrie, Shalavanach and Muckrach.

9470. What was the extent of arable in Carrie?—There is a good piece of land there, and very fertile and first-rate grazing besides.

9471. But you can't give us the area?—No, I did not pay the least attention to the number of crofts.

9472. How would the area compare in extent with Leitrie; was it less or more?—I don't think it was much short of Leitrie, if not more.

9473. Take Shalavanach: can you tell us the area of arable there?—No, but I have seen beautiful crops on it, and beautiful meal coming from the mill home to Shalavanach. I have seen three loads coming there by my uncle from the Cannich mill.

9474. Now, take Mullardoch: can you give us any information as to the extent of the arable there?—No, but I have seen two or three tenants there.

9475. Small tenants?—Small tenants.

9476. Paying what rent?—I do not remember.

9477. But rents under £30?—I do not think so; about that.

9478. Do you know arable land anywhere else in that district?—Well, I should.

9479. Take Coire-nan-cuilean?—There is not much arable in Coire-nan-cuilean, but the grazing is very superior. It could be mowed from the lake side to the top of the hill, and that is no small distance.

9480. Now Luibnadamh: do you remember it?—Fine that.

9481. Was there arable there?—Very little in my time, but I believe there is a good garden in it. I have seen a fine crop of berries there before now. Beauly. Duncan Chisholm.

9482. Did you know a place Tombuie?—Fine that.

9483. Was there arable there?—Yes, plenty.

9484. How much?—Oh, for the size of the place, well, I should think about 25 or 30 acres.

9485. Do you remember Dalrioch?—I do.

9486. Was there arable there?—There was.

9487. And can you give us the extent of it?—I am not fit. I should think there were several acres, but it is all under heather, heath, and so forth, wood and brackens.

9488. Do you remember whether there was arable in Luibguish?—Yes, there is; it is not very much; that is on the south side of the river Cannich.

9489. Are these places which would be suitable for crofters' settlements now?—I had seen them in, before now.

9490. You intend us to infer that you think they might be there again?—Oh, I don't see why not.

9491. There is both arable land and grazing land, is there?—Yes, but it is not so very fine grazing as what it is on the north side of the water Cannich.

9492. I suppose you are not able to tell us the stock which these places carry?—I forget in the meantime, but I know there were plenty sheep, cattle, horses, and goats.

9493. And all that land, to your knowledge, has been turned into forest?—Every inch, with the exception of one small place when you go into the glen.

9494. Have you been there recently?—No.

9495. How long is it since you were there?—There are a good few years since.

9496. You don't know anything of it during the last fifteen or twenty years?—I think I was there since. I have been into Kintail, and I took that road.

9497. Passing through?—Yes.

9498. What is your occupation?—General agent.

9499. In Inverness?—Yes.

9500. But you were brought up to hold the plough?—I was, and that very young too. I had ploughed Leitrie myself personally, and sowed it, and in another part of the country, which is now a deer forest I am sorry to say—I refer to Port-Clair. I ploughed 47 years ago, on the then farm of Port-Clair, now the forest of Port-Clair on the Lovat Estates, between Invermoriston and Fort-Augustus.

9501. Where is that?—Parish of Boleskine and Abertarff.

9502. *Mr Sutherland.*—I take it, Mr Chisholm, that, in the comparison you are making, you are talking of the land that was previously under cultivation only?—Oh yes, and the beautiful grazing as well.

9503. But when you said arable land, you are thinking of the land that was before under cultivation?—Oh, before.

9504. Now is it your opinion that all the land that could be cultivated has been cultivated in times past?—Surely not.

9505. You think there is a great deal more that could be cultivated just as well as what was cultivated in olden times?—Yes.

9506. And in that way the arable could be very greatly increased?—There is not the least doubt about it, but the grazing is very superior, and since the Lovat forest was extended to such an extent in Glen Strathfarrar, they were very heavy on The Chisholm's tenantry.

9507. Are you acquainted with the land that crofters over the Highlands generally have been making into arable?—Well, I think I have seen a good deal of it done.

9508. Was that better land or worse than the land now lying waste in Glencannich?—I was a tenant of Lord Lovat's for twenty years in the parish of Kirkhill, and I can safely say there is as good land in Glencannich as what I was paying £2 per imperial acre for; and also in Glen Strathfarrar.

9509. *Mr Forsyth.*—I think you said that you left Glencannich in 1838?—I did.

Beauly. Duncan Chisholm.

9510. Have you been there since that?—Oh yes.

9511. Have you been there recently at all?—No.

9512. Have you been there within twenty-five years?—Yes.

9513. Because I find there is so much difference between your estimate of the arable at Leitrie and Mr Cameron's. His was 20 and yours was 60?—I am not surprised at that.

9514. I should like to know how this discrepancy in the evidence comes?—Look at what is under heather of it since. He would not see the difference. You might trace out furrows in some of these places, covered with heather.

9515. Then you hold that there are 60 acres there?—I will be safe in saying 50.

9516. You hold that there are 60 acres there that have been regularly under crop?—Oh yes, in a rotational manner.

9517. In this place, I mean?—Yes.

9518. And you think there is a great deal more there that could be cultivated?—I am certain of it.

9519. You have heard what has been said as to the difficulty of getting any crop and the frosting of potatoes in that district. Does your experience go to bear that out?—No.

9520. Then you think there is no frosting of potatoes there?—Not in my time there.

9521. And can crops be easily got in there in harvest time?—Quite easy.

9522. There is no trouble from the weather?—I am not aware of it. I have seen plenty of it secured.

9523. The harvests are always good there?—The same as they are in the generality of the country.

9524. There are troubles from harvests occasionally?—Oh yes, there are, I have no doubt, and I have seen the same elsewhere.

9525. But do you think it is as easy to get in corn there as it is in what are supposed to be the more favoured districts of Scotland?—Well, it is a place that the corn is very easily seasoned in, more so than Glen Strathfarrar.

9526. So that you would not allow that there is any difficulty in securing corn?—Not more than the lower ground.

9527. Then you are of opinion that we need not consider that as a difficulty at all?—No difficulty.

9528. And is the land so superior that the crops are good?—Some of it is very superior.

9529. And do you think that it would continue to grow good corn, even with the heavy rainfall there is there washing the land?—Oh yes, it used to grow good corn and good meal also. I have seen corn going to the mill and coming back from it.

9530. And you are satisfied that this is a place above the average in every way?—Yes, in such a district as that.

9531. It is very high-lying you know?—It is about 470 feet above the level of the sea, the arable land. I am not speaking about the hills.

9532. *The Chairman.*—But the loch was 705 feet, and of course the land must be above the loch?—Is that Leitrie?

9533. *Mr Forsyth.*—We find the elevation is a great deal more than you think. It is probably between 700 and 800 feet?—Leitrie?

9534. Yes; does that alter your opinion?—Oh, I might err in taking off the Ordnance Survey.

9535. But still you think it is eminently adapted to arable culture?—It was and it is.

9536. And it would be again?—Certainly.

9537. *The Chairman.*—You ploughed land at Leitrie yourself?—I did so, personally.

9538. And the extent which you ploughed yourself personally was not less than 50 acres?—Well, it might be less than 50, because we were keeping a kind of rotation.

9539. What would it be?—I suppose it would be about 15 acres, what I ploughed that season.

9540. And what was the total area under rotation?—I consider the whole would be from 50 to 60.

9541. And the whole of that land you ploughed from time to time yourself?—Yes, and in other deer forests as well.

9542. *Mr Munro.*—It is fifty-five years, I think you told us, since you left Glencannich?—Something like that.

9543. And during that time have you been entirely engaged in business pursuits?—As a rule.

9544. Have you been so engaged in Beauly?—Several times.

9545. And I also know that you were in business in Inverness?—Yes.

9546. Now have you ever had any opportunities of observing the difference it made to traders in these towns through the depopulation of these straths and glens in the matter of trade?—Oh, there is no mistake about that, because these sportsmen have taken all their supplies (from their wine to the feeding of the dogs), from their army and co-operative stores in London.

9547. Have you ever observed yourself, many years ago, a large number of farmers' carts going to town with their produce, selling their produce, and bringing back from these towns what the merchants there sold?—To be sure. From Rose Street, till past the Railway Station now at Inverness, would be full of dairy produce of the best description from the surrounding countries. No margarine then, or anything else of that kind.

9548. So you consider that the towns have suffered a serious loss by the depopulation of these straths and glens?—Very much.

9549. When you lived at Glencannich, were you familiar with the farmers living there and their habits of life?—Yes, and buy what we required.

9550. Were they generally in comfortable circumstances?—Oh, to be sure they were.

9551. Now taking into account the altered conditions of living which prevail to-day, do you think that, if men could be got and replaced upon the land there, they could live in as favourable circumstances as they did in former times—as comfortably?—Oh, I should think so: what is to prevent them. Of course the houses are down, and thrown down, because in many places when anybody would die on the property the house was knocked down or pulled down, in many instances.

9552. Now we have been over the whole of Skye, and while there we found a large extent of land which could be profitably occupied, said by witnesses to be profitably occupied by them, but the people are there already to take possession of the lands, but where are the people here to be found?—They are evicted: they are out of the place: they are away to all quarters of the globe.

9553. Then can you give us any suggestion as to where the people would come from to re-people these straths and glens?—Give them the chance; let them have the work, and you would be surprised where they would come from.

9554. You are familiar with Glen Strathfarrar?—Yes, I am thoroughly acquainted with it.

9555. You have told us nothing to-day about that?—No, but I shall if my lord wants.

9556. Were you familiar with many people in Glen Strathfarrar?—I was.

9557. Do you remember it being occupied by a thriving class of tenantry?—I do.

9558. And they throve upon their agricultural pursuits there?—Ah, to be sure; so they might.

9559. Did they require any outside work, in the shape of help, to enable them to live?—No, they had plenty of work of their own. It is about 200 feet lower than Glencannich, I mean from sea-level.

9560. Now would you be apprehensive yourself, if you had a farm there, that the crops generally could be grown without fear of frost?—None whatever.

9561. Have you ever known oats to ripen there well?—I have seen several crops there, and very, very heavy crops.

9562. Now, as a test of your knowledge in that point, can you tell us if there were many meal mills kept going in former times there?—The nearest was down at the foot of the glen.

9563. But how many altogether —They used to

Beauly. Duncan Chisholm.

send to Comar mills besides the one that was at the foot of Glen Strathfarrar, and down to Kilmorack when the Glen Strathfarrar mill was out of order.

9564. Are there not mills there?—No, but there is a splendid mill at Comar on Mrs Chisholm's property.

9565. What others did you see?—Comar or Cannich.

9566. Does that mill get much employment now?—Oh, I should think so; it gets all the employment of the district.

9567. But there are not many other mills there?—No, there is a gentleman at Inverness who drove oats from Muille to Comar mills before now, himself and his servant man, with 3 horses, 3 loads, and it weighed 46 lbs. per bushel by the miller there (John Murray, who had the mills of Comar).

9568. That seems an extraordinary weight?—The land was fresh and good.

9569. Where was that ground?—Glen Strathfarrar and in Ard-chuilc.

9570. And you are quite satisfied?—Satisfied, but the man told me he was not able to come to the Commission.

9571. You are perfectly satisfied that in that strath abundance of corn could be grown to-day?—Yes, on both sides of the river; I have seen very, very heavy crops there.

9572. *Mr Macleod.*—You heard what the previous witness had to say—the last witness?—Mr Macrae; oh, he is a gamekeeper.

9573. You heard what he had to say about the crops?—Yes, I did, and I was quite astonished.

9574. You had been working land there, and that was not your experience?—No, no.

9575. You said you differed from some of the other witnesses?—Certainly.

9576. Then, on the other point that you differed, as to the extents of old arable land that are in those old townships?—Yes.

9577. Are there any other points that you differ from them upon?—Well, they would not see the old arable land because they would be covered with brackens.

9578. You think the explanation with regard to the old arable land is that you remember it, of course, when it was under tenants and under crop, and they only saw it when it had been under sheep for a good many years?—Yes.

9579. Now you said also that you could give us some information about Glen Strathfarrar as well as Glencannich?—Yes, I volunteered to do it; I have no payment to it, and I just tell the truth the same as a mariner who was on at the high seas—direct.

9580. Give us the names of the townships in Glen Strathfarrar?—Some of them are nearly as high up as Monar.

9581. Beginning at Monar, take the glen down?—That is Mr Stirling's property now.

9582. That is Monar. Give us the next place?—Inchvuilt.

9583. And the next?—Braulin.

9584. Yes?—On the south side, Tomantoul.

9585. And the next?—The next place on the low part of Glen Strathfarrar is Ardhuilc, then Inchinlair, Muille, where Lord Lovat built a lodge in an island. The next is Muille; there is one on the south side and one on the north side.

9586. Any more?—Camusore, Deanie,—there are two Deanies, one east and one west. There is another place down in the middle of the wood there. I am forgetting it now,—Fasag-cannich.

9587. *The Chairman.*—Was it a place called Coillegharbh?—That is on the south side of the water. That is the first deer forest that Lord Lovat had.

9588. *Mr Macleod.*—Are there any more?—Oh, plenty. Tomnaglass, down to Struy; and on the north side there are some places that I am almost forgetting.

9589. That is all, so far as you recollect?—And Culligran. Milton, where the nearest mill they used was, the people of Glen Strathfarrar.

9590. Any more that you can think of?—Struy Bridge is the next, if I recollect well. It is possible there may be more, but that is all I remember.

Beauly. Duncan Chisholm.

9591. That is, beginning at the top of the glen and coming down, you have given us altogether seventeen townships?—Very well.

9592. Then would there be more than one tenant in each of those places?—Yes, in Culligran there were several tenants.

9593. Just tell us how many you think there were on the average—say two on the average—in those places?—There were three in Culligran.

9594. That was the largest place in the glen?—Well, yes.

9595. Was there more than one in the majority of the others?—Oh, yes, at one time; but what I have seen myself I am speaking of. I don't want to go by hearsay.

9596. I don't presume for a moment that you do?—I just tell what I have seen myself personally.

9597. Then you think, in the majority of the places in the time you remember, there would be only one tenant?—There may be some of them with two tenants.

9598. And others with one, and so on?—Yes.

9599. And Culligran had three?—Yes, his two sons and the old man.

9600. Is there anything else you can tell us about Glen Strathfarrar?—As I said, Glen Strathfarrar Forest was a terror to the tenantry, because the march between the two glens on the top was never fenced, and you know at the making of a deer forest how the sheep and cattle will run where the grass is sweet.

9601. They were continually going over into the deer forest?—Yes, they were, and they were used as they should not be there. Whose order it was, I know not.

9602. Now, of course, you quite understand that we are not so much here to inquire into the matter of these grievances as to inquire what available land there may be; and what I would like you now to tell me is with regard to the stock that was on these places when you remember them. Were there many cattle?—Well, there were a good few cattle.

9603. Was it on the cattle or on the sheep that they were dependent mostly?—Sheep and cattle both.

9604. I think I heard you say something about goats?—There were not so many goats in Glen Strathfarrar in my time, with the exception of the very far west. They pretended that the goats were alarming the deer, and they were driving them out of the place, although very useful.

9605. Then about the area of arable land that would be in these townships. I don't want to tie you down,—I know perfectly well that you can't possibly give it except in a rough way. Did they grow as much meal in Glen Strathfarrar as sufficed for their families?—The most of them did, and potatoes.

9606. In the majority of instances?—Yes, in the majority of instances.

9607. So that there was a sufficient extent of arable for that purpose?—Yes, and for meadows also, to support the cattle in winter. There are some beautiful meadows in it.

9608. Then as to the growth of the crop there, I think you said that it grew fully better than in Glencannich?—Oh, well, it is fully as good in Glen Strathfarrar. It is lower by about 200 feet than Leitrie.

9609. And the crop, if anything, would be a surer crop there?—Yes.

9610. Then do you think, coming to the practical question, supposing that land in Glen Strathfarrar were available for small holdings, would you increase the number of tenants from the number that you remember being there, or would you decrease them?—It is quite capable of increasing them, and there are splendid slated houses there since the last tenants were in it.

9611. How do you mean?—There are splendid houses there since the former farmers were in the place.

Beauly. — Duncan Chisholm

9612. But I thought there are no tenants there at all?—No; but the houses are there.

9613. Oh! there are houses?—They were kept in repair under gamekeepers, gillies, and so forth.

9614. And you think they could now be made available for small tenants?—Yes, they could.

9615. You have some knowledge of the trade round about—the business that can be done round about. Do you think that a profitable market could be found for any dairy produce that would be made in those places?—There are no people there to consume it.

9616. Is there land about those glens?—There is not as many men as would consume it.

9617. But supposing that there were small tenants in these glens, could they bring their dairy produce easily to market?—Amongst themselves they might, but to bring it here would be another pair of shoes: too far off the market.

9618. Anything they did in that way they would have to consume themselves?—Yes, with the exception of butter and cheese, and curds and so forth.

9619. Well, I presume that is dairy produce?—Plenty of that.

9620. *The Chairman.*—I would like to ask—Do you know about Glen Affaric?—Well, I never passed through it.

9621. I thought you said, when you were beginning your evidence, that you were able to tell us?—I have seen part of it, but very little.

9622. Then you are not able to speak of it?—I used to see it from the hills.

9623. You never lived in it?—No, never.

9624. And you don't know anything of its history?—I often heard about its history, but I did not see about it personally.

9625. Do you know about Struy?—Fine that.

9626. Where is Struy?—It is at the junction of the Farrar and the Glass.

9627. Is there land there that would be suitable for settling crofters?—Yes, and beyond it Dumnaglass.

9628. It is near the hotel?—Yes, where the hotel was.

9629. Is there good land there?—Oh yes, in Struy.

9630. Is that land that is under forest now?—Well, all the grazing is, with very little exception.

9631. How far is it from Erchless Castle?—A mile or a mile and a half.

9632. And there is a good deal of wood there?—At one time there was, but it is all cut down; it is quite bare now.

9633. But there is a good deal of wood round it?—Well, I don't remember much of old wood standing there.

9634. Struy and Culligran: is not there a good deal of wood there?—There is a lot of growing wood in Erchless; it is very well wooded indeed. It is quite a treat to pass it.

9635. What extent of ground is there, where the trees have all been cut down, which would be available for settlement, in your judgment?—When I used to pass there it would be past the sky line from the road, the top of the hill. There was a sawmill or two there for years till it was manufactured.

9636. I think you said it is now occupied as forest?—I think so, with very little exception. There may be a little added to the farm of Struy at present, but not much.

9637. Is there a farm of Struy there now?—Yes.

9638. Do you know the extent of it?—I do not.

9639. Who is the tenant?—Mr Rattray, I believe.

9640. Now, going back again to some of those old townships you mentioned in answer to a question from Mr Macleod: are you aware that some of these townships you mentioned are now under wood. Culligran, for instance?—Was that plantation?

9641. Yes.—Well, it is since I used to go there.

9642. And Dumnaglass, are you aware it is under wood?—Well, there must be very little.

9643. I am going by the map before me?—The grandfather of the present nobleman planted a lot at the west end of Glen-Strathfarrar, in the neighbourhood of Monar, but it is all dwarfs together; the deer spoiled it.

Beauly.

9644. *Mr Gordon.*—You stated to us that, as far as you know, you are about 70 years of age?—Yes. Duncan Chisholm.

9645. You have given us some very good and very substantial information about Glencannich, which you left in 1838?—Yes.

9646. Then you would be 15 years of age at that time?—Perhaps fully that. I told you that there was no record or register kept in the place.

9647. But, according to yourself, that would be your age when you left it?—It would be all that.

9648. Were you the only man your father had to plough and sow the land?—No, but the only one that stopped at home.

9649. But the only one at home?—At the time.

9650. And did you cut 15 acres of a good crop when you were 15?—I did not; the shearers did.

9651. But you ploughed the land?—I ploughed it, sowed it, and harrowed it.

9652. Have you been much back in the glen since 1838?—No, I had no occasion to go.

9653. Have you ever seen any part of it ploughed, or sown, or cut since then?—I believe I did at Glen Strathfarrar.

9654. But at Cannich?—Yes, I did, I am sure.

9655. What year would that be in?—I could not tell you.

9656. Have you seen it more than once?—I used to go out to Kintail on business.

9657. Have you been more than once in Cannich since you left it?—I am sure I was. I was going through there to Kintail or Kyleakin.

9658. You gave us very strong evidence as regards the crops, and you say you were only 15 years of age when you left it, and you are not sure how often you have been back since you left it?—I have not my notes with respect to that.

9659. Well, we had evidence from the previous witness, who was twenty-three years on the very same ground you refer to—from 1859 to 1881—and he said emphatically that out of every second year, or at most every third year, the crop was a very bad one from bad weather?—I would not heed that. My lord, would you excuse me to hand this to you (hands up a paper to the Chairman).

9660. In the face of that evidence I would like to know whether you still stick to that statement?—I will try, and to the truth.

9661. But when you were only 15 years of age when you left it, how could you be so good a judge as the man who—— Recollect we had both farms. We had the low farm in the parish of Kirkhill and also in Glencannich for a time: Leitrie and Phopachy.

9662. How did the climate of the two countries correspond from your recollection in 1838?—They were very favourable indeed.

9663. Will you excuse me for putting one question. 1838 was a year famous for bad weather and a bad crop. I remember it quite well. Now you told me that you had a good crop on the farm of Leitrie in 1838?—Yes, without a doubt; there might be a little bother.

9664. That was one of the worst years, I suppose, in the present century, and we have had a good many bad ones?—Very likely.

9665. But, at any rate, you have not had any experience of the cultivation of that country since you left it in 1838?—I had no occasion.

9666. And you were 15 years of age then?—Fully.

9667. Well, I am taking your own word?—Yes.

9668. *Mr Burns.*—You left fifty-five years ago. Was not Colin at home then? He says he left forty-one years ago?—He is my senior brother, of course, and I don't remember these odds and ends so much.

9669. He said he left forty-one years ago.

9670. *Mr Shaw Stewart.*—He said he was away forty-one years.

9671. *Mr Burns.*—Oh, it does not matter. Did you say how many tenants were in Mullardoch?—I had seen three there.

9672. Over £30 a year each?—I will be plain with you: I don't remember the exact amount.

9673. Who were they?—William Chisholm, Archibald Chisholm, and John Chisholm.

9674. Where did they live?—On Mullardoch, but this was previous to the Williamsons going there.

9675. Was it in the summer only they lived there?—No, no; winter and summer.

9676. They had a house there?—Indeed they had several houses.

9677. Was there not a tacksman over them, because we do not find them in the rental?—No.

9678. You said that the land—ploughed land—had gone back to heather? Do you say it was good land?—It was better than now, because there were plenty cattle and people to keep it.

9679. Does good land that has been long cultivated, in your experience, go back to heather instead of grass?—Yes; it is a pity it is not ploughed.

9680. But it goes back to heather and not to grass?—And fog.

9681. You said heather?—I said both. I am not as well acquainted with it as Mr Burns.

9682. I know nothing about it. I am only asking you the question. How many mills were there on The Chisholm's estate up about Glencannich when you first remember; was there just the one at Cannich?—Yes.

9683. And it is there yet?—There yet.

9684. There has been no diminishing of the number of mills in that country?—No, I don't think so. The mill is there yet, and in very good order for the tenants.

9685. You said that the depopulation of the glens had hurt trade in the towns. What towns were you thinking about? Was it Inverness?—There is a few in Inverness.

9686. But what towns have been injured by the depopulation of Cannich?—Did I mention depopulation, Mr Burns?

9687. I think so?—Well, they used to manufacture timber in my time, and float it down to Beauly.

9688. But how did it hurt the towns; what towns do you mean?—I mean Inverness, for one.

9689. Do you know that the trade of Inverness has increased at least sixfold in the last forty years?—I know the rates are increasing, for one thing.

9690. But do you know, though, that the trade has increased—I believe it is more than tenfold, but I am quite safe in saying sixfold—in the last forty years, during the depopulating period?—Well, where could they go; they had no shelter but to run there.

9691. But you cannot dispute that the trade of Inverness during this depopulated period has increased at least sixfold?—Not for the last thirty years.

9692. I think you said the people in your time in the district did not require to buy meal?—Very little.

9693. We have information that some years they had to buy a tremendous quantity; do you know anything about it?—Some are more extravagant in meal than others, and they would have fishing and other things.

9694. You said there were townships in Glen Strathfarrar; what date do you refer to?—Well, I believe the first parties that had been evicted there on a large scale—the first eviction was during the life of the late Archibald Fraser, the youngest brother of General Simon, son of the Lord Lovat beheaded on Tower Hill. General Simon went to Glen Strathfarrar and got 200, as I am told, of volunteers to fight the enemy on the Heights of Abram, near Quebec.

9695. That is 1753; but I want to know at what date these townships existed that you know about—that you have been telling us of?—The last evictions?

9696. No, the townships. You said there were townships in Glen Strathfarrar. I want to know what date you say there were townships in Glen Strathfarrar?—It would be about the year 1800.

9697. That is before your time?—That is before my time.

9698. You are speaking from tradition?—I don't want to speak about hearsay. I prefer, and I thought I stated, that I would keep to that.

9699. But you don't remember seeing the townships in Glen Strathfarrar?—I have seen several tenants in it and their men.

9700. But it has been townships I have been asking you about all this time?—The townships are there yet.

9701. But I mean actual tenants living together in a small hamlet or village. Have you seen that?—I have seen plenty of that in Culligran.

9702. That is down at the bottom of the glen?—Yes.

9703. Is not there one tenant in it all your time?—Not all my time.

9704. Did you ever see a time when there was more than one tenant in it?—Yes.

9705. Tell me who?—I have seen the father and sons. They had a home apiece and a farm apiece.

9706. Do you know that the sons or tenants were only staying or living with their father?

9707. *The Chairman.*—I think his answer to Mr Macleod was very much his answer to you. There were three people; it may have been a general tenancy, but there were three tenants.

9708. *Mr Burns.*—You said there was a meal mill in Glen Strathfarrar. Where was it?—Milton, down below Culligran.

9709. That is not in the glen, I am told?—What is the difference; it is on the same water, and under the same landlord.

9710. Were you ever a tenant on Glen Strathfarrar?—No, but my aunt was.

9711. Where?—At Inchlair.

9712. How long is it since you were there?—It is a long time now. They had been evicted out of it.

9713. What was your aunt's name?—She was married to Valentine Macrae.

9714. She was the widow of Valentine Macrae?—She was not a widow then.

9715. Your uncle, Valentine Macrae, was the tenant?—Yes.

9716. *Mr Sutherland.*—Do you believe that the increase in the trade of Inverness was due to the depopulation of the glens?—Not likely.

9717. Then as to your memory of what happened when you were 15 years of age?—I have a perfect good memory—firm as ever.

9718. And of many things that happened before you were 15 years of age?—Yes; but I don't wish to speak of it here. I merely confine myself to what I had seen.

9719. But you think that Glen Strathfarrar and Glencannich are exactly where they were when you were 15 years of age?—Oh yes. I see, of course, it is getting wasted. Deer is not like cattle and sheep or human beings.

9720. But what you stated was spoken from your own memory and experience?—Yes.

9721. *Mr Munro.*—Returning to this question of the increased trade of Inverness, I presume you don't attribute any increase of the trade to the deer forests?—Quite the reverse.

9722. That Inverness has prospered, not because of the deer forests, but in spite of them, to a large extent?—Yes. I am a trader by sea and land since 1848.

9723. You remember the opening up of the railways to Inverness?—Long before it.

9724. And I suppose you are prepared to allow that the increase in the prosperity of Inverness is mainly, if not entirely, owing to the Highland Railway Company?—Well, it made its own share.

9725. And if these straths and glens had been occupied by farmers instead of by deer forests, the trade of Inverness would still further, in all probability, have increased?—Not a doubt. They would be there from one end of the year to another with their families, which is quite different to these gentlemen coming, in the meantime, as sportsmen, as they call themselves.

9726. *Mr Alexander Mackenzie,* Inverness.—I would like to ask, through your lordship, whether Mr Chisholm has not been a practical farmer for some twenty years on the low ground.

9727. *The Chairman.*—Have you been a practical

Beauly. Duncan Chisholm.

farmer?—I thought I convinced you of that. My credentials, I think, are sufficient.

9728. *Mr Alexander Mackenzie.*—Did you farm the farm of Phoppachy?—Yes, for twenty years.

9729. That is in Kirkhill?—Yes.

9730. I want to point out that our friend is not merely a commission agent. Is he quite sure that he was only 15 years of age in 1838. He told us that registers were not kept in those days, and he was not quite sure. Is it not the fact that you are considerably over 70 now?—Well, it is very possible. I don't want to make myself older, and I mean to live as long as I can and as well as I can.

9731. *The Chairman.*—How many years do you consider yourself younger than your brother?—Several years. I cannot state the exact figure.

9732. Not 10?—I suspect I am. He is older than me by far.

9733. *Mr Alexander Mackenzie.*—Now, sir, there appears to have been considerable discrepancy about the land which has once been arable about Glencannich. I would like your lordship to ask Mr Chisholm if there has not been a large amount of arable land in his early recollection which has gone back, not only into heather and fog, but which is now practically under wood—natural wood. There is some wood, but it is not very thriving.

9734. *The Chairman.*—The question is: Is some of the old arable land now growing wood?—Brackens, in particular.

9735. But wood—timber?—Well, I don't doubt but there are; heather and brackens, anyhow.

9736. Do you know, as a matter of fact, whether land formerly arable is now under wood?—It is inclined to go that way.

9737. *Mr Alexander Mackenzie.*—If this were so, would this account for the discrepancy with the evidence of a man who saw land with the appearance of being arable twenty years after he left.

9738. *The Chairman.*—Yes, it might, but he does not say he knows of such land.

9739. *Mr Alexander Mackenzie.*—I should like to know whether this unripened corn, of which we heard so much, is not very valuable, if not almost as valuable, in the rearing of cattle during the winter as if the corn ripened; used for fodder, is it not just as good as ripe grain used for human food?

9740. *The Chairman.*—What is your knowledge as to that?—It is a very good substitute for feeding or rearing. I used it in the Highlands and in the province of Connaught for years.

9741. *Mr Alexander Mackenzie.*—Was there not a large number of people who had gone from Strathglass to Glen-Strathfarrar in 1841, and occupied that until cleared out by the grandfather of the present Lord Lovat in 1845?—Certainly.

9742. How many families were there in 1843—say from 1840 to 1845—which you remember?—Seven or eight.

9743. So that there was more than the one to whom Mr Burns has referred to? There were at least seven or eight, according to your recollection, as late as 1845. Is it not a fact that some fifteen to twenty families went from Strathglass and were settled there by Mr Grieve, a large sheep farmer, by the consideration of Thomas Alexander, Lord Lovat, who provided land in that glen, and ultimately evicted them in 1845?—I believe it is.

Farquhar Macrae.

FARQUHAR MACRAE, Rebeg, Kirkhill (about 57)—*examined.*

9744. *The Chairman.*—Do you wish to give your evidence in Gaelic?—Yes.

9745. Are you a crofter?—No, I was a shepherd.

9746. And what are you now?—I am a crofter or a small farmer.

9747. Near Beauly?—Ay, in Kirkhill.

9748. What estate are you on?—Mr Fraser, Reelick.

9749. Can you tell us the size of your holding?—39 acres.

9750. How much is arable?—It is all arable. I daresay there are about 2 acres of pasture. Beauly. Farquhar Macrae.

9751. And what is your rent?—£32.

9752. You don't hold under lease?—Yes.

9753. A written lease?—Yes.

9754. For how long?—Fifteen years; well, there are eleven years to run.

9755. You know about Glen-Affaric?—Yes.

9756. How many years were you there?—I was for twenty-three years there.

9757. In what capacity?—As shepherd all the time.

9758. To whom did you act as shepherd?—For twenty years to Mr Williamson, Knockfin, and for three years to Mr Winans.

9759. Do you belong to Glen-Affaric?—I was born and bred in Strathglass.

9760. What part of Glen-Affaric were you located in?—For the first four years in the place they call Caimbaan, and the rest of the time in Ath-nam-Muileach, on the south side of the water.

9761. Do you remember the extent of the farm upon which you were shepherd?—Well, I have a rough idea of the length of it and the breadth of it.

9762. What was the length and what the breadth?—It would be about 21 miles in length.

9763. And how broad?—I would say from 3 to 2 miles broad in parts of it.

9764. Was all that land put under deer?—Not at first.

9765. But is it under deer now?—Yes.

9766. When was that process gone through?—It went under deer about eight years ago.

9767. Was it added to Mr Winans' forest?—It is Mr Winans that has it yet.

9768. Is it now called Wester Knockfin?—Wester and Easter Knockfin.

9769. How many sheep did it carry?—I can hardly tell. I would say it would carry between 3000 and 4000 in summer.

9770. Were the sheep wintered upon the land or were they sent away?—Some of them, the hoggs, were sent away.

9771. Where?—Down to the low country here. Some dinmonts were also sent away.

9772. Is that land, in your opinion, suitable for crofter settlements now?—Well, it is suitable for little tenants.

9773. Small holdings?—Ay.

9774. And could they live there without further assistance?—Well, I would think so, whatever.

9775. What is the nature of the arable land in them?—Well, there is not much arable land in it.

9776. It is generally pretty high, is it not?—Ay, pretty high.

9777. Running up to?—Running up to Cnoc-na-h-ullaidh.

9778. Can you tell me what is the height of the lowest level?—I think the head of Loch Affaric is about 980 feet, I believe. Both ends are much about the same.

9779. *Mr Sutherland.*—It is marked 744 feet?—Very well.

9780. *The Chairman.*—The loch itself is 744 feet. The land at the head of the loch is 800?—I think the house where I was stopping was about 1000 feet. That was Ath-nam-Muileach.

9781. Had you arable land there?—No; except a wee patch of potatoes.

9782. Did potatoes grow well?—Yes; pretty fair sometimes.

9783. There was nobody else living near you?—There was a man on the opposite side of the water.

9784. At Culevain?—Yes.

9785. That was another shepherd?—Yes.

9786. But excepting you and him, there was nobody else near at hand?—Yes; there were houses up the glen further on.

9787. Where?—At a place they call Colan, 2 miles or 2½ west of us, and a house at Caimbaan; and there were two shepherds there and three at Ath-nam-Muileach.

9788. And at Alltbeath?—That does not belong to the same farm.

9789. How many shepherds were on that farm altogether?—There were six shepherds on our farm in the glen, and one on each Knockfin.

9790. Are the crops late there always?—We did not use to sow crop at all in the glen, except potatoes.

9791. How did you do—had you corn in winter?—No.

9792. And no turnip?—No.

9793. What stock did you keep yourself?—Well, I had three cows and a few followers, and a horse.

9794. And some sheep?—No sheep. It is wages I had for sheep and service.

9795. Can you tell me what extent of land has been turned into deer forest in that quarter, in your recollection?—Oh well, I don't know. The whole glen is turned into deer forest in my recollection, from Fasnakyle and from Knockfin, on both sides of the water, up to the march of Kintail. It will be 22 miles in length.

9796. And do you know how broad?—Well, I would say from 5 to 6 miles on both sides of the water.

9797. All turned from sheep farm into deer forest?—Yes.

9798. What was the name of the farm next to yours?—The farm of Kerrow.

9799. How many shepherds were on it?—Four in the glen and two in the strath.

9800. And were these the only farms there—Knockfin farm and the Kerrow farm?—No, there was another little farm that Mr Fraser, Mauld, had called Benevean and Achagiat, and part of Fasnakyle farm.

9801. Two small farms which Mr Fraser had?—One farm he had.

9802. Both these small farms?—Ay, it is the one farm.

9803. When was that?—I am not very sure. I cannot recollect very well. There was a good few years since that.

9804. How long was it before Mr Winans' time?—No; it was Mr Winans that got it.

9805. Before Mr Winans came it had been a sheep farm?—Yes.

9806. And it was turned into forest, and made part of his forest?—Yes.

9807. Just try and remember how many years ago that was. Is it within the last ten years?—More than that.

9808. Are there any other farms you can mention besides Wester Knockfin, Kerrow, and Mam that have been turned into forest?—No; there was no more land in the glen but that.

9809. That is the whole land in the glen?—Yes.

9810. Would you say that these farms, taking them generally, are suitable for occupation and residence by crofters, or is the land too high?—Well, it is pretty high; but I think crofters would live pretty comfortably on it if they would get it at a fair rent.

9811. Is there enough of arable for them?—No, there is not much arable; there is a bit at Achagiat.

9812. But is there not arable land elsewhere than at Achagiat?—Well, there is land that could be cultivated, but I don't think the corn would ripen in it.

9813. Where is that land?—There is a good skelp at Ath-nam-Muileach.

9814. Nine or ten acres there?—Ay, I am sure there is all that.

9815. What did you say about the corn there?—It would not ripen; it is too high.

9816. That was where you lived?—Yes.

9817. *Mr Shaw Stewart.*—Then you think the only use that could be made of this ground, if it was not in forest, would be to be used as sheep farms?—Aye, sheep and cattle. We can rear any amount of cattle in the summer.

9818. What about the winter?—Sell them off at winter, the most of them, whatever, except a few you would keep for your own use.

9819. You would have no winter cattle at all?—Not over many. I could winter, I dare say, five or six cows there with natural grass.

9820. Do you know that in a great many parts sheep-farming does not pay?—I don't know how they pay to-day, but they were paying once. Beauly. — Farquhar Macrae.

9821. That may be, but do you not know that they don't pay now in a great many places?—Well, in some places they do pay yet.

9822. In some places they may, but in other places they don't?—No, if it is too high rented.

9823. But even at moderate rent. But still you would recommend this land being turned into sheep farms, although in some parts of the Highlands sheep-farming does not pay?—I can't say; but I know these glens would pay well if they were let at a reasonable rent, because there is good grazing in them.

9824. *Mr Sutherland.*—How far is Caimbaan from Beauly by road?—It will be about 41 miles, I believe.

9825. And the land will be rising all the way?—All the way.

9826. And you think that along that line of road there is plenty land that could be occupied by small holders?—Oh, not very small.

9827. What is your idea of the size of holding that ought to be put there where you were?—Well, I would like, if I was going back there, to get between 500 and 600 acres pasture before I could live on it. Just a comfortable living.

9828. And I have no doubt you could manage more to advantage if you got it?—Well, if I had the means.

9829. That is your opinion of it?—Yes.

9830. You stated that you were for twenty-three years in Glen Affaric, and you were afterwards three years a shepherd to Mr Winans?—I was twenty years with Mr Williamson and three years with Mr Winans.

9831. Was Mr Winans a sheep farmer then?—Yes, for three years.

9832. And then he cleared away the sheep?—Yes.

9833. Did he take over the stock from the previous tenant?—Well, the previous tenant delivered the stock to The Chisholm of Chisholm.

9834. And it was transferred then to Mr Winans?—Aye.

9835. And so it was Mr Winans, then, that afterwards—what did he do with the stock after the three years?—He sold it off at Inverness at the sales.

9836. Did you know anything about the circumstances. Did he lose or gain?—I cannot say, indeed; he was not caring much whether he did or not.

9837. Then you said that a certain amount of that territory along the course of this river was changed from sheep farm into deer forest?—Yes, the whole of it.

9838. Can you tell us how many shepherds were superseded by that operation?—Yes.

9839. How many shepherds were turned out by this afforestment?—Fourteen, and one in Fasnakyle makes fifteen.

9840. And do you know how many keepers were substituted for them?—Yes; at the time there were only two keepers in the one glen at that time. Of course there are more to-day, but there were only two then.

9841. So your experience, Mr Macrae, is of a double fashion. You have had experience as a shepherd and experience as an agriculturist?—A little.

9842. How long have you been a farmer?—Four years.

9843. And twenty-three as a shepherd?—Aye.

9844. Now would you be willing yourself, provided such holdings as you indicate were to be got, do you think you would like to take one yourself?—Yes, if I would be able for it.

9845. How do you mean? In capital?—Yes, in capital.

9846. But if you had the necessary capital you would not be afraid, notwithstanding your experience where you are now, to take one of these holdings?—No, at a fair rent.

9847. Just so: I always suppose it would be a fair rent, fixed by neither landlord nor tenant, but by a tribunal. You would have no hesitation in taking such a holding?—No.

Beauly. Farquhar Macrae.

9848. *Mr Forsyth.*—What size of holding would you take, and how many sheep would you like to have?—I would not like to take less than 500 or 600 acres of that pasture before I could keep myself.

9849. How many sheep would you carry up there?—It would be enough to carry a sheep for every acre.

9850. Would it carry a sheep to an acre?—In the summer.

9851. You would have to winter your hoggs out?—Yes.

9852. And the dinmonts?—Well, the weak ones.

9853. And you think you could make a moderate rent out of that?—Well, I would think so.

9854. And keep your family too?—Ay.

9855. That would require some capital?—Yes.

9856. What would you calculate that at, roughly, say for 500 sheep?—£1000 would be little enough.

9857. Would you winter the hoggs out altogether, or take wintering for them or let them out at wintering by the head?—Well, I don't know; according to circumstances.

9858. You know the expense of that, don't you?—Yes, I do.

9859. But you still think you could make that work?—I would think so.

9860. But you don't believe in cropping up there?—No, except a bit of potatoes for the house.

9861. How would you keep your cows?—By natural grass.

9862. You would not try oats much?—No.

9863. You would rather not, although you had a horse to plough?—Even although.

9864. *Mr Gordon.*—You stated that the length of this glen was about 22 miles by rather more than 2 in width?—Between both sides of it, it may be 4 or 5 miles in breadth.

9865. Is this piece of ground, which you refer to as keeping a sheep to the acre, better than the average of the glen?—Yes, all those up at the head of Affaric.

9866. That is quite green, but it is pretty stormy there in winter?—Of course it is.

9867. Is there much winter?—No, not much winter.

9868. How would you do in a big storm coming?—The best way we could.

9869. You gave us the size of your glen, 22 miles in breadth by 2 in width: you would have 28,000 acres. If you make it 4 you would have 56,000 acres. How did you have such a small stock as 500? You are supposing that in your 500 acres you would just keep actually as much sheep as are on the ground?—There is about 16 or 17 miles of that ground where 10 acres would not keep a sheep.

9870. Where is that?—Away from Fasnakyle by the water side till the head of Loch Affaric.

9871. That is very good ground from Loch Beneveian to Fasnakyle?—Ay, on the north side, not on the south side.

9872. It is black ground, and wilder, but it is good ground for wintering another part of it?—It is no good for wintering or for summering.

9873. At any rate I am afraid you would hardly manage to keep the sheep to the acre that you were talking about. You would require a little more space?—It would keep that all the summer anyhow.

9874. You think you would be safer to speak about the sheep than about the acres—that is to say, you would need 400 or 500 sheep before you could make a living?—Aye.

9875. And the extent of the ground would depend upon its quality?—Yes.

9876. But it is the number of sheep you are looking to, and not the acres, when you say you want so much to keep a man; 500 or 600 acres at the foot of the glen you would not consider sufficient to keep a man?—No.

9877. Therefore it is the number of sheep you want. You want to have at least 400 or 500 sheep before?—Aye.

9877*a*. You would have enough to keep a man and his family; is that so?—Yes.

9878. You had about 4000 sheep there?—Yes, I am sure there were all that.

9879. You would only have, then, dividing that by four or five, you would only have eight or ten tenants on the whole glen?—Yes, on the south side of it.

9880. Now could you give us any idea of what rent you would have to pay for those 500 sheep?—Well, I don't know.

9881. What is the old rent of it?—I am not very sure.

9882. What was the rent Mr Winans was paying, or Mr Williamson?—I think he was paying about £1000 for it.

9883. Suppose you have ten, that would be £100 each. That would come to 4s. a sheep. Would that not be rather much?—Yes, but 4s. a sheep would be cheaper in those days than 2s. in the meantime.

9884. Was there ever a sheep worth 4s.?—Well, I can't say; it was rather dear, and no mistake.

9885. *Mr Macleod.*—I want to know exactly the number of shepherds that were on this farm that you are on at Knockfin?—Eight.

9886. *Mr Burns.*—After the sheep were cleared, do you know how many watchers Mr Winans employed in the glen, beginning with Macdonald at Knockfin up to Caimban?—Well, I have just a good idea of it. There was another one with Macdonald at Knockfin, and there were two or three at the bridge, and there were other two at the other bridge west, and there were another at Wester Knockfin, and another at Luib, and another at Dalgrar, another at Ath-nam-Muileach, and one at Caimban, and one at Allt-beath, and one at Polan [Affaric Lodge], and one at Achagiat. That is all.

9887. Was there not a number of men staying with Maclaren at Affaric?—Ay, sometimes.

9888. There were nine there when I was living there?—I daresay there were.

9889. Are you counting them?—No.

9890. Nine and fifteen would be twenty-four, would it not?—Yes, but the nine would only be for a week or two.

9891. I suppose you do not know, but it is in the valuation roll, that Mr Winans pays £2000 a year for the grazing or deer forest. I am told he pays £3400 for the place, shooting and grazing. Do you think you could get crofters and small tenants who could go there and pay more than half that rent?—No.

9892. They could not live, paying more than £1000?—Not even that.

9893. Do you know that Williamson and Brown lost money by it, and had to give it up?—Yes, fine.

9894. I suppose you don't know that Mr Winans also lost a lot of money on it keeping the sheep?—I believe he did lose a lot through the sheep.

9895. Williamson and Brown's rent was £1200; you said £1000. Did you know they had to give it up?—Yes.

9896. There is no method of making a third of the Winans' rent out of crofters and small tenants, so that they could live?—I believe not.

9897. You know the history of this place. It is called on the map Glen Affaric Forest. Was it an ancient forest?—It was never a forest till Lord Tweedmouth got the north side of it and Mr Winans the south side.

9898. You mean that sheep were never cleared off it?—No.

9899. But had it the name of forest long ago?—Yes.

9900. The Glen was a forest?—Aye.

9901. And it goes up to Caimban?—Yes.

9902. But was not all that known as the forest?—Well, there were plenty trees, and no mistake, but I don't call it a forest now, unless it was cleared of sheep.

9903. But long ago it was different, was it not?—I don't know, I am sure.

9904. Is there any public road past the place till past Knockfin?—There is a public road to Affaric Lodge.

9905. Do you know the public road ends at what they call the Brocairs's house at Wester Knockfin?—Yes.

Beauly.

Farquhar Macrae.

9906. But beyond that, I am told (I may be wrong) that the public road goes to Beneveian?—Ay, on the north side.

9907. And beyond that there is a road, not a very good road, made by Mrs Chisholm to Affaric Lodge?—Aye.

9908. But that is a private road?—It is public enough. It was made by Colonel Inge.

9909. How far is it from Affaric Lodge, where the road ends, to Caimbaan: 10 miles at any rate?—Ten miles.

9910. Is it the fact that this ground is composed mainly of mountains? You have got Scuir-na-Lapaich. Do you know the height of it?—No.

9911. 3773 feet; you go up to Mamsoul 3862 feet I think, Carn Eige 3877, Ben Attow [Beinn-Fhada] 3383. Well, it is mountain land on that west part of it?—Yes.

9912. Nobody would ever think, except planting a few potatoes, of agricultural pursuits there, I don't suppose?—Oh no.

9913. It will only do for sheep or deer?—Sheep or cattle—black cattle.

9914. But you don't know where they work cattle and sheep together, except with their shepherds, do you?—Oh yes, in some places.

9915. Where?—In Lochalsh and Kintail and Glenmoriston.

9916. Are these very small tenants?—Mr Mitchell has a few sheep among the cattle.

9917. That is very unusual, is not it?—Mr Macdonald keeps a lot of sheep among his cattle.

9918. You know about the price of wintering, being a shepherd?—I have a good idea.

9919. Has it gone up or gone down within the last thirty years?—Well, I don't know; I heard the late minister saying that he was paying one year for his wintering 10s. 9d. for each.

9920. That is one particular year, but on the average has it not gone up?—Well, I am sure it is almost going down.

[Adjourned.]

ELEVENTH SITTING.

BEAULY, JUNE 14, 1893.

Present:—

David Brand, Esq., Advocate, Sheriff of Ayr, and Chairman of the Crofters Commission, *Chairman.*
Michael Hugh Shaw Stewart, Esq., M.P.
Angus Sutherland, Esq., M.P.
James Noel Muller Forsyth, Esq.
George Gordon, Esq.
Rev. Malcolm Maccallum.
John Macleod, Esq.
Henry Munro, Esq.
William Mackenzie, Esq., *Secretary.*

John Brown Grant.

John Brown Grant, Factor, Chisholm Estates, Erchless (38)—*examined.*

9921. *The Chairman.*—You are factor on The Chisholm estate?—Yes.

9922. How long have you been factor?—For eight years.

9923. Where were you previously?—I was in Sutherlandshire, as factor for Mr Sutherland of Skibo.

9924. Is the statement which you have prepared by yourself?—By myself.

9925. Do you wish to read it to us?—With your permission I would like to read it.

Beauly.

John Brown Grant.

The Report of Lord Napier's Commission, 1883, states (p. 85):—'It is said that much of the land now 'cleared for deer might be made available for profitable 'occupation by crofters. The evidence on this head is, 'as might be supposed, very conflicting. Those who 'pressed the theory most closely, brought forward in 'its support cases where undoubtedly land now under 'forest had been formerly occupied by crofters, and 'where crofters might again be located. It may, however, be fairly stated that by far the larger portion of 'land devoted to deer is to be found at such altitudes, 'and consists so much of rock, heather, and moor, as to 'be unsuitable for crofters, except as shielings or summer 'grazings for cattle and sheep. It is, of course, true 'that there are few deer forests where an occasional 'spot of hard green land might not be found which 'would be available for a crofter's residence and cultivation; but, looking to the small proportion of arable 'to pasture land in such places, it may fairly be assumed that almost insuperable difficulties would be 'offered to the settlement of crofters in these deer 'forests, as they would find it impossible to defray the 'expense of purchasing the large sheep stock which the 'ground is competent to carry, even though they would 'not in this case be obliged to take over the stock on 'the ground at a valuation.' Nothing has occurred, since Lord Napier's Commission issued their Report, to make it less impracticable to cultivate deer forest land with profit to crofters or anybody else. In the case of the land devoted to deer forests on The Chisholm estates, there are 80,000 acres of forest land in the occupation of three tenants, the whole being let on an average nett rent of 1s. 6d. per acre. In this area not more than 150 acres of land show signs of having once been cultivated. I produce Ordnance Survey Plan with the deer forest area referred to coloured. The forests are Erchless, Glencannich, and Glen-Affaric. Eighty acres of the old arable land mentioned are at Knockfin, and have not been in the occupation of small tenants since the beginning of this century. They formed the only piece of low, wintering ground of the extensive sheep farm of Knockfin. Eighteen acres are at Muckerach in Glencannich, 14 acres at Leitrie, 9 acres at Shalavanach, 5 acres at Carrie, 4 acres at Luibguish, 4 acres at Tombuie, all in Glencannich. The rent rolls of the estate since 1787 show that the lands referred to were sometimes in the hands of a few large tenants, while at other times an attempt seems to have been made to divide a part into club farms with from two to four tenants in each. A rent roll of 1687 shows the whole estate of Chisholm of that day to be let in fifteen separate holdings. The rent roll of 1787 shows fifteen separate holdings with eighteen individual tenants resident on and occupying the present deer forest land. By far the largest area of the land at that time was let simply as shielings for summer grazing, and principally to men who resided in Kintail. In 1800 there were eleven separate tenants. In 1810 there appear to have been only six, including the large sheep farmers; in 1820, six; in 1830, five; in 1840, ten; in 1850, eight; in 1860, six. In 1787 the whole Chisholm estate was let in forty-five separate holdings to about 100 tenants. In 1850 seventy individual tenants occupied the whole estate. At the present time it is let in ninety-nine separate holdings to eighty-six different tenants. After 1801 sheep-farming was introduced, there being few or no sheep in the country before that period, and south countrymen with the necessary skill and capital appeared. The reasons for their introduction, as stated by Macculloch in his Letters written between 1811 and 1821, are seen in the following extract (vol. 4, p. 111):—'In those 'mountainous and boggy tracts, black cattle cannot 'consume all the pasture. Sheep can, and consequently there is a saving on this head alone by the 'exchange. Sheep cannot be cultivated to a profit, 'unless in large flocks and by a well-regulated system, 'the details of which are too minute for me to give here. 'Small capitalists cannot thence manage them; and 'thus arises the necessity of large sheep farms. Lastly,

Beauly.
John Brown Grant.

'the necessity of a proportion of winter food renders 'it compulsory to take from petty agriculture the 'smaller interspersed tracts which are adapted to this 'purpose. Now those small spots were occupied by 'a race of starving and miserable tenants, who thus 'impeded the application of what they could not use, 'producing nothing themselves and obstructing 'production.' About 1830 shooting began to have some value. Sir Joseph Radcliffe was tenant of Erchless Castle at that date, at a rental of £100. Fasnakyle was let in 1840 to Mr George Wood for £450. Between 1850 and 1860 the small tenant who had adopted the sheep-farming business, and who had been in difficulties all along, gave place to the deer forest tenant, who bought him out. Muckerach, Carrie, Sliosgarbh, Leitrie, Shalavanach and Craskie are examples of this. The Chisholm, James Sutherland, who succeeded to the estates in 1860, made a laudable attempt to place tenants back on these holdings. He assisted them with money, and let the land at rents almost of their own fixing.

9926. *Mr Sutherland.*—How many?—Four or five.

9927. And what was the size of their holdings?—They ran from about £100 to £120 of rent.

9928. *Mr Gordon.*—Are you sure your date is correct?—Between 1850 and 1860.

9929. It was in 1859, the gamekeepers said, that they began to disperse the tenants?—That would be covered by the date I give. I can put in the documents I refer to. The attempt failed, the borrowed money was never repaid and the tenants left again, with one exception, and it is only by repeated concessions that he, too, can be induced to remain. Between 1870 and 1883, sheep-farming, even on a large scale and with every command of capital and skill, became unprofitable, and one by one the large sheep farms were cleared. Kerrow, Knockfin, Comar, Mauld, and Mullardoch are cases in point. But it does not follow that, although the use to which the land was put changed, there was any great decrease in the number of the people resident on the estate, since 1801 at least. The census of 1798 shows a population in the whole parish of Kilmorack of 2318.

9930. *Mr Sutherland.*—How many of these were on The Chisholm estate?—I am not sure; I think perhaps I can make that a little clearer presently. The Rev. James Robertson, Minister of Callander, writing for the Board of Agriculture in 1808, mentions that (p. 322):—"The only districts in the county of Inverness where 'population, during the last twenty or thirty years, has 'increased, are Urquhart, Strathglass, the vicinity of Fort 'George, the estate of Grant and a part of the Aird." In 1831 the population of the parish of Kilmorack had increased to 2709, of which the village of Beauly then contained 508, leaving a country population of 2201. According to last census, the present population of the parish, in which nine-tenths of the deer forest lands referred to are situated, amounts to 2294, and the proportion of decrease in the rural part of the parish, for the past thirty years, is less than for the other parts of the county of Inverness. There can be no doubt whatever that, since the beginning of this century, the standard of comfort has been greatly raised in this district. Wages for labourers were then from a shilling to 1s. 6d. a day without food, while for the crop of 1800 the fiar's price for a boll of oatmeal was £2. The small tenants on the estate, during at least the first twenty years of the century, appeared to be in great difficulties. The Report by Mr Alexander Anderson, on the estate of Chisholm, in the year 1817, states as follows:—"The severity and the effects of the 'winter and spring of 1815–16 upon all Highland stock, 'as well as the low prices and almost total stagnation of 'that year, added to the failure of the corn crops of '1816–17, in all elevated situations, are too well 'known and will long be remembered by proprietors and 'tenants. The tenants who depend wholly, or in a great 'measure, upon grazing, have not suffered so deeply, 'though their loss of stock in the spring of 1816 was 'very great, and the low prices of that year added much 'to their distress. I, however, apprehend that several 'of this description on the estate of Chisholm will not 'hold out. Some appear never to have possessed skill 'or capital for their undertakings, and the small capital 'they did possess is nearly, if not wholly, exhausted. A 'few may be overrented, and in too many cases a 'determined perseverance in illicit distillation has 'increased the misfortunes of the seasons."

Beauly.
John Brown Grant.

9931. *Mr Shaw Stewart.*—What is the name of the writer?—Mr Alexander Anderson, who was a banker in Inverness, and, I believe, for some time factor on The Chisholm estates.

9932. *Mr Gordon.*—Will that Report be put in?—Yes. From the foregoing it can be seen that agriculture, or even grazing, has never been a prosperous industry in Strathglass, and when the character of the greater part of the land is examined, the reasons become at once apparent. There is nowhere in Scotland a wilder or more rugged tract of country than that extending from the head of Strathglass, to the sea at Kintail. The highest hills run up to nearly 4000 feet, and on the whole area of deer forests referred to there are not fewer than nineteen peaks over 3000 feet in height. Skene says ("Celtic Scotland," vol. 1, p. 12):—'Within is a wild 'and mountainous region, full of the most picturesque 'beauty, which the ever varied combination of mountain, 'rock and stream, can afford, but adapted only for 'pasture and hunting, and for the occupation of a people 'still in the early stage of pastoral and war-like life.' The two glens of Affaric and Cannich have a bottom elevation of from 500 to 800 feet. They are narrow, and shaded by the mountains.

9933. *The Chairman.*—What is the breadth; you say very narrow?—They are narrow at the bottom.

9934. And widening out?—They widen out to the ridge.

9935. What is the average breadth?—At the bottom the average breadth would not be more than half a mile.

9936. *Mr Gordon.*—I don't think it is half that?—Well, at the widest part of the lake, which is the bottom breadth, it might be half a mile. In Glen Affaric no small tenants ever cultivated land or lived; in Glencannich there are four detached places which tenants did occupy. Of the largest of these places not more than 18 acres show traces of cultivation. Spring rainstorms and autumn frosts prevent the ripening of corn, whilst snow lies long and deep. Winter can scarcely be said to be over till well on into May, and autumn is ended with October. There is no accurate record of the rainfall.

9937. *Mr Sutherland.*—Are you referring to Glen Affaric alone just now?—Both glens, but Longart, at the head of Glencannich, is said to be one of the wettest places in Scotland. The heavy rain-laden clouds drifting in from the Atlantic, with the prevailing westerly winds, meeting the barrier of the mountain range running north and south (the ancient Drumalban), are compelled to rise into a colder strata of air, and discharge their contents on the eastern side. Floods occur, sometimes even in summer. The rapid melting of accumulated snow is the most frequent cause. In the spring of 1892, the greatest flood known for a long time took place. From the sources of the river Glass to the sea, every bridge, with two exceptions, was swept away.

9938. *The Chairman.*—That was entirely exceptional?—Yes, that in 1892. For many months afterwards the country was all but impassible. In the seven years before this occurrence I have seen no fewer than four great floods, and every bridge in Glencannich, without exception, washed away.

9939. *Mr Macleod.*—Every year for seven years?—I have seen four, and I have seen every bridge washed away.

9940. Not on one occasion?—Between one occasion and another.

9941. *The Chairman.*—You have seen floods on four occasions, and between these four occasions all the bridges were washed away?—Yes, in fact we have twice built all the bridges in Glencannich within that period. Landslips, too, are frequent in that glen, blocking the road for hundreds of yards at a time.

Beauly. John Brown Grant.

9942. Have you seen that?—Yes. The small patches of land, therefore, that once were cultivated, could never have been suited for this purpose. A tenant who still farms near the lower end of Glencannich has, for a number of years past, given up growing corn or turnips. Those green patches of ground, amid so much mountain land, were of great value, however, to the sheep farmer. They eked out the wintering ground which he found necessary for his sheep, and enabled him to keep sheep at home during the winter time which he would otherwise have had to send away. They are equally valuable, I may say absolutely indispensable, to the deer forester. He cannot send his stock to low-ground wintering, and unless there is a certain proportion of this class of land in a deer forest, deer cannot be kept at all. No living thing can inhabit the high ground during the storms of winter. The Commissioners will find, on examining the ground, that the old patches of land are the places on which the deer foresters reside, being in nearly every case the only spots where the houses can be built and occupied. These men, if any attempt were made to plant crofters in their vicinity, would find their occupation entirely gone. It appears strange to the people of this district that such an attempt should even be thought of. The great majority are bound up, one way or another, with the prosperity of the present system. These deer foresters are in receipt of regular wages, varying from 18s. to 35s. per week. I have the honour to represent a division of the county in the Inverness-shire County Council, and in my district there are no fewer than twenty-five of them upon the Electorate. A more active, intelligent, and capable body of men it would be difficult to meet with, and I feel assured that, although the land was offered to them for cultivation, they would refuse to change their present condition. There are two of those men employed in place of every shepherd who had occupation formerly. Besides the wages of the men employed looking after the deer, there is a very great expenditure in the forests in making roads and paths, erecting bridges, new buildings, repairing old buildings, painting, embanking, fencing and carting, Mr Winans, at the present moment, spending no less than £300 per month on labour alone. Mrs Chisholm of Chisholm, the owner of the property, whose agricultural rental, from causes which are obvious to everyone who has thought for one moment of the present depression of this industry, has shrank from £5000 per annum in 1860 to £1500 at the present time.

9943. *Mr Macleod.*—That is because the agricultural land has been added to the deer forest?—Partly, and partly on account of the depression of agriculture and the low rents—we have reduced the rents from time to time.

9944. You must see that it is obvious, if these figures are to be of any value, you ought to differentiate between the two?—I can give you the figures and you can differentiate for yourself. It is partly the one cause and partly the other.

9945. *The Chairman.*—You include losses of rent from absorption into the forest?—Partly.

9946. But unless you can make the distinction, where is the value of your statistics?—I can put in the books and documents themselves. Mrs Chisholm spends no less than £80 a month in wages. On her gross rental of £11,500, she paid last year £1740 in rates, taxes and parochial burdens. In work mostly done by contract and not included in the wages bill, such as building, planting, draining, fencing, embanking of rivers, making of roads, erection of bridges, Mrs Chisholm spent last year over £1970. This large sum, solely derived from the rental of deer forests, went mostly to the improvement of the agricultural parts of the estate, and the agricultural tenants are the first to recognise that no rents which they could pay would enable any proprietor to expend such large sums for their benefit. I need scarcely say that the above amounts do not nearly represent the total sum that is spent in the district on the shooting industry. During the season, which lasts from the 1st of August to the middle of October, numbers of extra men are employed at 4s. to 4s. 6d. per man per day, a man and horse earning not less than 7s. This labour is drawn from the small tenants of the surrounding district. The demand for labour, created by the deer forest industry, has had the effect of raising the rate of wages about 50 per cent. within the past thirty years. It happens not unfrequently that the crofter with a pony, during the shooting season, is able to earn six times the rent he pays for his croft. It is not easy for anyone intimately connected with the system of sport at present pursued in the Highlands to understand the agitation which has arisen against it. It is perfectly obvious, however, that this agitation arises amongst people at a great distance from the scene of the sporting industry,—people who understand nothing whatever of the conditions under which it is carried on, or of the localities devoted to it. They assume, for the purposes of their own argument, that the deer forests occupy a fertile tract which capital and labour would convert into one smiling field of golden grain. They carefully stop their ears when one attempts to tell them that this region never has been, and never will be, one in which an agricultural industry can succeed. When to a barren soil and a rigorous climate comes to be added the unprofitable return for any possible production of the land, a reasonable man will see that agriculture, which at present is bearing such trials in the most favoured localities, has become utterly impossible in the Highland wilds. The native Highlander takes quite kindly to the changed condition of things. There was a time, and that not very long ago, when hunting was his sole pursuit and means of livelihood. He lived on the produce of his bow and spear. Our earliest records in the Highlands — the sculptured stones—whilst bearing no traces of a ploughshare or even of a sheep-shears, except as a symbol of woman's art, exhibit many scenes from hunting life. The poems of Ossian are full of allusions to the chase. In the district in which I live, the songs of the common people reflect the same feeling. There is a story told in song of a nurse to one of the chiefs of Chisholm, who was, for some cause or another, condemned to banishment to the Laigh of Moray, and was granted any request she might like to make before leaving. Her request was to have a house erected on the scene of her banishment, in which she might live, the house to be made of timber from Strathglass. This request was complied with; but she had not been long there when she bewailed her sad lot in words to the effect that, although living in this house of Strathglass wood and beside a field of waving barley, larger than the people of Strathglass ever dreamt of, she could never be happy till she returned to the sight of the dun deer and the brown in the woods of Comar. The district is full of Gaelic place-names referring to hunting. The Glen of the Hinds, the "Stag's Hollow," and "Beinn-Fhionnlaidh" (Finlay's Hill).

9947. *Mr Sutherland.*—How do you translate these names?—I am not an authority on Gaelic.

9948. It means the Ox's Hollow, I may tell you?—I believe there is a conflict of opinion on that point. "Beinn-Fhionnlaidh"is an example, Finlay being a noted hunter in his day, of whom a story is told in the Notes to the "Lays of the Deer Forests," by Sobieski Stuart. The Highlander is not naturally an agriculturist. There is, in fact, plenty of evidence to show that he rather despised agriculture: he would not indulge in any kind of manual labour. Sir Walter Scott tells the story (printed along with the 1876 edition of Burt) of a Highland chief named Donald the Hammerer, who was so enraged at finding his son engaged in farming and directing farm labourers, that he pursued him with his sword. The son took refuge in his house and crept for safety under a bed. Donald followed, and, in the uncertain light, 'thinking his degenerate son had 'concealed himself in the bed clothes, made a deadly 'stab at his supposed son, but instead of killing him, his 'sword went through the heart of his old nurse, who was 'then near 80 years of age. After the unfortunate 'accident Donald became very religious.' With this natural taste for sport, the native Highlander in the hunting districts is only too pleased to find a con-

Beauly. John Brown Grant.

genial occupation and one for which his services are handsomely rewarded. After the pastoral industry fails, after the agricultural industry fails, he goes kindly back to hunting. Besides the wealth which sportsmen have brought into the Highlands, and which has built schools, endowed churches, made roads and bridges, introduced medical aid, improved dwellings and raised wages, the contact with men of wealth and education, from all parts of the world, has helped to widen the native's range of thought and gives him the self-reliance of the man who has measured himself with his superiors and is not ashamed of the place he takes beside them. No true sportsman would ever come to this country if he thought that the indulgence in his taste took bread from the mouth of a single individual. I am acquainted with a gentleman who, for the last thirty years, has taken a grouse moor or deer forest, year by year, in the Highlands of Scotland. We discussed this very matter, and he assured me that these were the sentiments of himself and his friends, who are also shooting tenants on a large scale. Wealthy men, as he remarked, could betake themselves anywhere, and not for all he possessed would he allow his sport interfere with a man's means of livelihood. On the other hand, no true sportsman would take a deer forest in which crofters were planted, knowing with the utmost certainty that a conflict as to their respective rights was bound to ensue. Whatever dispute might arise, the sportsman would get the worst of it, and the ground would ultimately be left to the crofter. His fate might then be described in the words of Macculloch (vol. 4. p. 116):—"The unconditional 'surrender of the lands to the tenantry would not enable 'them to enlarge their lots, nor prevent the further sub-'division; and a very few years would find them exactly 'in that state of which the improvement had been 'vainly attempted. And while the surrender would 'involve the ruin of the proprietor and of all those who 'live by his expenditure, it would be replaced by the 'gain of a few additional families, starving and propagat-'ing starvation, consuming without reproducing; objects 'of pity, incapable of improvement, without hope, and 'useless to the political community.'

(Signed) J. B. Grant.

14*th June* 1893.

9949. *The Chairman.*—Can you tell me what is the total area of land under forest on The Chisholm estate at present?—80,000 acres; that is an approximate estimate.

9950. That is quite sufficient for my purpose. How much is occupied otherwise of that estate?—There are 113,000 in the estate altogether.

9951. Of which 80,000 acres are under forest?—Yes.

9952. That leaves 33,000 acres: how is that occupied?—As sheep farms and by ordinary agricultural subjects; mixed sheep farms and agriculture.

9953. The Chisholm estate has a number of crofters?—Yes.

9954. How many?—Under £30 of rent, do you mean?

9955. Yes, I mean under £30 of rent?—Thirty or thirty-five.

9956. What is the average size of their holdings?—As regards rent, do you mean?

9957. No, as regards area, taking it roughly on the average, arable and grazing?—The principal number of crofters are just within a mile of this village. The whole estate has 900 acres; there are 400 acres of wood upon that place, and the rest of it, 500 acres, is devoted to that class of people.

9958. 500 acres divided among how many?—About forty tenants. They are not all crofters; the largest tenant pays £100 of rent, and it goes down to 2s. 6d.

9959. What I want you to tell me, if you can is, what is the average size of the crofter's holding?—I would say 5 or 6 acres of arable land, and in most cases a little bit of outrun of some kind or other.

9960. How many small farmers have you, paying a rent of about £100 or under?

Beauly. John Brown Grant.

9961. *Mr Gordon.*—You have not got a rental?—No, but the Valuation Roll is here. Roughly speaking, I would say 18 or 20.

9962. *The Chairman.*—I take your figures as approximate?—Yes, it must be so.

9963. How many large farms have you on the estate paying over £100?—Only two.

9964. What are their names?—One is Kerrow, occupied by Lord Tweedmouth.

9965. And the other?—The other is the farm of Comar, a grazing farm.

9966. Can you tell us the stocks on these farms?—Kerrow has 300 acres of arable land and 3000 acres of hill ground, and the sheep stock will be over 700.

9967. Then for Comar, what is your answer?—The part of Comar that I referred to is entirely grazing, and there is a stock of nearly 8000 sheep.

9968. How much arable?—There is not much arable at all on the bit I speak of; the arable part and the farm are now detached from the grazing part.

9969. What is become of it?—It is let to the former tenant of the hill.

9970. What is the extent of it?—54 acres.

9971. Who has it?—Mr Robertson.

9972. Is that land under rotation, or is it old arable?—It is under rotation.

9973. Is the arable land to which you referred on Kerrow under rotation, or is it old arable?—It is under rotation. Lord Tweedmouth is the tenant.

9974. Now you say the average rent of the 80,000 acres is 1s. 6d. an acre?—That is so.

9975. Is that taking together sporting rent and farm rent?—Yes, the whole thing.

9976. What is the average rent of the farms per acre?—The grazing rent?

9977. Well, take the grazing rent?—It differs in different farms a little, but the average would run from sixpence to a shilling.

9978. What is the average rent of the crofter?—For his arable ground the crofter would not pay more than 15s. an acre.

9979. And for his grazing?—I suppose it is in a way thrown in; it depends on circumstances.

9980. What is the average rent of the forest?—The average rent of the forest is about 1s. 6d. an acre.

9981. Is not there a sporting rent for the farm?—Yes, besides.

9982. What is the sporting rent per acre?—Well, take Kerrow for instance; the sporting rent of Kerrow is £150. You may take that as a typical case.

9983. That sporting rent is derived from grouse moor and deer?—It is occupied by sheep, of course; we would call it a grouse shooting.

9984. Then the rent of Comar?—The rent of the part occupied by sheep,—I should say that Mr Winans pays for that, while occupied by sheep, nearly a shilling an acre, for the shooting.

9985. For grouse?—For deer.

9986. Is there a grouse rent upon it?—No, there are no grouse.

9987. *Mr Gordon.*—There are twenty-five separate tenants or tenancies in the parish of Kilmorack, and forty-one in the parish of Kiltarlity?—That will perhaps work out pretty nearly to what I said.

9988. Yes, I think it bears you out.

9989. *The Chairman.*—Could you give us the grazing rent plus the sporting rent on the sheep farms, per acre?—I said already that the sporting rent that Mr Winans paid on this sheep farm was about a shilling an acre on the farm of Comar, and the grazing rent I would put at sixpence.

9990. Making together 1s. 6d.?—Yes, 1s. 6d. That is the figure I gave already.

9991. Then the rent of the forest is 1s. 6d?—Yes.

9992. So they are equal?—Yes.

9993. You have said there are 80,000 acres of forest and I would like you to give your attention to the following particulars, namely, the state of the forest in 1883. What was the number of acres then in Erchless Forest?—Between 7000 and 8000 acres.

9994. Well, I will give you the figures, as I don't

Beauly.

John Brown Grant.

know that I can ask you for them right off; the figure is 12,670 in Lord Napier's Report?—That includes more ground than the forest ground. It includes the whole estate of Erchless.

9995. Lord Napier's Report gives the total forest land in 1883 as 57,800 acres?—Yes.

9996. May I take that as approximately correct?—At the time.

9997. Yes, in 1883?—I have no doubt it may be so; I was not connected with the estate at that time.

9998. Accepting these figures as approximately correct, may we take it that the forest land has been increased by something like 20,000 acres?—I have no doubt that is so.

9999. Can you give me the dates of the different additions?—Well, I think that very year Knockfin was cleared, that is 20,000 acres. It was after 1883, at any rate.

10,000. Was there any other place added?—It was about that time that Mullardoch and Coire-nan-cuilean were added.

10,001. What is the extent of these?—5000 or 6000 acres.

10,002. Any other addition?—There was Mauld,—the upper part of Mauld with perhaps 3000 acres.

10,003. Any others?—I think that is all.

10,004. That makes a total addition of 28,000 acres, and if you add 60,000 to 28,000 you get 88,000?—57,000 I think you said to begin with.

10,005. Yes, 57,800?—Well, you see, they included a part of Erchless that is not forest at all, so that it would probably come back to my figures.

10,006. That may account for it. At that time, 1883, all these sheep farms, I suppose, were being successfully carried on as such; the bad times had not come?—Well, I don't know if they were carried on successfully; I scarcely think they would be at that time.

10,007. Were these additions made simply to extend the forest or in order to make what was forest properly available?—The farm of Knockfin was advertised, and failed to find a tenant. Lord Tweedmouth was the shooting tenant at the time; Mr Winans desired to become the shooting tenant, and he began by taking the grazings like an ordinary sheep grazier. No other man could be found to take it.

10,008. So the history of it is this, that from the difficulty of letting these lands they gradually became absorbed into forests?—That is so, exactly.

10,009. You said that most of the green patches had in former days been shielings?—Most of the upper ground.

10,010. Can you give us a notion of the extent of these shielings, or can you tell me first of all how many of them there were?—I could; I will put in the rent-rolls at different periods.

10,011. If you please, and the extent of these shielings?—Yes.

10,012. These shielings were for a length of time during the summer occupied by animals and those taking charge of them?—I have no doubt that is so.

10,013. Did the persons there not sometimes stay altogether?—Well, of course I cannot say, but, judging from the place where you find the remains of the shielings I would say that they could not occupy them during the winter season.

10,014. Are some of them at a low level and some at a high level?—No, they are all mostly high.

10,015. You say that on The Chisholm estate an experiment was made of planting tenants?—Taking tenants back who had previously left.

10,016. At a rent of from £100 to £120?—I think so, but I would require to refer to the documents.

10,017. That is what you say in the statement?—I have not said it in the statement exactly; I said it in reply to a question.

10,018. But at any rate the rent was above £30?—Oh yes, in every case.

10,019. To what cause in particular do you attribute the failure of that experiment?—I think there was a complication of causes.

10,020. The date is long before our present period; it is thirty years ago?—Yes, that is so.

10,021. And we may take it that times were fairly good, perhaps. To what cause do you attribute the failure?—I don't know, I am sure; agriculture has been going down ever since.

10,022. There was no particular depression in 1860?—Well, no; in fact things rose I think up to 1872, which was the beginning of the depression.

10,023. Why should that experiment have failed, do you think?—It must certainly be owing to the land. To begin with, they had not capital.

10,024. That is not the fault of the climate or of the soil; it is the fault of the people?—Quite so.

10,025. May we take it that that experiment does not afford any guide to us either one way or the other?—Well, you must judge according to your own opinion; it is not a matter on which I am offering any opinion.

10,026. It is either a fact from which we may get a valuable inference, or it is not. Up to this point you have not furnished us with the means of using it as an inference?—I have said, of course, that the people did not possess capital to begin with; they may not have possessed the necessary skill, and the subject was perhaps unsuitable for experiment.

10,027. Or perhaps not. Don't you think, when the experiment was made, every endeavour would be used to put them on ground where they would have a good chance?—Well, it was the best chance they could have got for the purpose.

10,028. Quite so. But your information, either historical or experimental, does not enable you to say whether the causes of their failure were such as should prevent the experiment from being again made?—Oh yes, I say that. I say the causes of their failure are such, in my mind, as to deter anyone from making the experiment again.

10,029. Don't you think that, so far as your information goes, that experiment does not afford a guide either one way or the other?—Well, taking men in the same position, and putting them back there again, you would certainly have the same failure.

10,030. But suppose you had men with capital?—Well, of course you would vary the conditions.

10,031. Of course, if you had the very same causes, you would produce the same effect. But suppose the experiment made under somewhat more favourable circumstances?—If you have the circumstances more favourable, you alter the conditions altogether.

10,032. In other words, this example you have given us is not a valuable guide one way or another?—I may say that we supplied them with capital, which they never repaid in some instances.

10,033. You have no personal knowledge of the experiment?—I have personal knowledge to this extent, that in one case, at any rate, there was a pretty large capital supplied, and it was exhausted very quickly.

10,034. What was the capital?—£550 was supplied

10,035. Was some of it not repaid?—Not a penny.

10,036. *Mr Sutherland.*—What were the conditions?—No conditions at all, except that the money was lent and not repaid.

10,037. There were conditions of interest, were there not?—The money was lent in the form of the proprietor of the estate of Chisholm signing his name to a bill or cash credit with the bank, and very soon afterwards the money was paid up by him.

10,038. Were these persons holding under nineteen years' leases?—Yes.

10,039. You are only speaking at present of one individual case?—Yes.

10,040. Was there anything particular about that case?—Nothing whatever exceptional.

10,041. May I ask the name of the man you refer to?—Well, I would rather not give the name.

10,042. Oh, I don't press it. Is it the fact the land on which this experiment was made was about the worst on the estate?—It is about the best in Glencannich.

10,043. Where was the place?—At this point (indicating position on map).

Beauly.

John Brown Grant.

10,044. Can you give us the variations of population on The Chisholm estate during the last fifty years?—No, I have no data to go upon except the rent-rolls; I can show you the variations in the tenants from them.

10,045. But you cannot show the growth or decrease of the population?—No, except that I can tell you the number of holdings at different times, and the names of the tenants.

10,046. That impinges on the evidence in regard to the increase of population in the parish of Kilmorack?—Well, it does not alter it altogether.

10,047. *Mr Gordon.*—If you could give us the number of families, and take each family at five, you would come pretty near the population?—Well, I could do that from the rent-roll.

10,048. *Mr Macleod.*—What you have endeavoured to show is that there has been no decrease in the population on The Chisholm estate; and how you get at that is by giving us the whole population of Kilmorack. Now, it is hardly fair to give us that alone.—I have given you besides the number of tenancies; that is the only other information I have.

10,049. What object had you, might I ask, in mentioning the population of Kilmorack?—I apprehend that this Commission is generally interested in deer forests all round.

10,050. Your statement, as I understand, was for The Chisholm estate?—I am quite prepared to say there was an increase all round.

10,051. *The Chairman.*—I would like if you could give us figures confined to The Chisholm estate; but perhaps you are not able to do that?—I give you all the figures I could get.

10,052. *Mr Gordon.*—You could perhaps give us the number of resting tenants in 1850, 1860, and 1870, and the corresponding number in 1893, and if you deduct the one from the other, and multiply the difference by five, you will arrive very near the number?—I can do that very easily.

10,053. *The Chairman.*—You spoke of expenditure by Mr Winans—£300 per month on labour, and expenditure by The Chisholm estate management £80 per month on wages; is that expenditure going on just now?—Yes, at the present moment.

10,054. Of course that expenditure only effeirs to the benefit of a very limited number?—Well, I have told the wages per week.

10,055. What are the wages?—From 18s. to 35s.

10,056. Paid by Mr Winans?—Yes.

10,057. What are the wages paid by the estate?—They run from 15s. to 21s. per week.

10,058. Are those wages spent upon people whom we might call crofters or small tenants?—They are mostly spent upon regular labourers.

10,059. Servants?—I don't mean engaged by the year, but simply by the week in a great many cases; and the people who earn these wages are drawn, of course, from the crofting population.

10,060. Now you say that no true sportsman would take land where there are crofters?—Deer forests I referred to.

10,061. I mean deer forests. You are aware that there are a considerable number of forests within the crofting area where there are crofters?—I am not acquainted with them. I know there are such, but I have no acquaintance with them.

10,062. According to your opinion, the existence of a deer forest is incompatible with the neighbourhood of crofters?—Crofters within its area.

10,063. Or on its verge?—If they are fenced out, of course, they do no harm on the verge. If they are fenced out from the deer, and the deer from them, there is no harm done.

10,064. Unless they are fenced out it does not do to have crofters near a deer forest?—Quite so.

10,065. Now is it not your opinion that a considerable tract of this ground of which we have been speaking might be profitably occupied by small tenants?—No, that is not my opinion.

10,066. Do you extend that observation to the whole of the land now under consideration?—Taking it as a whole, I do.

10,067. As a whole you do?—Yes.

10,068. Is there no part of land in one of these glens that might be usefully occupied?—You might occupy a very small part, and destroy the value of the whole of the remainder.

10,069. Well, suppose you did occupy a very small part, how many crofters could you accommodate, taking the average size of The Chisholm holdings?—Well, you have, I think, about 54 acres of land in Glencannich that had been cultivated—that showed traces of cultivation. That land is in detached pieces, 18 acres here, 10 there, and so on; you could not plant more than one crofter in each place.

10,070. How many could you plant in all?—I don't think you could plant more than five at the very outside.

10,071. With holdings something like the small Chisholm holdings?—Exactly, that is in Glencannich.

10,072. Well, in any other glen?—At Knockfin you have 80 acres of land.

10,073. Old arable?—Old arable.

10,074. Presently under cultivation?—Part of it.

10,075. How much of it is old arable?—80 acres.

10,076. How many crofters could you plant there?—There is no great hill ground available there for them; it is wood altogether at the back. There is no outrun; you would require to give a man 20 acres of arable land.

10,077. Allowing for that, you could plant four or five there?—Yes, four or five.

10,078. Any other spot?—No, that exhausts the whole.

10,079. Now I pass from the forests to the farms. There are two farms you say?—Yes.

10,080. Did you mention the extent of them?—Kerrow has 300 acres of arable and 3000 acres of hill.

10,081. I suppose a considerable part of that land could be used for extension of crofters' grazing?—Oh yes, you might cut it up. There are no crofters near-hand it, of course.

10,082. There may not be: that is not the question before us. Is there some part of that hill capable of cultivation?—I am not aware of any part that is. It does not look like it, but I have not been through it.

10,083. Take the farm as a whole. Is there old arable on it?—It is all under rotation. About 80 acres were brought from moor into cultivation by Lord Tweedmouth.

10,084. When was that?—Under a lease which he entered upon, I think, at Whitsunday 1871.

10,085. The reclamation has been since then?—Yes. It is from twelve to twenty years ago.

10,086. The total extent of it was how much?—About 300 acres at present.

10,087. And that was commenced in 1870?—After that.

10,088. Under a lease?—Under a lease.

10,089. What has been the result of that?—The result is that the farm is now 300 acres.

10,090. Has the reclamation proved a success?—You must ask Lord Tweedmouth.

10,091. Don't you know?—I don't know.

10,092. Is it under rotation of crop at present?—It is.

10,093. The whole of it?—The whole of it.

10,094. And has been under rotation, to your knowledge, for a number of years past?—Yes.

10,095. As ordinary farm land?—Ordinary arable farm land. Whether it is a success or not is quite a different matter.

10,096. Now take the other farm: what is it?—The purely grazing farm of Comar—Upper Comar, at the head of the glen. There is no arable there at all.

10,097. But is there old arable?—No, there never was any cultivation there that a man can see. It is very high ground.

10,098. Some of it is high enough, certainly. There is land there that would do for grazing purposes?—Splendid grazing.

10,099. Is it exceptionally good grazing?—I believe it is considered to be exceptionally good.

Beauly. John Brown Grant.

10,100. The best on the estate?—Well, I would not say that; perhaps the head of Glen Affaric is the best.

10,101. But at all events it is exceedingly good?—It is very good.

10,102. You mentioned illicit distillation: is that going on at present?—No.

10,103. And has not been going on for some time?—No.

10,104. *Mr Shaw Stewart.*—You said just now, in reply to the Chairman, that there were certain parts of Glencannich and Knockfin where four or five crofters might be placed in each of these places?—Not in each.

10,105. You said four or five in Glencannich, and four or five in Knockfin?—That is Sheriff Brand's suggestion, roughly.

10,106. Have you taken into consideration whether they would be able to cultivate the land to profit?—They could not possibly cultivate the land to anything like the profit that it now yields. If they got the land for nothing, and were supplied with capital and everything, they might make a living out of it. It depends entirely on what the meaning of the word profit is.

10,107. Well, perhaps it is difficult to define, but in considering the word profit I don't exclude payment of rent, because I am not proposing that they should get the land for nothing?—If they have to pay the present rental, they certainly could not cultivate it to profit, or anything like it.

10,108. Taking the present rental roughly at 1s. 6d. an acre?—That is taking the whole 80,000 acres.

10,109. Put it in this way. Could they occupy the land to profit, including the stocking, payment of rent,—a moderate rent—and repayment of any loan that might be advanced to them?—They could not occupy the land to profit and pay any rent at all.

10,110. You mean that no one, however skilled and experienced, could cultivate any part of these lands except with an outlay of capital which they could not expect entirely to recover?—That is so; the interest of any capital would kill any rent. They could not possibly pay both rent and interest on capital.

10,111. I suppose the most promising arable lands are near the bottom of the valleys?—That is so.

10,112. And the ground rises very sharply from the valley?—Yes.

10,113. To a considerable height on either side?—Yes.

10,114. And therefore the rays of the sun do not reach the best part of the land except during a very short time of the day?—In summer.

10,115. You spoke of four floods happening during the seven years previous to the 1892 flood. Besides destroying the bridges, did the floods bring down much debris on to those low-lying lands?—Yes, they did.

10,116. And damaged them to some extent?—Yes, every time.

10,117. You said that where there was one shepherd before under the sheep farms there are now two foresters?—That is my opinion.

10,118. Is that roughly speaking?—That is roughly speaking.

10,119. Well then, with regard to the fall of rents that you have told us of, you gave us the dates of the fall from 1860 up to the present time?—Yes.

10,119*a*. Is it not the case that in 1860 sheep farming was very profitable?—Very likely it was; I don't know of my own knowledge.

10,120. And that probably a good deal of the increase is due to the decrease in the value of sheep?—Yes, a good deal may be due to that. I may mention, although of course it does not afford you any great comparison [I gave these particular figures for another purpose, and only referred to them incidentally], that the fall in the agricultural subjects, the purely agricultural subjects which are still agricultural would be about 35 per cent. during that period.

10,121. That is all over?—All over. The rents now are 35 per cent. less than in 1860. In 1860 I find an agricultural rent-roll of £5000, and in 1893 I find an agricultural rent-roll of £1500. Of course the difference is shooting rents.

10,122. The drift of your statement is that all the possible arable land in these forests is so strictly limited that if the forest industry were destroyed there would be no chance of any occupants of those lands getting wages from any kind of labour?—That is so.

10,123. Now I want to ask you a question with regard to the crofters that you already have. You gave us the size of their holdings as about 4 to 5 acres, with a little outrun?—Yes, in some cases; in other cases they have no outrun.

10,124. Would crofters thrive better there if they had a larger extent of ground?—I will put it in this way; if instead of those forty crofters with 4 or 5 acres of land, there were twenty with 8 or 10 acres apiece, would they do better?—In the present crofting district, do you mean?

10,125. Yes?—I daresay they would; they would be bigger men. But they make no complaint at present, and would be glad to take more land if they could get it.

10,126. But they applied to the Crofters Commission?—Yes, a number of them did, and we asked others to apply who are under lease.

10,127. Are many of them in arrear?—Not very many.

10,128. But have you any decided opinion whether in that particular district fewer crofters would do better than the number that are there now?—I have a difficulty there. The crofters are within a mile of this place where you are sitting. The nearest point of the deer forest district is 17 miles from here. We can scarcely compare what they are here with what they might be up there. They are doing very well here, and I think if you were to put them up there they would fail entirely.

10,129. I understand that the bulk of them are near this place?—They are just within a mile of you.

10,130. I am speaking solely of the district within a mile of this. Would a reduced number of crofters thrive better where they are than the present number?—Certainly, they would like themselves to add to the holdings where they are, but they find it very difficult under the present conditions.

10,131. Under the present conditions you would have no available land to give them?—None whatever.

10,132. And the only way of making these crofters more prosperous would be to remove some of them?—We do not wish to remove them; they are fairly prosperous at present. I don't say they are not prosperous; they are doing very well.

10,133. You consider they are doing well?—They make no complaint, and they pay their rents.

10,134. *The Chairman.*—You have no complaint to make against them?—None whatever.

10,135. *Mr Shaw Stewart.*—Do I understand that the whole extension of the forest since 1883 was due to the impossibility of letting the land as sheep farms?—That is mainly so.

10,136. *Mr Sutherland.*—You began, Mr Grant, by referring to evidence regarding The Chisholm estate that was led before Lord Napier's Commission?—I am not sure but I took it from the Report of Lord Napier's Commission.

10,137. You are aware, of course, that Lord Napier's Commission reported, recommending that the afforestment of land should cease?—There was some remark of that kind.

10,138. A definite recommendation?—I am not aware of the terms of it.

10,139. You are aware that there was a recommendation to that effect?—I have heard it stated.

10,140. And you have admitted in your evidence that since that date 28,000 acres of The Chisholm estate have been made into deer forest?—Yes.

10,141. Would we be justified, then, in supposing that the recommendations of Lord Napier's Commission were departed from in this case?—I am not prepared to admit that it was a recommendation to us.

10,142. It was a general recommendation and condemnation?—We did nothing in defiance of any recommendation to us.

10,143. But to the legislature?—I am not aware to the legislature.

Beauly.

John Brown Grant.

10,144. You stated also, I think, that certain lands on The Chisholm estate were not in possession of crofters within the present century?—Yes, that is so.

10,145. Is the whole of The Chisholm property under the Crofters Act?—Yes.

10,146. Are you aware that the placing of it under the Crofters Act depends upon its being in possession of crofters within eighty years?—Well, in the county, of course.

10,147. Every parish is judged by itself?—But we do not occupy the whole of one parish.

10,148. But you occupy, perhaps, several parishes—more than one?—Yes, we do. There are a great many tenants more than ourselves.

10,149. That would otherwise have made them crofting parishes?—Certainly.

10,150. So you think it is not the fact that they were crofters?—Not in our ground.

10,151. So that you think that within this century there were no crofters on The Chisholm estate, or the part you refer to?—Yes, the part I refer to; I refer to Knockfin particularly.

10,152. And what were the places you exclude from it?—Knockfin alone. I don't know what you would call crofters; of course in the other parts they were paying over £30 of rent.

10,153. There would be no general ground upon which the Commission would decide whether they were crofters or not. Then you gave us some statistics as to the number of tenants on the estate from 1800 down to the present time, which showed that in 1800 there were on The Chisholm estate eleven tenants?—That is on the present deer forest ground.

10,154. And that The Chisholm estate at present has eighty-nine tenants?—Eighty-nine or ninety-nine, was it not?

10,155. So that there has been an increase from eleven to eighty-nine tenants?—No, that is not a fair comparison; I say on the whole estate now. The former figure refers to the deer forest part, and the second to the whole estate. But you have the grounds for a comparison, because I gave you figures applicable to the whole estate at the earlier period as well.

10,156. You refer at one time to the area under deer, and the next time to the area altogether?—Quite so.

10,157. That makes it impossible to follow out the comparison?—No, you can compare the areas.

10,158. I must pass then altogether away from that, which is an important point?—It will be cleared up when you come to read my statement.

10,159. I would like to clear it up now; this is the important place to clear it up?—Very well. I said that the rent roll of 1687 showed that the whole estate of Chisholm was let in fifteen separate holdings.

10,160. Well, that will do for my present purpose. That refers to the whole of The Chisholm estate?—Yes.

10,161. And at the present moment the number is eighty-nine?—Yes.

10,162. Which shows that the tenancy has increased from fifteen in 1687 to eighty-nine in 1893?—The tenancy, from my information in the rent-rolls, has increased from fifteen separate tenancies in 1687 to ninety-nine in the present year, with eighty-six different tenants.

10,163. What I wish to know is whether these fifteen tenancies represent all the families on The Chisholm estate in 1687?—I can give you the document.

10,164. What is your opinion?—My opinion is that it was not so at all. My opinion is that it was let to tacksmen who had sub-tenants.

10,165. So that it does not give us any indication of the number of families that lived there at that time?—No, it simply shows the system of letting the estate.

10,166. Then you quoted Mr Macculloch. Do you know anything about Mr Macculloch?—He is dead a long time.

10,167. Was he a farmer?—I don't know.

10,168. Was he a Highlander?—It looks like it, having a 'Mac' to his name.

Beauly.

John Brown Grant.

10,169. Is that all you know about his being a Highlander?—I read his book.

10,170. And you quoted it very largely. But you do not know whether he had any practical knowledge of agriculture or not?—I cannot speak as to the extent of his knowledge.

10,171. He told you that sheep could be 'cultivated,' did he not?—I forget, really.

10,172. That was the quotation from him that you gave us?—That sheep would do better than the system in existence at the present day.

10,173. I don't lay great stress on it, but as you are quoting him I wish to point that out to you. You quoted upon his authority that sheep farmers were introduced with the necessary skill and capital; he recommended that that should be done?—Yes.

10,174. They were introduced?—Yes.

10,175. We need not go into the circumstances under which they were introduced, but what is the result?—There are a good many of them who have made fortunes.

10,176. And are they making fortunes now, do you think?—No.

10,177. That is a test of Mr Macculloch's skill as a political economist?—He was perfectly right, for a time.

10,178. But he is wrong now?—Yes.

10,179. So that is a good test?—He may be right again.

10,180. Possibly; but he is being superseded now as an effete authority?—There is nothing effete about it. He was an authority in every way.

10,181. Will you take the Report of Lord Napier's Commission as a test?—As to the value of sheep? Well, I am not familiar with the whole of its contents.

10,182. It made certain recommendations, you know, upon which followed the Crofters Act, which was an attempt to go back upon the policy advocated by Mr Macculloch?—That may be so; I don't know.

10,183. Then with regard to the stocks of sheep farms. I think we had it yesterday in evidence that Mr Winans was a sheep farmer to begin with?—Sometimes he was.

10,184. And the admission was that he failed, and therefore changed it into a deer forest?—He cleared the sheep away.

10,185. He ceased to be a sheep farmer, and became a sportsman?—Yes.

10,186. That is another evidence in your opinion, is it not, that the sheep farming is a failure?—I have already said that at the present moment sheep farming does not pay.

10,187. Then with regard to this particular case of Mr Winans, you gave in evidence which a little surprized me, but I have no doubt you are right that the sheep grazing rent, plus the sporting rent, is after all the rent that you get for the deer forest?—Yes, but at the present we are unable to let sheep grazing at any rent, on a large scale.

10,188. But in the places where sheep farms are now, you have got a grazing rent plus a sporting rent?—In the places which are let as sheep farms, yes.

10,189. And they paid rent to the same amount as you get from the subjects as a deer forest?—Yes.

10,190. So that to the landlord there is no increase in the annual value?—But it follows that when these places go out of lease we cannot let them as sheep farms. I refer to the rent which has been paid.

10,191. Are you aware then if that applies to other places as well as to The Chisholm estate?—I have no doubt that localities similarly situated may find the same difficulties.

10,192. You referred also to the standard of comfort?—Yes.

10,193. I understand you stated that for the purpose of making a comparison between what was the case then and what would be likely to happen now?—Quite so.

10,194. But of course you are perfectly willing now

to make allowance for changed conditions; if the conditions were different, the result might be rationally expected to be somewhat different?—I simply wished to show that there has been no great injury caused to the individual as far as our part of the country is concerned.

10,195. But do you attribute the increase in the prosperity and the raising of the standard of comfort in any way to the fact that deer foresting was introduced?—I do, to some extent: it has raised wages.

10,196. In Beauly, for instance?—In Beauly it has done a great deal of good. You will find the men in Beauly quite ready to say that they derive a great part of their income from deer forests, and would be very sorry to see them put down.

10,197. And do you think that with a sub-division of land more than we have at present that would be increased to a greater extent?—No, they will tell you the very reverse.

10,198. Supposing, instead of Mr Winans and his dependents, there were thirty or forty crofters' families such as you see down here, don't you think that the trade of Beauly would be very largely increased?—It would be the exact opposite.

10,199. It depends more upon the wealth of one individual customer to the shopkeepers than upon the productive wealth of thirty or forty?—No, Mr Winans distributes his wealth to his dependents, and they in turn distribute it to the shopkeepers.

10,200. And how many of his dependents are there?—I should say that on that particular ground we have been referring to on Mrs Chisholm's estate, Mr Winans will employ regularly, at the wages I have mentioned, between thirty and forty men from year's end to year's end, some of them with families, and all occupying good houses. They are very respectable men indeed.

10,201. And you think that the number that are there now should not be increased?—I have told you what I thought could be planted there as crofters occupying it.

10,202. And do you think that the inhabitants of the surrounding towns would not benefit proportionally?—There need be no great increase in the population; these men would have to be displaced; they would either have to go away or you may turn them into crofters, but they would be no better off.

10,203. Therefore it is better for a man to be a labourer to another than a farmer for himself?—It depends on how much he gets.

10,204. But we are supposing he is put into a position with a reasonably fair prospect of success?—Taking the place as it stands, I say he is better off just now getting 18s. to 35s. a week and getting the whole croft, than being dependent on the croft solely.

10,205. Are you of opinion that any of your small holders would have a bank account?—No doubt.

10,206. Do you know any labourers that have bank accounts?—Yes.

10,207. On Mr Winans' estate?—Yes; I am not very sure; I could not tell you.

10,208. You also spoke of the destitution in 1817?—I found that from the report on the estate.

10,209. Do you know what the general state of Scotland was in 1817?—No.

10,210. Are you aware that there was a famine all over Scotland at that time?—Very probably.

10,211. So that the case of this glen would not be very different from other parts of Scotland at that time?—If you say so, I am quite willing to believe it.

10,212. I may mention that I was quite recently reading of it in Fraser-Tytler's History of Scotland, which speaks of the distress being general and reaching as far as Ayr. The report which you have referred to is one which was written by a factor?—I think so. He appears to have been acting as agent for the trustee.

10,213. Granting him to have had the best motives in the world, do you think he was likely to be quite unprejudiced?—He was quite unprejudiced.

10,214. What succeeded his report? Was that about the time people were being cleared off generally?—I am not sure.

10,215. Is that not the date at which sheep farming tenants were introduced into Scotland?—No, sheep farming was introduced before.

10,216. It may have been different here, but I am sure that in other parts of the Highlands my recollection is that it was about that time that sheep farming was introduced. You also quoted Mr Skene. He is undoubtedly a high authority, and I think, you say, he has stated with regard to this locality that it is fit only for hunting and for the nurture of a warlike people?—Yes.

10,217. They served an apprenticeship there; and do you think they are very warlike now, those who are there?—Oh, I don't know; they will defend their own rights, I daresay, if you come to attack them.

10,218. But I suppose you would not like them to cultivate any sort of warlike spirit now. We live in different times. Then with regard to the crops there, you heard the statements that were made regarding meal mills used?—Yes.

10,219. Have you any reason to doubt the truth of that statement?—Not the least.

10,220. Would they erect a mill if there was nothing for it to do, do you think?—This mill has been in existence from time immemorial, and it is the best in the whole countryside; and it is still there.

10,221. And a reasonable inference is that there was some corn to grind?—There was, of course; it was kept employed.

10,222. But your remarks must apply to a much wider area than Glencannich?—It applies to the tract lying east and west of it.

10,223. And notwithstanding that we had evidence of the existence of seven mills in Strathglass?—My remarks apply to the present deer forest tract; you do not find a mill in that at all.

10,224. Were there mills, do you know, in the olden time?—No, there is no evidence to show that. There was no mill in Glencannich nor in Glen Affaric.

10,225. You also referred to the sweeping away of bridges. I have no doubt bridges were swept away there, but you are aware that in 1892 Bonar-Bridge was swept away?—That is the one year I referred to.

10,226. And several other bridges that had stood for nearly a century were swept away?—Yes.

10,227. So that the sweeping away of the bridges proves no more there than in other places?—Well, I had just finished rebuilding the bridges in Glencannich when they were swept away again.

10,228. The greater part of them are wooden bridges?—Yes; there are some stone bridges, but the most of them are wooden.

10,229. You would not say that floods there are more frequent than in other parts of the Highlands?—Yes, I should say floods in Glencannich are more frequent than any place that I am acquainted with in the Highlands.

10,230. You also said that the people round about here were interested in the maintaining of deer forests, and you advanced a proof of that which is a very concrete one, viz., that they had returned yourself to the County Council. But might they not have returned you on your personal merits, quite apart from your connection with deer forests?—It may be so.

10,231. So that it is possible it might not be an argument at all of theirs in favour of deer forests?—I never used it as any argument.

10,232. Then the question of the agricultural rent has been gone into already. You referred to the £1740 paid in rates?—Yes.

10,233. But you are aware upon what ground rates are paid; rates are not paid by individuals?—We pay that amount, I know.

10,234. It is not heads that are assessed, but subjects?—We pay that upon our rental.

10,235. I don't doubt it. But why do you claim as a virtue that which you do under compulsion of a statute?—There is this to be said about it. If you

Beauly. John Brown Grant.

destroy that rental, you are bound to increase the rating on the other parts of the district.

10,236. The rating is on value, not on rental?—You must increase the rate per £ on the other parts of the district if you take away our rental.

10,237. But the intention is to increase the value by putting the land to the best possible use?—Well, I have expressed the opinion that you could not possibly increase the value by destroying the deer forest.

10,238. But the intention is not to take away value, but to increase it, and in that case part of your objection would be overcome?—Oh, certainly, if that is possible.

10,239. Would you not admit that the occupation of the land by small crofters would produce higher rents than one sporting tenant pays?—No, I would not admit that.

10,240. Do you know the nature of the ground upon which these people were planted when they were taken away out of these glens?—I know that James Sutherland Chisholm, when he came from America, found some of them away,—some may have been his own relations,—and they had been away for some time. They made an appeal to him that they should come back to their native glens; he was one of the most kind-hearted men alive, and he just planted them there. It was partly from personal grounds, and partly from his sympathetic nature that he made the experiment.

10,241. Taking the case of the Highlands all over, you are aware, no doubt, from your own observation, that they were planted down upon land which was of very little value, and that their industry made it what it is worth to-day?—This particular land was the very best in Glencannich, land that a witness yesterday described as a sort of garden. I don't say it was good land at all, but it was the best available.

10,242. The point was as to the £1740 paid in rates; and what I wish to ask you is, that whoever possessed the land would have to pay that?—It would be spread over the whole parish, of course. Supposing anybody possessed land at no rent at all, of course the other ratepayers in the parish would have to make up the difference.

10,243. You understand that rates are levied upon value?—But if you destroy value of one part, you put the rates more heavily on the remainder.

10,244. Just so, if you destroy the value; but if you increase the value?—Of course, if you increase the value, it is just the reverse; but that is a supposition.

10,245. It is a supposition on your part that we will decrease it?—I am not supposing anything at all.

10,246. Then you said Mrs Chisholm spent over £1900 last year in improving the agricultural value of the estate?—Yes.

10,247. That is simply adding to her capital account?—But she gets no return for that expenditure.

10,248. But it is her own property?—Yes, putting it into buildings.

10,249. So she is simply investing so much money for the benefit of her own capital account?—Yes, but for the benefit of the existing tenants.

10,250. Granted, but a banker does the same for the benefit of his customers?—A banker expects some interest; we get none.

10,251. You also referred to the shooting industry, and the deer forest industry, and the sporting industry; in what sense do you claim it to be an industry?—I claim any occupation to be an industry in which you find a large number of men engaged in employment which affords them regular wages.

10,252. Is it a very industrious occupation to go out and shoot?—Well, the sportsman's job is to do the work.

10,253. It is the part of the men who attend that I am referring to?—It is the men's part that I refer to as an industry.

10,254. Then they are the industrious people?—Yes.

10,255. You said that the native Highlander took kindly to that state of things?—Yes.

10,256. And you said that when the pastoral industry failed, and when the agricultural industry failed, they took to hunting. You did not mean that the people took to hunting themselves?—I said they found a very profitable employment; they earned their wages at it. I did not mean for a moment that they took to hunting for themselves.

Beauly. John Brown Grant.

10,257. I thought you tried to connect the past with the present. So you think they went out in the past to hunt as gillies?—I have no knowledge of the past beyond reading from books.

10,258. I thought you said they were addicted to hunting?—So they were; the gillie takes a very intense delight in his share of the sport.

10,259. I thought you referred to their qualities in the olden time?—It is the fact that they have that instinct and partly that training about them that makes them valuable.

10,260. But the instinct is got by indulging in sport in a very different way; the conditions are very much changed?—In some respects; but we find exactly the same kind of thing in the present day—great hunting in Mar and great hunting in Glen-Strathfarrar.

10,261. That is previous to the advent of the modern sportsman and the Game Laws?—We don't know very much about Game Laws in this part of the country.

10,262. You also expressed the fear that sub-division might take place?—I am not aware: did I express a fear?

10,263. I have no doubt that was a slip of memory on your part; you are aware that sub-division is strictly prohibited, and that the prohibition is quite effectually carried out at present?—I think it was a quotation that I introduced.

10,264. You are aware that it is prevented?—There was always an attempt made to prevent it, but yet it goes on.

10,265. You do not mean to say that the Crofters Commission allows it to take place now? I could bring instances before you in which very drastic efforts were made to prevent it?—Mr Mackintosh, the factor on Lord Macdonald's property, tells me that in spite of everything he can do it takes place.

10,266. We have now a legal machinery to prevent it?—The machinery always existed, but the difficulty was to put it into operation.

10,267. But you do not contemplate that the present tribunal is to carry it out?—You had quite efficient machinery before; you have just as much difficulty in putting the present machinery into operation as you had in the olden time. You would have as much odium attaching to an eviction now as before.

10,268. But don't you see it is a very different thing when a man has a direct pecuniary interest in not carrying it out and as compared with an impartial tribunal?—I think we saw the operation before in the same way.

10,269. But do you know of your own knowledge that it has been violated since 1886?—Oh, we do not permit it on this estate.

10,270. But since 1886 do you know of it?—No, I do not, of my own knowledge.

10,271. I was very much struck by the attitude you seemed to take up. You generally deny that agriculture was carried on under favourable conditions or with favourable results while the people were in these glens?—Yes.

10,272. And yet you made the amount of land they cultivated the criterion of the suitability of the land for present occupation: do you see anything contradictory in that?—I do not admit any suitability for present occupation: I say it is not suitable for present occupation.

10,273. But you admit that it was under cultivation before?—It shows signs of cultivation.

10,274. And you have the benefit of your own sight, have you not?—Certainly.

10,275. And you see the marks there still?—To the extent I have mentioned.

10,276. And is the land made more suitable in your opinion in any way by the existence of these places?—I have said, of course, that these green spots add to the value for sheep, and also for deer.

10,277. And if more were made so, it would still more increase the value?—I have no doubt every spot available would do so.

10,278. Did you ever know a sheep farmer to reclaim land?—Yes.

10,279. Where?—In Sutherlandshire; at Bighouse, for instance, the sheep farmer reclaimed a great deal of land.

10,280. With the landlord's money?—Very likely.

10,281. But did you know crofters reclaim land without any landlord's money?—Oh yes.

10,282. They are the parties really who do it,—I am talking generally?—They did at one time; you find nothing now in the way of reclaiming land.

10,283. But if you planted them there again they would likely go over the same process?—They would not now, because it does not pay anybody now to reclaim land.

10,284. But I see it going on at the present day?—You do not see very much of it going on.

10,285. We saw it as the result of the Crofters Act?—Look round this part of the country where they did once reclaim land, and you will find very little now.

10,286. But if the inducements were given to encourage them to reclaim land, don't you think it is in human nature to do as much as possible in that way?—There is only a very limited amount of land available for reclamation under any possible conditions. This is a deep, narrow valley, with steep mountains on each side, and they cannot go up the hillside.

10,287. But you do not doubt the *bona fides* of the people who gave evidence here yesterday?—Not in the slightest.

10,288. Then I think you said in reply to a question by Mr Shaw-Stewart that they could not cultivate the land to profit. That is one of the conditions?—They could not.

10,289. And pay any rent?—No.

10,290. But I take it that that reference was made to cultivation, and cultivation only, because you have used the word 'cultivate.' Is that so? But you see we have as an alternative that they could 'otherwise advantage-'ously occupy' such land.—I am not aware of the terms.

10,291. But could these lands be 'otherwise advantage-'ously occupied' by crofters or other small tenants?—No, I do not think so.

10,292. As grazing farms?—I do not think so. Judging from the past, we find that that class of tenant has invariably not succeeded.

10,293. Taking the same area, if a large farmer can make it pay why should not an aggregation of small farms make it pay?—I could give a great many reasons for it. The management of a sheep stock has never been successfully conducted by a small farmer.

10,294. Take the case of a club farm?—We don't know them in this part of the country; we have none in this part of the country. A small farmer has, of course, all the work to do upon a small farm that a big farmer does upon a big farm; it is like one man turning out goods at the rate of 100,000 a day and another man trying to do it at the rate of 10 a day. There is far more labour in proportion to the amount of capital and stock.

10,295. But was not the system of consolidation that you are advocating at the present time carried on for nearly a century?—I say that if there is any profit to be made at all, the large farmer will make it where the small farmer would fail.

10,296. The logical inference from that is that you maintain that what is called the small farmer must fail where the large farmer has failed?—Upon that class of ground.

10,297. And the only alternative is a deer forest?—Quite so.

10,298. You cannot assist us by showing us land in your management that would be fit for our purpose?—I shall be very pleased to show you all the land, but you must judge for yourself as to its suitability.

10,299. *Mr Forsyth.*—You mentioned that there were some places in Glencannich that you thought might possibly be occupied by small tenants in future. Can you give me any idea as to the expense of house-building, as the locality appears to be rather out of the way and difficult of access, and it is a very important point?—We are building houses for small tenants up here; the Commissioners could go and see them.

10,300. Where?—On the crofting place up here, Rhindown. They cost us from £160 to £170 in cash, and we supply some home-grown timber besides, which we don't charge for. The accommodation is the very least that a man can put up with nowadays.

10,301. What is that?—On the ground floor, two rooms with a small closet between, and upstairs, two attics.

10,302. Attics with storm windows?—Yes.

10,303. Could not a cheaper house be got up?—I tried and got plans, and found that was the cheapest house we could get which would satisfy them under modern conditions.

10,304. But if the tenants assisted, a house could be put up for less?—I would be very pleased if anybody would give me the plan of a house costing less that would satisfy them.

10,305. Then I think I gathered from your previous evidence that you consider that on the whole the land about Glencannich would be most profitably occupied at any rate by grazing rather than by agriculture?—That is so.

10,306. You say that in that glen cropping would have to be a very secondary consideration as a source of profit?—Quite secondary.

10,307-8. It has also been elicited from you in evidence that sheep farming can scarcely be called a paying industry just now?—No, it is not, just now.

10,309. Then don't you see some difficulty in the way of planting tenants here where the success of the arable venture would be very doubtful, and where the sheep farming does not come in as a paying part of the concern?—I made no suggestion about planting tenants; you might put them down, but I say they would not succeed.

10,310. I want to get your opinion as to that. You are of opinion that they would not be able to live and thrive there?—No, they would not.

10,311. Not even with a carefully managed club stock?—Of course I have no knowledge of the club farm system; I do not understand how it is done.

10,312. The land is hardly suitable for wintering sheep?—Not young sheep.

10,313. The hoggs and the weaker year-olds would have to be sent away?—Yes.

10,314. And, on the whole, you consider the profits would be very small or *nil*?—Yes.

10,315. *Mr Gordon.*—A good deal of stress seems to be put upon this question of population, and I would like to make it a little clearer. In addition to the houses presently occupied by tenants on your rent-roll, there are houses occupied by others, possibly a few cottars, are there?—Yes.

10,316. Are they all on your rent-roll?—No.

10,317. There would be also houses occupied by these foresters?—Yes.

10,318. And the occupants of these would, of course, add considerably to the population?—Yes.

10,319. That is in addition to those upon your rent-roll?—Yes.

10,320. Therefore the basis of calculation that I proposed would not be exactly correct unless you added these?—Quite so, it would be against the numbers.

10,321. It would show a much greater decrease of population than is actually the case?—Yes.

10,322. Now with regard to the fall of rental: you quoted, I think, from Dr Macculloch?—Yes, from Macculloch.

10,323. What time did he write?—Between 1811 and 1821.

10,324. And after his book was published there was a very considerable rise in rents?—Oh yes.

10,325. And the profits of farming were general all over Scotland?—Yes.

Beauly. John Brown Grant.

10,326. More especially, I think, between the years 1852 and 1876 or 1878?—Yes, I fancy that was the prosperous time.

10,327. You quoted 1872 as the maximum year; now 1873 was the maximum year in which both beef and cattle were highest, and wool was highest. After that year there was a gradual decline, culminating up to the present time almost, in the value of stock?—Yes.

10,328. You state, and I have no doubt correctly, that the comfort of the small tenants down here in Rhindown is fully over the average of their class throughout the country?—Yes.

10,329. Would it be fair to compare the climate of Rhindown with that of Glencannich?—I am not comparing it now.

10,330. The climate would be the main obstacle?—It would be one of the obstacles.

10,331. In the way of successful cultivation?—Yes.

10,332. Now we heard from the first witness yesterday, that in proposing a policy of reinstatement of a number of these tenants in the glens, he suggested in the first place that the expense of buildings should be borne by proprietors?—Yes, I heard that.

10,333. And afterwards he said that the lion's share of the expense of stocking the ground (that is the phrase he used) should be borne by the proprietor. Now is it customary in this country for a proprietor to advance money to stock holdings?—No, I am not aware of it.

10,334. There is not such a thing known in this part of the country?—No.

10,335. Then there is another thing I would like you to make more plain, in regard to the rates. What would be the effect in the parish of Kilmorack in the event of the deer forests being wholly done away with? How would the rental be derived, supposing the deer forests were done away with and the whole ground was under sheep?—The rental of Kilmorack is about £17,000 or £18,000 a year.

10,336. But take the ground under deer?—Well, there must be at least £10,000 of that.

10,337. Swept off?—Yes.

10,338. Now I assume that the public and parochial burdens are only levied so far as necessary, and have nothing to do with the rental?—Yes.

10,339. Can you tell us roughly what the amount of the present public and parochial burdens are in the parish, how much per £?—The poor rate, I think, is 1s. per £, or 1s. 6d.

10,340. Do they amount to 3s. altogether, or 2s., or what are the public and parochial burdens for poor, education, road and other rates?—As a general calculation we make it 4s. in the £.

10,341. Well, is it your opinion that if the deer forests were done away with, and the ground put under sheep again, or bigger or lesser holdings, these public burdens would be increased or lowered?—Increased, certainly.

10,342. That is to say, the number of poor would be increased?—No, they would be increased if the population was crowded, of course. But with the present population the rate would simply be increased.

10,343. But I want to know, first of all, what your opinion is. Would a population of crofters and grazing farmers be more or less likely to increase the rates?—It would be likely to increase the rates.

10,344. Therefore you would have to draw an increased amount of rates from a greatly decreased rental?—That is so, exactly.

10,345. That is the effect it would have, in your opinion.

10,346. Mr Sutherland wishes you to state again, assuming that this is done, what would be the amount of the decrease?—I am going without the Valuation Roll. I think roughly that out of the rental of £18,000 in the parish of Kilmorack £10,000 is derived from deer forests.

10,347. How much would be the decrease?—I could scarcely tell; you might get no rent at all if you attempted to let that as large sheep farms.

10,348. I am not prepared to accept that from you.—We tried to let the farms, and could not get an offer. Beauly. John Brown Grant.

10,349. *Mr Sutherland.*—Give us an idea with regard to The Chisholm estate.—We could not hope to get more than half, at the very extreme limit, by letting to large sheep farmers.

10,350. What would that amount to?—£5000.

10,351. *Mr Gordon.*—Therefore the probability would be that you would have an increased demand in the form of public and parochial burdens, while your rental would be decreased from £18,000 to £13,000?—Yes.

10,352. Is that so?—Yes, in the parish.

10,353. I am talking of the parish of Kilmorack alone?—Yes.

10,354. How can you explain about the unprofitable nature of sheep raising now—sheep farms?—Well, the price of wool has a great deal to do with it; and we have had a series of very bad seasons,—cold, wet seasons, when the sheep do not thrive. The price of wintering also has increased; and we have to deal with an enormons competition from New Zealand and Australia in carcases. One ship may bring over as many as 80,000 carcases.

10,355. Do you believe that the large importation of foreign meat into this country has a great deal to do with the lessened value of home produce?—Yes.

10,356. The same as in the case of grain?—Yes.

10,357. That accounts for the fall in the rental too?—It does.

10,358. And such a state of matters could not have been anticipated at the time this author wrote his book?—No, certainly not.

10,359. Now you have said that you don't think any part of this ground could be cultivated to profit in small holdings?—Yes.

10,360. If you talk of specific parts of the property that may be correct, but I think in some parts of this country, talking of the Highlands generally, I would put it to you again whether you would not modify your opinion somewhat?—I am only referring to the 80,000 acres I speak to; I am not presuming to say anything about the other parts of the country.

10,361. But you are an intelligent man, and we would like to get some information from you?—Thank you very much.

10,362. What is the smallest size of holding that you think a man can profitably cultivate, either as a crofter or as a grazier?—You see the size of holding has not very much to do with it. Five acres down at Beauly here would keep a man very comfortably.

10,363. I did not make my question complete. The smallest size of holding that a man can cultivate to profit, and live on from the produce of his holding?—I think it depends very much on where the holding is situated. If you get 5 acres of carse land down here, and give it to a man at a reasonable rent, he could occupy his whole time in cultivating it, and live upon it comfortably.

10,364. On 5 acres?—On 5 acres.

10,365. Your answer would lead to the next question—Do you think it would be more advisable to make the crofters' holdings down in the laigh rather than in the high lands?—Certainly, it would be better for the crofter.

10,366. *Mr Maccallum.*—We have had evidence as to the way in which deer forests came to be formed,—first, that the small tenants were removed for the formation of large sheep farms, and then that large sheep farms were converted into deer forests; that is the process?—I think——

10,367. We have had a good deal of evidence that that is so.—I heard that evidence given.

10,368. Now do you seriously say that the native Highlanders take kindly to that process?—They do; I say so. They take kindly to the hunting business I said.

10,369. And to the changes that have occurred?—I did not say anything about that.

10,370. The removal first of the small tenants, then

Beauly. John Brown Grant.

the conversion of the sheep farms into deer forests, do you say that the crofter, the native Highlander, takes kindly to that?—Of course that is a matter affecting each individual looking at it from his own point of view. If he was favoured by the change he would approve of it.

10,371. You spoke of the native Highlanders as a body?—I confined myself to hunting.

10,372. That the native Highlanders took kindly to he changes?—I said the native Highlanders took kindly to hunting.

10,373. 'To the changed condition of things' is the note that I have?—I said he was only too pleased to have a congenial occupation. I said after the pastoral industry fails, after the agricultural industry fails, he goes kindly back to hunting.

10,374. *Mr Sutherland.*—I have taken this note 'The majority of the people are interested in maintain-'ing the present system.'—Yes.

10,375. *Mr Maccallum.*—Well, as a whole, then, you do not now say that the Highlanders take kindly to this change?—I say in the districts in which this pursuit is carried on they take quite kindly to it.

10,376. These changes, you see, first of all necessitate the removal of the native Highlander, for you also made this statement, that no sportsman would take a forest with crofters on it?—In it.

10,377. Yes, in it; on the land. So that first of all the change necessitates the removal?—Well, I do not know, because you don't make deer forests where there are crofters.

10,378. But going back, they first were removed?—Not by the sportsman.

10,379. But there were in former times small tenants, and they had to be removed?—Well, they might have been converted into shepherds to begin with, and then when the sheep business stopped they would be converted into foresters.

10,380. Don't you admit that crofting and deer forests do not go well together?—That is quite true.

10,381. Because they had to be fenced away from it. Now do you think there is any similarity between that condition of things and the condition of things to which you referred in olden times; were they fenced out before?—No, they did not go in for agriculture at all, therefore fences were not required. It is the crofter that complains, therefore, not so much the other way.

10,382. Now is this process going on?—I would not approve of the process going on except in ground such as Glencannich and Glen Affaric, peculiarly suited for it. I am entirely of the sportsman's mind—that it should not be done at the expense of any individual.

10,383. Do you think then there is any room for the process going on any further?—I am not acquainted with the whole ground in the Highlands, but there must be some places just as well adapted as Glen Affaric, where there are sheep, and it does not pay. You hurt no man by simply taking off the sheep and putting on deer.

10,384. You spoke of deer forests as an industry; you do not mean this, that it is an industry that should be extended, do you?—Wherever you find ground suitable, and wherever you hurt nobody, it should be extended.

10,385. Do you think it can be extended without hurting anybody?—It cannot be extended in Scotland very much further; there is no ground suitable.

10,386. Are you aware that that opinion was given by an eminent authority (Mr Malcolm, Glengarry), in 1883, that there was no more suitable ground, or there was very little suitable ground?—I think perhaps I did read Mr Malcolm's evidence.

10,387. This was the reply he made to a question that was put to him:—'I do not think it is possible 'to carry it' that is, the system of deer forests, 'much 'further, for I do not think there is much more land in 'the Highlands to be taken up by deer forest.'—I agree with that.

10,388. But how has that been found reliable? Has there not been a great deal of extension of the area under deer since then?—There has been some extension, no doubt.

10,389. On the estate you represent, have there been 28,000 acres added?—Very likely.

10,390. Is not that a great extension?—On that estate, of course.

10,391. In ten years?—Yes.

10,392. You had 58,000 acres at that time, and 28,000 have been added since?—Yes.

10,393. Would you still extend the system wherever there is suitable land?—Yes, where we could put the land to no other use.

10,394. Would you extend it in every case in which the proprietor could thereby get a higher rent?—Not exactly; no.

10,395. Why not?—The rent is not a criterion in the matter; it is a matter between no rent at all and a sporting rent. If we could let the land for sheep farms we might take a lower rent.

10,396. Would you approve of taking a lower rent for a sheep farm?—It depends upon the place entirely.

10,397. Why?—If the ground is not very high ground we should attempt to let it as a sheep farm, because it never makes a satisfactory deer forest.

10,398. Don't they require low land also?—They require low land for wintering, but you require a tremendous range of altitude.

10,399. But supposing the proprietor could get a higher rent for a place as a deer forest, should he take that?—The proprietor is like every other man, he depends upon his rent, and is quite entitled to let his land to the greatest advantage.

10,400. And you quite approve of that?—I quite approve of it, reserving that he does not injure any individual in the process.

10,401. This is the point I wish to get cleared. Would you approve of the proprietor letting it as a deer forest if he could thus get a higher rent for his land?—I must ask what property you mean. Do you mean Rhindown here?

10,402. I mean any land that he has to let. If he could get a higher rent for it as a deer forest would you approve of his turning it under deer?—The question covers the whole ground all round, while I say there is only part suitable.

10,403. If the land were not suitable, there is no likelihood he would get a higher rent for it?—Well, quite so. But I am not going to say that a proprietor should let all his land for the highest rent. I say in the case of Rhindown, for instance, the proprietor should not let it as a deer forest.

10,404. Why not?—Because we would have to turn out the people, and would have to do a lot of things we had no right to do; so we would not let that as a deer forest.

10,405. Then you think that land suitable for occupation should not be let as a deer forest; would you admit that?—Land suitable for occupation?

10,406. Yes, land suitable for occupation?—Well, I don't know, I am sure.

10,407. *The Chairman.*—You must say yes or no to that?—Land suitable for what—to live upon?

10,408. *Mr Maccallum.*—For occupation by small tenants?—I will say so. It should not be let as a deer forest.

10,409. Then when you speak of deer forests as an industry, did you look to the products of the deer forest? What are the products of this industry?—The products are—I don't know that there is any great production, except venison.

10,410. Does it tend to make the gillies industrious? Is it a suitable occupation for them?—They seem to like it very much; they enjoy it rather.

10,411. Does it give them constant occupation all the year round?—Yes, a large number.

10,412. Ay, but for the gillies?—You would distinguish between gillies and foresters?

10,413. Yes?—Well, of course, the regular men are occupied all the year round; the gillies have a temporary occupation.

10,414. Is there not some danger of habits of

Beauly.

John Brown Grant.

indolence being formed by these people who have no constant occupation?—They have steady occupation here, and they may go down to the low country or they may be employed as labourers on the estate. We send so many into the forest as gillies in the shooting season, and take them back as labourers after the shooting season is over.

10,415. Foresters are employed all the year round, but for the greater part of the season they have not much to do?—Their labours may not be heavy.

10,416. Therefore is there not a tendency to produce habits of idleness?—They are all active, able men.

10,417. You seem to look at deer foresting from this point of view, that it produces a warlike people?—I only quoted from Skene.

10,418. But you quoted for the purpose of bringing out that it produces a warlike people. Do you wish the Highlanders to become a warlike people?—I don't know. I wish them to be able to defend their rights, if attacked.

10,419. And you say it gives them a distaste to agriculture?—I say they never had a taste for agriculture.

10,420. But you increase their distaste by this sort of occupation, don't you?—I don't know.

10,421. You say that they take very kindly to this sort of occupation; don't you think that increases their distaste for agriculture?—I don't see that it does; they did not have much of a taste, and it does not tend to give them much of a taste for it.

10,422. Then as to the producing of a warlike people, we had evidence that from Glencannich in the memory of Mr Colin Chisholm there were seventeen officers in the army?—But I don't admit that.

10,423. But this is the thing: can you disprove it?—No, I cannot disprove it, and he cannot prove it.

10,424. *Mr Sutherland.*—The Army List proves it?—It will not prove where they were born. I have no doubt a number of men went from Glencannich and from all the glens.

10,425. Do you really doubt his evidence on that point?—I do.

10,426. *Mr Maccallum.*—And you do not believe that the officers he names were born there?—There may have been some, but not the number he states, or anything like it.

10,427. What reason have you to believe that he is wrong?—I have very good reason indeed.

10,428. Well, let us have it?—I simply say that I do not believe it.

10,429. That is no evidence at all, one way or the other. However, he says that was the case. Can you tell me do members of the keepers' families go to the army?—Neither the keepers' families nor the crofters' families, nor any other families in the Highlands can be induced to enter the army in the present day.

10,430. So you don't think they are a warlike people?—We are not fighting anywhere, at present.

10,431. You have not officers now, as you had before?—We have competitive examination now.

10,432. Does it not seem to have broken their spirit?—No, there are very apparent reasons now for the officers not being drawn from the same class as they used to be.

10,433. Then you expressed the opinion that Glencannich could not now be advantageously occupied by small tenants?—Yes.

10,434. Do you think that it was advantageously occupied formerly, when there were so many distinguished men from that district?—You see I don't admit the distinguished men in the first place, and then I say from the rent-rolls those that were there were not in very good circumstances.

10,435. But you find times of famine in every place?—I find here serious arrears, and other things which enable me to say that they could not have been in very good circumstances.

10,436. But you admit that there were tenants there?—Oh yes, certainly.

10,437. And we have evidence that these were able to train members of their families so that they were able to take up positions of distinction in the army and the church?—That is your evidence.

Beauly.

John Brown Grant.

10,438. Would it not be desirable to have such a state of things back again?—I don't admit its existence, of course, and therefore I cannot say.

10,439. But would it not be very desirable that there should be such a state of things?—If you create a nursery for army officers, of course that would be a very desirable state of things.

10,440. And we have also had evidence as to church dignitaries; would it not be very desirable that such a state of things should be got at?—I do not know quite what the state of things was, but if what you intend is that a nursery of army officers should be brought back, I have said that would be a desirable thing.

10,441. And that people would be there who could be able to train them?—A sort of military college.

10,442. I do not speak of a military college: I simply speak of there being Highlanders who could rear up their children to take positions of distinction?—We do not find them anywhere in the Highlands.

10,443. Don't you find them in the Island of Skye?—We do not find those from the crofting class taking positions of distinction in the University.

10,444. I spoke of positions of distinction generally?—There is no reason why from the crofting class as able a man should not come as from any other class.

10,445. What we find, as a matter of fact, is that they do?—They do, in very many cases.

10,446. And it would be a desirable thing to have such a state of matters in Glencannich, of course?—It would be very desirable, of course, to have such a state of matters anywhere.

10,447. And then, do not the agricultural farmers find great difficulty in getting reliable workers for the farms?—Oh yes; the labour question has become a very serious one indeed for the agricultural farmer; it adds to the other difficulties that farmers have to contend with at present.

10,448. Would not a district that is let to small tenants be just a nursery for reliable workmen?—No, I would not admit that.

10,449. Why not?—Because the crofter himself is not a reliable workman for the large agricultural farmer: he is engaged on his own croft during the most important seasons of the year.

10,450. But I look to this, that the crofter would have a family, and that the children would be trained to work on the land, and that they would thus make very good workmen on an agricultural farm?—We have a great difficulty in drawing them from that source. They will go to the towns, to the railway, or the police, but not to farm work.

10,451. Have you had such experience?—I have.

10,452. And they do not make good workmen?—They make capital workmen, but they won't go to agricultural work.

10,453. Is that not because they get something better to go to?—No doubt.

10,454. They are very much run after as servants?—They make very good servants. They won't work in agricultural farms; that is my experience. They won't become farm servants if they can help it.

10,455. But they would suit very well for that?—If they would go, yes certainly.

10,456. You also spoke of the danger that the rates would be greatly increased if the deer forests were broken up?—Yes.

10,457. But don't you think that there would be a sporting rent after all; supposing the land were to be put under small tenants, would there not be a sporting rent?—I gravely doubt that. I don't think anybody would give a sporting rent for the ground as a deer forest under small tenants.

10,458. Why not?—It would require some explanation; of course the crofter and he would come into conflict in a great many ways.

10,459. I thought it would be the crofter's interest to live on good terms with the sportsman, because he would get work and wages?—You may imagine that.

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10,460. Why should he quarrel with his bread and butter?—That is very true, why should he? But in practice we find it different.

10,461. You have no practice of it; you have cleared them?—Yes.

10,462. How can you have practice of it if you have cleared them?—We had some practice; and with the people on the margin of the forests and with the sheep farmer we know what it is.

10,463. The deer would be there?—There might be some deer there.

10,464. Don't you say it is a place very well suited for deer, and that places are named after deer?—That is so.

10,465. Why would not the sportsman then take such ground?—Just because he would not. He would go somewhere else where he could enjoy his sport under more congenial surroundings.

10,466. And you think 'more congenial surroundings' is to have the people all away?—In the particular part where his sporting is he does not want the people.

10,467. Would it not be far better for him to have his sport and allow the people to live?—No, he would go somewhere else.

10,468. Where would he go?—He might go to Norway, or to the Rocky Mountains, or some such place, or do without sport altogether.

10,469. *Mr Sutherland.*—Could he get a deer forest in Norway?—Yes.

10,470. *Mr Maccallum.*—Do you find this then, that people will not take grouse shootings if the land is pastured?—Grouse shootings are different; there is no great objection to crofters or anybody else on grouse shootings. The best grouse shooting we have is occupied by crofters.

10,471. And would some of the ground under deer suit as grouse shootings?—No, not any part of the 80,000 acres; no part of it would suit for grouse.

10,472. Are there no grouse on it?—A few at the lower end, but it would not suit.

10,473. I wish you would make it clear really why it is that the sportsman would not take to such a condition of things; there would be plenty of deer, you admit?—I would require to go through the whole theory of sport before that could be made plain; I mention the fact that he would not do it, and I could mention a good many more facts.

10,474. So that you hold that wherever a deer forest is, the crofters must give way at once?—No, I say the forest should not be where the crofters are at all. But I say if you put crofters upon the forest the sportsman goes out.

10,475. Then as to the extension of the system: you are not for extending it any further,—you go that length, I think?—There may be cases that I am not aware of where the land is suitable and available, and where it would injure nobody.

10,476. You don't know any land that could be made into a deer forest?—Not at the present time.

10,477. There is no intention of making any further extension in this neighbourhood?—I am not aware of any.

10,478. And you think there is a final stop now?—I don't know that at all.

10,479. But in this neighbourhood?—I don't know of any in this immediate neighbourhood.

10,480. There is no more suitable land here?—No.

10,481. *Mr Munro.*—Are you a Highlander yourself?—Well, I don't know; my father was born on the Braes of Glenlivet, in Banffshire, and he was the son of a crofter.

10,482. Where were you born?—I was born in Morayshire, at Elgin.

10,483. You do not speak the Gaelic language, I think you said?—Not much.

10,484. How long have you been in Glencannich?—I have not been in Glencannich; I have been at Erchless for eight years.

10,485. I understand that you have had a very considerable experience in the management of Highland property?—I have had some experience.

10,486. And as the result of that experience I presume I may say that you can readily determine the best uses to which lands could be put, particularly those under your management?—I have, of course, been endeavouring to do that. Beauly. John Brown Grant.

10,487. Now, following up that answer, let me ask you to suppose for a moment that you were unable to obtain a tenant for your deer forest, to what uses would you say these lands should be put, speaking as a practical man?—Supposing we were not able to obtain a tenant? I have been considering that question; we would have to go back to sheep.

10,488. You would let the land either in sheep farms or to small tenants?—I don't know that we could let it; we could put it under sheep, and try to make some commercial profit.

10,489. But you would be disposed to let it to small tenants on the best terms possible?—No, I say sheep would be the best alternative.

10,490. But small tenants could have sheep on the club farm system?—No, I would let the ground in large tracts.

10,491. You would let them for the best rent you could get?—Certainly.

10,492. Now, from the opinions you have favoured the Commission with, I presume I judge rightly in saying that you very naturally, from your calling, look upon the letting of land solely from the landlord's point of view, and that you would allow no consideration to stand between you and the obtaining of the highest possible rents?—I have said already that I would not let deer forests in unsuitable places for any rent at all. We do not look at the matter from a purely commercial point of view.

10,493. But you have told us already that the lands with which you are concerned are only adapted for deer forest purposes?—Not the whole of them; part of them I mentioned.

10,494. Now do you consider that you or your employers are justified in excluding from your consideration the prejudicial effect which the letting of lands for deer forest suitable for crops or sheep may have on other interests?—I do not quite understand what prejudicial effect you refer to.

10,495. I will come to that afterwards?—But I cannot answer the question all at one go.

10,496. It is publicly stated, and no doubt you are quite familiar with the statement, that the letting of deer forests has a very prejudicial effect upon other interests in this country?—I deny that.

10,497. Such as the agricultural interests?—I deny that.

10,498. And the mercantile interests?—You see I dispute the beginning of the statement, and therefore I cannot answer the rest of the question.

10,499. You do not admit that deer forests have any prejudicial effect upon any interests whatever?—Quite so.

10,500. I suppose you are quite prepared to admit that the ownership of land involves some responsibility on the part of the landlord towards the country?—Very good; certainly.

10,501. Now we come to the economic aspect of the question of deer forests. You say that you do not admit that any interests are prejudicially affected by the letting of land for deer forests?—That is a general statement.

10,502. Now is there not a loss to the nation in the first place in the reduced production of beef, mutton, wool, and grain?—It is perfectly inappreciable.

10,503. Then you mean to tell me that the letting of 2,000,000 or 3,000,000 acres of land quite capable of sustaining sheep is an inappreciable loss to the nation?—Yes.

10,504. How many sheep, might I ask you, could you rear on that extent of land?—Supposing it was all the very best class of grazing land, you might have a million of sheep, and the produce from that might be perhaps 100,000 sheep per year.

10,505. You say that 2,000,000 to 3,000,000 acres of land would sustain 1,000,000 of sheep?—Yes.

10,506. And do you mean seriously to tell us that the extinction of 1,000,000 sheep involves no appreciable loss to the nation?—Not appreciable. You do not eat these sheep every year.

10,507. I am perfectly sensible of that?—You only eat about 100,000, which is about a ship's cargo.

10,508. But if we do away with these 1,000,000 sheep, does it not follow that we would have to import beef and mutton and wool to fill up the vacuum?—We do that anyhow.

10,509. But does not that imply a very serious loss to the nation?—It may be a gain to the nation.

10,510. How could that be?—It may cost more to grow than to buy.

10,511. But as a matter of fact you must allow, I think, that if these 2,000,000 to 3,000,000 acres of land are capable of sustaining 1,000,000 of sheep, there must be some loss to the nation surely?—There may be; as a matter of fact, in Scotland, we find sheep increasing, taking the whole country together.

10,512. We do not owe that to the existence of deer forests?—Perhaps not.

10,513. Now there is another aspect of this question. Is there not some loss involved in the creation of deer forests, in the decrease of the population of the country?—Well, in converting a sheep farm into a deer forest, it is rather the other way about; there are more men employed, as a rule, in a deer forest than on a sheep farm.

10,514. Do you mean to tell us that the rural population of the Highland counties has increased since the afforestment commenced?—That is another question altogether; the rural population of the Highland counties has decreased; and in the remainder of Scotland and in England too.

10,515. Do you attribute any proportion of that decrease to the introduction of deer forests?—I am not prepared to admit that.

10,516. The question has been discussed here yesterday regarding the loss which towns sustain in consequence of the extinguishing of a large number of farms to make way for a deer forest. Do you allow that towns have sustained any such loss?—Not in the neighbourhood of deer forests; they have rather benefited.

10,517. Is it not a natural thing to suppose that if there were a large number of farmers living in a neighbourhood with their families they must draw their supplies from the neighbouring towns?—But you are supposing a state of things that does not exist in this neighbourhood. I hold that Beauly has benefited greatly by this deer forest business, and you can get the people of Beauly to come here and say so.

10,518. Will you get any number of people in Beauly to sustain you in that contention?—Yes, I am sure I would.

10,519. How does it follow now that the few can benefit Beauly more than the many?—I don't admit the 'few,' I say there are as many of a population employed about a deer forest as on a sheep farm, the other population remaining the same, barring the natural drifting towards towns, and so on.

10,520. Now there is another point of loss. You know that the farmers have complained for some time past, the lowland farmers, that they have suffered very material loss in consequence of the withdrawal of a large demand for the wintering of sheep?—I don't admit that.

10,521. Does it not follow from your statement that if there were a million of sheep upon a certain area of land, and you extinguished that million of sheep, there must be a decrease of the demand for wintering?—It may be quite natural to think so, but it is not the case, and I will explain why. The agricultural farmer who used to let wintering has been in difficulties with the agricultural part of his farm for a number of years past, and instead of having all his eggs in one basket and depending solely on agriculture, he has taken to keeping sheep himself, and the consequence is that he has no wintering to let. There has been a change in the condition of the people who used to let wintering, and the result is that the wintering is now as dear as before.

10,522. You mean to say that the cost of wintering is dearer to-day than it was before deer forests began?—As dear, or dearer.

10,523. And you actually seriously contend that the lessened area under sheep has increased the value of the wintering?—That is the tendency, but it may not have any appreciable effect.

10,524. *Mr Sutherland.*—Where does he summer them?—He simply keeps them at home and winters them himself and sells them. He has gone into the sheep farming business himself, and that makes it dearer for the man that has to go to the market for his wintering.

10,525. *Mr Munro.*—You have something to do, I think, with the Comar sheep farm?—Yes.

10,526. And at present I understand that you contemplate removing the tenant of the farm?—No, we do not.

10,527. Wait one moment, and substitute deer for sheep?—Of course we discuss these things sometimes.

10,528. Is it not the case?—We have not done anything of the kind.

10,529. But do you contemplate doing that?—I do not know what we may do.

10,530. Is it not a fact that at this moment you have arranged to deprive Mr Robertson, Comar, of the sheep farm?—No, no. We have taken his sheep; he gave us notice a year ago.

10,531. But you induced him to give notice?—Not at all. We would have been very pleased if he had kept on.

10,532. Is it not a perfectly fair question to ask you what you intend to do with the farm?—We may keep the sheep on the farm, or we may clear it for deer. We cannot get a tenant for it.

10,533. In point of fact if you can get it to pay better under deer than under sheep you will convert it into a deer forest?—Certainly.

10,534. Let us take this as a concrete example of what we are speaking about. At present the farm sustains 7500 sheep?—I don't know; we got 7000 odds the other day.

10,535. Very well, let it be 7000 sheep. It sustains 7000 sheep; can you point to a single advantage that the nation would get by the substitution of deer for sheep? that is putting the matter into as narrow a form as I can.—As a sheep farm we would get no rent for it; as a deer forest we will get rent. That rent is spent in the various payments I mentioned to you, such as labour, rates, taxes, &c. That all benefits the community round about us; it is money coming into this district and spent there, which benefits the people; otherwise there would be none.

10,536. But in the meantime you solely look at this question from the landlord's point of view?—The landlord is the only man that is concerned in this question, that I can see.

10,537. You think so. You think the letting of that land has nothing to do with the nation?—You cannot compel a landlord to keep sheep for the benefit of the nation.

10,538. Then the only consideration you take into account is the utmost that the landlord can make out of Comar Farm?—The landlord has to consider his interest, of course, irrespective of the nation.

10,539. You have not succeeded in pointing to any advantage that the nation obtains by the conversion of this farm into a deer forest?—I have pointed out this distribution of wealth.

10,540. But the national wealth is not increased?—Yes, the national wealth is increased by that distribution.

10,541. I think you will be prepared to admit that the national wealth is rather diminished by the withdrawal of one article which is of value and the substitution of another article that is of no value?—That is a very abtruse and economic question, which I do not feel called on to offer any opinion upon.

10,542. Now pass to Lord Napier's Report. I do

not think you were a witness before that Commission?—No, I was not.

10,543. A question was raised by Mr Maccallum as to the increase of deer forests since the issuing of Lord Napier's Report?—Yes.

10,544. Do you know to what extent land has been added to deer forests since 1883?—I could not answer that for the whole of the Highlands.

10,545. Do you know what the Report of the Royal Commission was with reference to the increase of deer forests?—I have read the Report.

10,546. I will refresh your memory by one or two excerpts from it. In the Report it is stated:—'It 'has been stated to us in evidence that most of the 'land specially adapted by its natural features and by 'the habits of the deer for this purpose, and which 'can, without substantial injustice to other interests, be 'thus applied, is now appropriated, and that the forma-'tion of other forests, to any great extent, is not likely 'to take place.' Then the Report goes on to say:—'No one could contemplate the conversion of the 'whole extent of good pasture land, and of possible 'arable land at a moderate elevation in the Highlands, 'into forest, without alarm and reprobation, and it is 'scarcely necessary to say that any serious movement 'towards such an issue would be arrested by the force 'of public opinion, attended with an amount of irrita-'tion much to be deprecated. We do not anticipate, 'with any degree of certainty, that the contingency to 'which we have adverted would arise, but considering 'the diversity of opinion expressed, the possibility of unfortunate results, and the prevailing excitement in connection with this question, we may well consider 'whether Your Majesty's Government and Parliament 'may not contemplate such legislative restrictions as 'would restrain the progressive and immoderate afforest-'ment of land, and allay the apprehensions which are 'widely felt upon the subject.' Do you agree with that recommendation?—The whole thing there turns upon moderate elevation. That is all contingent upon an attempt being made to turn land at a moderate elevation into a deer forest, and of course I agree with it.

10,547. What would you consider a moderate elevation?—Taking the average of the whole forest, levelling down everything, I would say from 500 to 800 feet.

10,548. Then you never heard of corn ripening at an elevation of 1200 feet?—That again depends on the situation. If you get corn to grow on a southern exposure, you may find it ripen, as in the Braes of Mar, at a height of 1300 feet. But in the deepness of a valley where you have mountains that form a high wall, it will not ripen at a third of that.

10,549. But returning to this question of Lord Napier's Report, are you aware what extent of land has been added to deer forests since that recommendation was made?—No, I do not know.

10,550. Do you remember a debate which took place in 1891 in the House of Commons, initiated by our friend Mr Sutherland here?—I think I do; there were several debates, and Mr Marjoribanks made a speech, I think.

10,551. Do you remember what amount of land it was admitted had been added to the deer forests in Scotland?—No, I do not remember.

10,552. Do you remember that the figure was 150,000 acres?—There might be.

10,553. But that estimate was disputed by those who were against the increasing of deer forests?—Quite so; I recollect the discussion.

10,554. A Government return has since been obtained, which shows that the increase since has been not less than 591,000 acres?—Quite so.

10,555. And that increase from private sources, which I have read of, has been made up to close on a million of acres?—Quite so.

10,556. Now, do you not consider that that large increase in the area under deer must have proved very detrimental to the nation?—You must take the individual cases; it might be the very reverse. I don't know but our own case, where there has been no detriment to anybody or anything.

10,557. Do you agree with the recommendation of the Napier Commission as to the further restriction of deer forests?—In general terms I do; of course I have said already that it could not be extended to land not suitable. If any attempt is made in that way it should be stopped.

10,558. If that recommendation had been given effect to, you would not to-day have been able to offer Comar?—Quite so, we would have the land lying practically vacant.

10,559. You have told us to-day that population and deer forests are not compatible?—I said crofters and deer forests.

10,560. Not only crofters, but others?—Oh well, if they are engaged in the forest, there may be as many as you like; it would be a very good job for them.

10,561. You would perhaps not remember the time when Guisachan was sold?—No, I do not remember.

10,562. Are you aware that it is stated in the advertisement for sale of that property, that the small population mentioned is an additional incentive to anyone to buy the property?—I don't know.

10,563. You are perhaps aware that it is frequently mentioned in advertisements of deer forests or other game preserves, that a diminished population is always put in as an inducement?—A small population.

10,564. Now, is it not the fact that the declining of the population and the decay of a nation are very much the same thing?—But you see a small population and a declining population are two very different things; a population may be small, and yet not declining.

10,565. You would do your best to diminish the population?—No, nothing of the kind.

10,566. In your quarter of the globe?—No.

10,567. Oh, you don't?—We don't.

10,568. You do not admit that there is any decline of the population?—We do nothing to make it decline.

10,569. I heard you say, in the course of reading your paper, that the population of your particular district, The Chisholm district, had not decreased to the same extent as other parts?—I spoke of the parish of Kilmorack: these are the only statistics I have got. I took the percentage, and found that the decrease was lower than in some other parishes.

10,570. As a matter of fact, you cannot tell us whether the population in your district proper has increased or decreased:—No, I have explained that I have not the statistics to enable me to answer that question.

10,571. Then on the question of labour: you have mentioned that Mr Winans and Mrs Chisholm expend very considerable sums in wages?—Yes.

10,572. Might I ask you what is the nature of the employment by which these men obtain their wages?—Do you mean the work they are engaged upon?

10,573. Yes.—I think I mentioned the kind of work: they make roads, and build bridges, and put up buildings, and embank rivers, and all the ordinary work going on in an estate; and there are so many, of course, who are gamekeepers.

10,574. All done for the upkeep of the forest?—Yes.

10,575. Therefore the wages are not earned in any productive industry?—Well, Mrs Chisholm's case is different from that; I was referring more particularly to Mr Winans. He employs them on the forest, Mrs Chisholm on the estate generally.

10,576. What I wish to point out especially with regard to Mr Winans is this: there is a great distinction in spending money in wages for something that produces no substantial result, and spending money for example in the reclamation of land, which is a permanent benefit to the nation.—I don't admit that. We have land reclaimed at great expense which has been no benefit.

10,577. Then you are not prepared to admit that Glencannich could at this moment be profitably or advantageously occupied by small tenants?—No.

10,578. Not under any conditions?—Of course under

Beauly.

John Brown Grant.

any conditions,—if you could plant them there, and keep them there, and pay them to be there, but not profitably occupying it.

10,579. But supposing they got the land at a moderate rent, could they profitably occupy it?—Supposing they got the land for nothing at all, they could not.

10,580. That is your opinion?—That is my opinion.

10,581. But you have no facts to speak from?—I am judging from the past record, and from my own knowledge of the neighbourhood.

10,582. But taking the past record of Strathglass, according to the information we have obtained, it used to support a thriving tenantry?—I dispute that evidence.

10,583. But you are not in a position to rebut it by any facts?—I will put in the estate rent-rolls.

10,584. But the rent-rolls in the form in which you have put some of them in are very misleading; that is the least I can say about it?—They are the only rent-rolls.

10,585. *Mr Macleod.*—I think you said you had been eight years on the Chisholm estate?—Yes.

10,586. And before being there had you any other experience of Highland property?—Yes; I was three years at Skibo, with Mr Sutherland of Skibo.

10,587. As estate manager?—As estate manager and factor, and so on.

10,588. So that that comprises the whole of your experience?—Well, I was at home with my father, who was a manager and factor in connection with Highland property all his life.

10,589. Where?—He was in Skibo for seven years.

10,590. I hope you do not think that the questions are impertinent, but you have expressed a very strong opinion on more than one point with regard to the subject that is before us,—a very strong opinion, and I am anxious, of course, to know on what experience it is founded?—Well, my father was an estate manager and factor, and I myself took up that profession.

10,591. Where, might I ask?—He was at Aldourie here, and Strathnairn, and Skibo,—been that all his life. He is now a farmer; and in that way I had an early training. Then I went into a bank, and then back to Skibo, and was eighteen months there. I then went to Her Majesty's Home Farm at Windsor for two years, then to Ireland, and was on a very large place there with the Earl of Wicklow; I then came back to a place in Warwickshire, and was estate manager there for two years; then I returned to Skibo, and from there to Strathglass.

10,592. I take it that this was the first experience you had on The Chisholm estate of deer forest property?—Deer forest, yes.

10,593. And of course you had no knowledge of that particular district under any other conditions?—No, of course not.

10,594. And your view is that there is no available land there?—Yes, that is my view.

10,595. For crofters or other small tenants?—Yes.

10,596. I think, though, you said in preparing the paper you submitted you did not know the terms of the remit to us?—No, I don't know that I have read it.

10,597. Now I would like you to tell me what object you had in making that statement with regard to the population first on The Chisholm estate and secondly as to the parish of Kilmorack; perhaps you had better refresh your memory by reading it.—It has reference to the context, very likely. As Mr Munro says, there has been an attempt made to show that deer forests have decreased the population.

10,598. And I quite agree with you that in many cases they have not; they simply took the place of sheep farms, and foresters took the place of shepherds. I quite agree with that. But you have prepared a very elaborate paper,—certainly it may not, perhaps, as you have said yourself, be all germane to the subject before us, but still you must have had some reason for giving these figures?—I have given the population of the whole parish in 1831.

10,599. You gave the population on The Chisholm estate?—No, I have given no population on The Chisholm estate at all.

Beauly.

John Brown Grant.

10,600. You said there were a certain number of tenants at a particular period?—Yes.

10,601. Of course we know the manner of arriving at the population; all that I wanted to know is,—you may have had some other reason, but I understood what you wanted to bring out was a comparison between the population then and now?—To some extent.

10,602. And the inference you desired us to draw was that there had been no decrease in the population?—Not more than the ordinary normal decrease all over the country. I do wish you to draw that inference.

10,603. And the manner in which you desired us to draw that inference was by giving us the number of tenants?—That is with reference to the estate, of course; that is the only available means I had. I did not mention the cottars even.

10,604. No, you did not mention cottars?—No.

10,605. Nor sub-tenants?—No.

10,606. And you did not even say principal tenants?—No. I just took the whole rent-roll, and there is the number of tenants.

10,607. So that if it was not for the fact that we had of our own knowledge, or otherwise, obtained the information, it might be taken that that was all the population that was on the estate?—Quite so; you make it more when you bring it up that way.

10,608. But you do not, of course, doubt in any way that the population on The Chisholm property has been very much decreased?—I don't know since what period? There have been rises and falls.

10,609. You see this. I quite agree with you that the deer forests may not probably have decreased the population, but you are quite prepared to admit, I should think, that the sheep farms have?—Oh, to some extent they did, no doubt. Where you find them displacing small tenants, as in Glencannich, of course they did not employ as many men as before.

10,610. So that, although the deer forests did not decrease the population, the sheep farms originally did?—No doubt, to some extent.

10,611. And in that way, indirectly, the deer forests are the means of keeping the population lower than it would otherwise be?—Well, I don't know, I am sure.

10,612. I think that is a perfectly fair conclusion, but it is not a matter of very great importance.—Quite so.

10,613. Would you mind reading again that portion of your statement where you spoke of the rental of the agricultural subjects? You said that it had decreased from £5000?—I just took the rent-roll.

10,614. From £5000 to £1500. You made that bald statement without any explanation.—I did certainly explain.

10,615. What was the explanation?—I quite expected that I would be asked how that was arrived at, and I was going to explain it as I went along.

10,616. In any case, you made the statement without any explanation?—I did explain.

10,617. What explanation did you give?—I found an agricultural rental in the rent-roll of 1860 of £5000 or thereabouts, and in the same way in the present rental of £1500 only.

10,618. And what inference did you desire us to draw from that?—I desired you to draw from that just that there was a general fall in agricultural rents, and that so much of the land that had formerly been devoted to agriculture, including sheep farms, was now devoted to deer forests.

10,619. Don't you think now, that a fair inference, if we had not had the knowledge otherwise, would have been that it was a real decrease in rent,—that sheep farming had gone back?—You must draw your own inferences altogether. I am explaining the figures; they are there.

10,620. I am exceedingly sorry to say it, but I do not think you used us well. That is all I have got to say, and I decline to go any further in the examination.

10,621. *Mr Shaw Stewart.*—Mr Sutherland exam-

ined you on the sentimental view of the deer forests question; he seemed to think that the occupation of foresters or gillies was rather derogatory to Highlanders, and that they assisted in the sport without deriving any profit or enjoyment from it. Is it not generally admitted by those who know anything about deer-stalking that the chief pleasure of the sport consists in the long stalk rather than in the moment of the shot?—Yes, I enjoy that part of it most myself.

10,622. And, to be successful, must not the stalker have an intimate knowledge of the ground and of the wind that comes from the corries?—Very intimate.

10,623. And therefore it is the forester and sometimes the gillie that bears the chief part of the amusement?—Yes.

10,624. And, in the late autumn, during the hind shooting, he has the shooting as well?—Yes.

10,625. He then shoots as well as stalks?—Yes.

10,626. Therefore is it not fair to say that the foresters and gillies have not, at least, an equal part in the enjoyment of the sport of the deer forest with the proprietor or his friends, many of whom are ignorant of the ground, and therefore unable to do any stalking for themselves?—Yes.

10,627. *The Chairman.*—I think it fair, in the interests of this inquiry, to put this question. You admit that there has been a considerable increase in afforestment of land since 1883?—Yes.

10,628. Does it consist with your knowledge that that increase has been due, to a considerable extent, to the failure to obtain tenants for grazing farms?—That is quite the case.

10,629. In a number of instances has the afforestment been in a certain sense compulsory, because the landlord could not get a tenant-farmer?—That is quite true.

10,630. And, if he could have got a tenant farmer, he would not have afforested the land?—He would not have afforested the land.

10,631. Does that apply to a considerable tract of the new afforestment?—It does, to a great extent.

10,632. That is true of the land of which we have been speaking?—Yes.

10,633. Is it also true to your knowledge of certain recent afforestments in the county of Sutherland?—Not to my knowledge, but I believe it is so; I have heard it so stated.

10,634. Now you used these words, in the course of your examination by one of our number, that you would not approve of afforestment except in such places as Glencannich or Glen Affaric?—Places suitable like that.

10,635. Now, having that view, in the future would you be against afforesting grazing land even if a grazing tenant could not be got?—I can see no harm whatever in doing it. If a grazing tenant cannot be got, what can you do with it?

10,636. You have committed yourself to the view that you would not approve of afforestment except in such places as Glencannich and Glen Affaric?—Each place must be considered on its own individual merits, and, unless it is suitable like that, I would not approve of it.

10,637. But looking to the feeling which prevails in many influential quarters, as well as many uninfluential quarters, on the subject, would you in the future approve of additional afforestment of grazing lands, even if a grazing tenant cannot be got?—I would let the thing take its individual course.

10,638. Then your view is that the landlord should exercise the right which he undoubtedly at present possesses of adding additional land to a subsisting forest, or of creating a new forest, if and when he cannot obtain a grazing tenant for a farm?—That is mainly so.

10,639. And that is your view?—That is my view.

10,640. *Mr Sutherland.*—Would you kindly state generally,—I do not wish you to do it with any detail,—the means you have taken to secure grazing tenants in cases where lands have been made into deer forests?—Well, in the case of Knockfin, it was extensively advertised, north and south.

10,641. For how long a period?—For perhaps six months. Beauly.

10,642. Did you get any offers?—No offers at all. John Brown Grant.

10,643. Take the case of Mr Winans, who took it first as a grazing tenant?—Yes.

10,644. Did he sign a grazing lease?—Yes.

10,645. By what means did it afterwards become a sporting lease?—He took a sporting lease afterwards. It was let to Lord Tweedmouth as sporting tenant at the time; the sheep farm was advertised, and Mr Winans took it.

10,646. What became of his lease binding him to keep it a grazing farm?—He was not bound to keep the sheep there.

10,647. Not by his grazing lease?—No.

10,648. Do you mean to say you let a tract of land without specifying the purpose to which it is to be devoted?—We always do. We let it for that purpose, but we never bind the tenant to devote it to any particular purpose.

10,649. Do you allow him to devote it to any purpose he likes?—In terms of the lease, for grazings, but we do not compel him to graze it.

10,650. How did the grazing lease of Mr Winans turn into a sporting lease?—He bought out Lord Tweedmouth, who was the sporting tenant.

10,651. But what did he do as regards his arrangements with the estate?—He put the two leases together, and made one lease of it. They are distinct leases still; he has got a grazing lease, and a sporting lease, as you will see from the valuation roll.

10,652. So he made a bargain with the estate for grazing purposes, and he made a bargain with Lord Tweedmouth for sporting purposes. Now you say both are combined, the two are made into one, and he has the alternative of grazing or sporting as he chooses. Is that the explanation of it?—That is exactly so.

10,653. So there is no difference then: it would be possible to combine two leases anywhere, and do the same?—It is frequently done. Lord Tweedmouth did the same thing himself with the farm of Kerrow. He was grazing tenant, and had sheep there for some time, but he cleared it when he was also sporting tenant under a different lease.

10,654. So there is nothing to prevent a grazing tenant from turning a farm into a deer forest?—Our tenants have done it frequently.

10,655. Without consulting you?—Without consulting us at all.

10,656. *Mr Donald Macrae,* 'Balallan,' Plockton.—I should like to put a question or two to the witness, with your lordship's permission.

10,657. *The Chairman.*—Yes.

10,658. *Mr Donald Macrae.*—The first question is with regard to the farm of Comar, the lease of which expired just now, and the valuation of which took place only ten days ago,—a valuation that embraced, it was stated, 8500 sheep. I should like your lordship to put the question, Did the estate take steps to secure if possible a grazing tenant for that farm, and if so, what steps?

10,659. *The Chairman.*—You hear the question, Mr Grant? Did you take steps to secure a grazing tenant, and if so, what steps?—We made a general inquiry, but the thing was so absolutely hopeless that we did not advertise in this case.

10,660. What was the nature of the general inquiry?—I know a great many farmers, and I mentioned the matter to them.

10,661. Did you not advertise?—No, we did not advertise.

10,662. *Mr Donald Macrae.*—They did not advertise. What reason has he to suppose that if he had advertised for half a year or more or less he would fail to secure a grazing tenant for the farm?—The reason is this, that I was looking at the example of other proprietors who had failed after advertising.

10,663. *The Chairman.*—You despaired of getting it let?—Yes.

10,664. *Mr Macrae.*—Are there landless cottars on

Beauly.

John Brown Grant.

The Chisholm estate, and where are they situated?—Do you mean workmen?

10,665. I mean cottars,—people who live in houses, and whose names do not appear in the valuation roll.—We have a number of work people.

10,666. And who have no lands; who are not tenants in any sense?—The workmen have their houses for occupation.

10,667. *The Chairman.*—But have you landless cottars on the estate who are not workmen?—I do not think so; everybody finds employment on the estate.

10,668. *Mr Macrae.*—Have they stated employment, from year to year, and from week to week?—I think so.

10,669. They have?—I do not know any who have not.

10,670. Are there cottars about Cannich?—Yes.

10,671. Are they content in their present condition?—I hope so.

10,672. Are they content in their present condition? I should like an answer to that?—I know of no discontent.

10,673. Did they express a wish to get holdings?—They expressed a wish to get a cow's grass, some of them.

10,674. Did they present a petition for land to Mrs Chisholm?—Yes, and some of them got land.

10,675. How many presented the petition?—Including the schoolmaster, and the minister, and people of that sort, I think there were ten.

10,676. *The Chairman.*—And how many got land, or a cow's grass?—Three; some of them had land before.

10,677. *Mr Macrae.*—I should like to know, my lord, what they actually asked in the petition?—*Witness.*—I have got a copy. Might I read the Free Church minister's letter to Mrs Chisholm?

10,678-9. *The Chairman.*—On behalf of the applicants?—Yes.

10,680. Just read it.—It is dated 22nd May last:—'I have been requested to intimate to you a resolution 'passed unanimously at a meeting held in the Cannich 'school on Wednesday last. The resolution was that 'Mrs Chisholm be asked if she will voluntarily grant 'grazing for a cow, and potato ground, to some ten 'men in the district. Your petitioners think that this 'can be given without any detriment to existing interests. 'These men do not include those who have already got 'some land on Comar Muir. The object for which the 'meeting was called, was to consider what steps should 'be taken before the Commission on Deer Forests in 'June. But, in the first place, the wish of the meeting 'was to do nothing until Mrs Chisholm should have 'an opportunity of considering their wants. I am sure 'I most sincerely wish to be on the most honourable 'terms with my proprietrix, and I can say the same 'for your petitioners. But Mrs Chisholm will readily 'understand, that when any one is driven to the other 'side of the country for necessary provision for the 'beasts, while plenty could be got at the door, that 'it is not easy to cherish such kindly feelings as one 'could wish. Hitherto I have always spoken in public 'and private in the most respectful terms, but I do wish 'for all concerned that these few people would get some 'little consideration. It is a hard thing for the poor 'people to have the dung that ought to be growing 'potatoes at their houses; also to have to buy milk from 'a distance and sometimes not able to get it at all. 'I, at least, must always feel thankful that Mrs 'Chisholm has removed intoxicating liquors from her 'estates.'

10,681. Who signs that?—C. C. Mackenzie, the Free Church minister.

10,682. *Mr Macrae.*—I mean to follow up the question, with your lordship's permission: I mean to bring out another interesting fact. I should like to ascertain the names of those landless cottars who did not get land?—They got land not because of the petition, they got it before the petition altogether.

10,683. I should like to know what the reply to that petition was.

10,684. *The Chairman.*—What was the result of that petition?—It resulted in nothing at all. Mr Mackenzie did not give any names there, and when I came to make inquiries, I found it included himself and the schoolmaster and the blacksmith; there were some who got land, but it was too late to give them all.

10,685. You had no land to give?—No land to give.

10,686. *Mr Macrae.*—I should like to know whether that letter was replied to. The letter is addressed to Mrs Chisholm; she may have replied to it—I do not know.

10,687. *The Chairman.*—You did not reply to it?—No.

10,688. And you got no instructions about it?—No.

10,689. *Mr Macrae.*—I should like to ask if that was the only document by which these people approached Mrs Chisholm?—Oh no, I think Mrs Chisholm had been twice written to by Mr Mackenzie before.

10,690. *The Chairman.*—On behalf of these cottars?—Yes.

10,691. *Mr Macrae.*—I should like to ask if they took the usual steps of approaching Mrs Chisholm through the factor?—They may have made an approach through me; I do not remember.

10,692. *The Chairman.*—Did they approach you?—They may have done so. I think so.

10,693. I take that as an affirmative answer?—I think on one occasion.

10,694. *Mr Macrae.*—Did they present a petition to Mrs Chisholm in an unclosed envelope through the factor?—Yes.

10,695. Has that petition been replied to?—Yes, I am sure it has.

10,696. Who replied to it?—I think I replied to it.

10,697. Can we get here the request made in the petition?—I think I replied verbally to one.

10,698. *The Chairman.*—What was the request then made?—The request was for a cow's grass.

10,699. What was the answer made?—The answer was that it was all let, and we could not give it to them.

10,700. *Mr Macrae.*—I am to ask another question, with your lordship's permission. Are these people sufficiently free and sufficiently independent to come before Her Majesty's Royal Commission here to speak for themselves?—Certainly.

10,701. Is it a fact that in one of those petitions they stated to Mrs Chisholm that the tenant of Comar threatened to pull their houses about their ears if they would dare to speak about land to the Commissioners here?—They might have said something of that kind, but we paid no attention to it.

10,702. *The Chairman.*—Was there something of that kind said?—It was stated in one of the petitions. Of course the land was let to Mr Robertson, Comar.

10,703. *Mr Macrae.*—My lord, I have now to state that I have been up there a fortnight ago, at a public meeting held there before I ever went to Glencannich, or before any other here went to Glencannich, so far as I know; the people voluntarily held a meeting, and appointed delegates to appear before Her Majesty's Royal Commission. I was there less than a fortnight ago, and those delegates were present, and one in particular of the delegates complained to me, and that delegate, as I understand, is a cottar living on Comar farm—a cottar without any security of tenure. That man told me that he was in fear and in terror of coming before Her Majesty's Royal Commission to state the case for himself and for the others, because a deliberate threat was made that he would be hounded out of the country and his house pulled down, and the houses of the others, if they would dare open their mouths about land; and they are not here to-day because of that threat?—*Witness.*—We never threatened anything.

10,704. *Mr Macrae.*—And further, my lord, that those people made Mrs Chisholm aware, through the factor, of the fact that they were threatened, and they expected a measure of encouragement and protection from the estate to come here. The estate has given them no encouragement, and no security, so far as the estate was concerned, and that is the condition of matters,

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that Her Majesty's Royal Commission is so far baffled in their inquiries.

10,705–6. *The Chairman.*—Mr Grant, you admit that something of the kind was said by the tenant of Comar?—Yes; in the petition to Mrs Chisholm it is so stated. Nobody has been turned out, and nothing has been even attempted.

10,707. *Mr William Burns*, Solicitor, Inverness, Agent for Mrs Chisholm.—One word in answer to Mr Macrae. He suggests rather that the estate did not help the people to come. Did Mr Macrae ask us to do so? I have heard nothing of it. Mr Robertson and we are at loggerheads; we are at variance; we are not on the one side; we are just on the borders of litigation. He got the land under a lease that has now expired. If you had asked us to help you, I don't know what would have happened.

10,708. *The Chairman.*—Does Mr Robertson's lease expire just now?

10,709. *Mr Burns.*—Mr Robertson's lease of the grazing lands away up in the glen is ended, but his lease of the arable land down where his house is is continued, and this is the place that he is talking about. We cannot interfere with him, but if Mr Macrae, 'Balallan,' had asked for it, I should have taken the utmost care to protect all mankind that wanted to make a statement here.

10,710. *Mr Macrae.*—My lord, with your lordship's permission I would make only one remark, and then I am done. The matter is in your lordship's hands and in the hands of the Royal Commission. These people approached Mrs Chisholm through the factor; they were aware that I had no protection to afford them except the protection that I am endeavouring to secure for them here and now. They approached Mrs Chisholm through the factor, and it is from that quarter, I hold, that they should have had some encouragement and some protection, these forsooth 'independent' people.

10,711. *The Chairman.*—It is only right to say that we are faced with the significant fact, whatever it may mean, that eight names were sent in from Strathglass as delegates, and the Secretary's information is that there are only three here, whatever the explanation may be.

10,712. *Mr Macrae.*—These people, my lord, want to come, if they only had the necessary security.

10,713. *The Chairman.*—Well, eight names were sent as delegates from Strathglass, and they are not here.

10,714. *Mr Macrae.*—These men are absent and this is the reason.

10,715. *Mr Burns.*—In the name of Mrs Chisholm, and of Mr Winans, and everybody, I offer them the utmost security.

10,716. *The Chairman.*—You are quite willing to give that undertaking?

10,717. *Mr Burns.*—Absolutely; I will have them carried down and taken back, and give them whatever security they want. The request should have been conveyed to me.

10,718. *Mr Macrae.*—It was conveyed to Mrs Chisholm and to Mr Grant, and there was a petition besides, with this fact mentioned in it.

10,719. *The Chairman.*—The result, Mr Macrae, is this, that Mr Burns on behalf of The Chisholm estate offers the fullest encouragement to anyone who desires to come here to give evidence before the Commission.

10,720. *Mr Macrae.*—But, my lord, Mr Burns dropped a very significant hint that these people, or at any rate the one to whom I referred, is a cottar on lands held on lease by the man who made the threat, and the question is, what security has Mrs Chisholm to give the men if that threat is to be put into execution? Mr Burns made the significant suggestion that they had no power whatever to prevent him putting that threat into execution.

10,721. *Mr Burns.*—I am willing to give the same undertaking on behalf of Comar, on my own responsibility.

10,722. *Mr Macrae.*—Has he a brief from Comar?

10,723. *Mr Burns.*—No.

Beauly.
John Brown
Grant.

10,724. *Mr Sutherland.*—Allow me to make one remark. All this is settled by law; there has been an Act of Parliament passed last year which aims at people who may threaten any person giving evidence before a tribunal or Commission of this kind, by which they are liable to a fine of £100 or three months' imprisonment. It lies in the hands of the usual criminal authorities to put this Act into force.—*Witness.*—Mr Robertson's threat, whatever it amounted to, had no reference to evidence before this Commission.

10,725. *Mr Maccallum.*—Mr Grant, you led me to understand that there was no probability of the deer forest area on your estate being increased. Do you still hold to that answer?—There is the sheep farm that Mr Munro referred to.

10,726. It was distinctly conveyed to me by you that there was not any probability of any increase here. You notice there was an increase of 28,000 acres?—I might have had that in my mind, of course, at the time.

10,727. You now withdraw that, and say there is a probability?—There may be a chance that this farm will be cleared.

10,728. You see you admit this, that you were so hopeless of getting a farmer to take Comar that you did not even advertise it?—No.

10,729. And you also made the further statement that in such a case as that it should be turned into a deer forest?—Yes.

10,730. So there is every probability of it being turned into a deer forest?—Yes.

10,731. And therefore you withdraw the impression you have given?—Quite so, if it did have that impression.

10,732. *Mr Munro.*—In the negotiations for the transfer of Comar farm, who took the initiative?—Comar, by giving us notice that he would go out.

10,733. When the notice of this threat was conveyed to you by the small tenants, did you take any steps to assure them they would be kept skaithless?—Yes, I assured them that there would be no danger of this ever happening.

10,734. *Mr George Malcolm*, Secretary, Highland Property Association.—I wish to put a question to Mr Grant, first, as to the total area under deer forest. Mr Munro, I think, put the area at 3,000,000 acres. Are you aware, Mr Grant, that by the latest return the total area is 2,552,383 acres? [Hands a document to witness.]—Yes, I see that is the summation brought out here.

10,735. *Mr Sutherland.*—What is the date of that?

10,736. *Mr Malcolm.*—4th August 1891.

10,737. *The Chairman.*—It is Mr Fraser-Mackintosh's Return.

10,738. *Mr Malcolm.*—Are you aware that there was a finding in Lord Napier's Commission Report that it was necessary in deer forest land to devote 5 acres to the keep of each sheep? You have read that?—I think I read that.

10,739. I will read the passage I refer to:—'We 'believe that on the best forest land it takes about '4 acres to graze a sheep, and on the worst per-'haps 8 acres; but these are both extremes, and over 'the greater portion of the land devoted to deer forests 'we believe the average number of acres required to 'graze a sheep cannot be less than 5.'—Quite so; I said 3, I think.

10,740. If you divide that area of 2½ million acres by five, you get 500,000 sheep, don't you, as the sheep-keeping capacity of the forests?—Yes.

10,741. And, as a practical farmer or as a manager of farms, you know that sheep—Highland sheep—take three years to arrive at maturity?—Yes, I think so.

10,742. So that, although the number of sheep is 500,000, only one-third is put out in each year?—Yes.

10,743. That means that over all the forests 170,000 sheep are annually sent forth?—Yes, I would say that is a high estimate.

Beauly. John Brown Grant.

10,744. I need not enter into detail, but I have made the calculation, and I find that it only yields a fractional part of 1 lb. of meat to the whole population of this country?—Quite so; I understand it must be very small.

10,745. Now, in the course of your examination to-day, a reference was made to some parts of Lord Napier's Report which were called recommendations by that Commission. Are you aware that these, with one exception, were not really recommendations, but mere suggestions?—Well, I understood that they had not the weight of recommendations to the Government, whatever their nature was.

10,746. In one case they say:—'It is our opinion,' in another case they say something like this:—'Assuming that this suggestion,' and so on. The one that is a distinct recommendation is a recommendation that there should be no increase of deer forests which would involve the removal of crofters?—I understood that; that is my opinion.

10,747. In your case, where there has been an increase of afforestment, there were no crofters?—No crofters.

10,748. And therefore no removals?—No.

10,749. And even if this recommendation had been put in force in the Crofters Act, you, of course, would not have gone against anything of that sort?—No, certainly not.

10,750. There was another suggestion made, that afforestment in future should not take place below 1000 feet?—I have heard that suggestion made.

10,751. Do you consider that, if that suggestion were put into legal force, it would be not only detrimental to deer forests but destructive of them?—Oh yes, it is not practicable in any way, compatible with the existence of deer forests.

10,752. Then are you aware, further, that all those recommendations or suggestions, whichever way you look at them, it was a distinct recommendation of that Commission that they should not be made to apply to deer forests existing at that date?—Yes, that is so.

10,753. The remarks upon that point are:—'The 'preceding remarks are not intended to apply to 'existing forests. We would not think it equitable 'that these areas should be subjected to exceptional 'legislation, other than that which may be made 'applicable to agricultural or pastoral lands, even at 'the termination of current leases?'—Quite so.

10,754. Now one of the Commissioners made a reference to an increase of afforestment in Glengarry?—Yes.

10,755. I do not know whether you are fully aware of it?

10,756. *The Chairman.*—No, there is a misapprehension there; you were mentioned as Mr Malcolm of Glengarry.

10,757. *Mr Malcolm.*—I beg pardon. I thought Mr Maccallum gave the extent of the extension.

10,758. *The Chairman.*—Oh no.

10,759. *Mr Malcolm.*—Some reference was made to the increased expense of wintering. Did I understand you to say that the increased expense of wintering, notwithstanding some diminution in the area of sheep farms, was due to a very serious diminution of the area of low country wintering?—To some extent; that is one of the causes.

10,760. *The Chairman.*—The witness went into that very fully, Mr Malcolm; I don't think you need detain us on that point. He was quite explicit on the subject.

10,761. *Mr Malcolm.*—Mr Macleod made some reference to the remarks in your paper about the population in the parish, and about the diminution in the agricultural rental. Was it your object in making the remarks—was it one of your objects at any rate,—to show the effect made upon taxation by a large reduction of rent?—Yes, and that we were spending money on agriculture that we did not receive from it.

10,762. *The Chairman.*—I am afraid I can hardly allow that line of examination. I think it has been fully exhausted already from this bench. What you have asked already with regard to deer forests was perfectly relevant, especially as your name was directly mentioned.

Beauly. John Brown Grant.

10,763. *Mr Malcolm.*—May I put a question as to the extent of the taxation in the parish—as to the extent of the rates derived from sporting subjects in the parish?

10,764. *The Chairman.*—What is your answer to that question, Mr Grant?

10,765. *Mr Malcolm.*—I wish to put the question in this form, if you please. I understand that, taking the road and poor and school rates in this parish of Kilmorack, they amount to about £1500, and that of that amount no less than £1000 is derived from the sporting subjects?—I can quite understand that.

10,766. Is that the case?—That is very likely the case; of course I have not the figures before me.

10,767. Then when you spoke of the products of a deer forest, you mean, I suppose, the results in the shape of improvements, wages, reduction of taxation, and so on?—Yes.

10,768. *The Chairman.*—We have had all that fully gone into. I don't think there is any occasion to labour it further.

10,769. *Mr Malcolm.*—Mr Maccallum put the question to you very properly, as to the opportunities of the crofter class to rise to places of distinction in society?—Yes.

10,770. Is it not equally the case that men in that position, whether in Glencannich or in Glasgow, or anywhere else, have equal opportunities of rising to distinction?—Oh yes, of course; everybody has got good opportunities nowadays.

10,771. *Mr Burns.*—One question I should like Mr Grant to answer. In Lord Napier's Report of 1884 it is stated [p. 93]:—'We have considered it our duty to 'record unequivocally the opinion that the dedication 'of large areas exclusively to the purposes of sport, as 'at present practised in the Highlands, does not involve 'substantial diminution of food-supply to the nation, and 'we have amply recognised the various benefits which 'are in many cases associated with the sporting system, 'where it is exercised in a liberal and judicious spirit. 'Do you agree with that?—Yes; that is my case.

10,772. And, in an investigation before the House of Commons, Mr Mundella admitted that, supposing all the land now devoted to deer had gone back to sheep, the difference in the price of mutton would not be one penny per pound?—Yes.

10,773. *Mr Sutherland.*—Can you give us any idea how much venison could reach the population of the country, if it were ever sold?—It is not sold; it is given away for nothing.

10,774. How do you distinguish between a recommendation and a suggestion?—Mr Malcolm has made the distinction very clearly. I myself did not read the Report very carefully.

10,775. You are aware that the suggestion was made that on the east coast of Scotland in no case should a new deer forest come below the 1000 feet level?—I think in one of the Reports——

10,776. In the General Report?—That is so; it appears somewhere.

10,777. Now has any land been made into deer forest under the 1000 feet level?—Oh, I have no doubt it has.

James Campbell.

JAMES CAMPBELL, Crofter, Druim-an-dorsair, Kilmorack (69). (Examined in Gaelic through an Interpreter.)

10,778. *The Chairman.*—Are you a crofter?—Yes.

10,779. What is the name of your holding?—Druim-an-dorsair.

10,780. Was your rent fixed by the Crofters Commission?—Yes.

10,781. I see your area is 7 acres arable, 10 acres 3 roods 23 poles outrun, no common grazing: the former rent was £7 and the Fair Rent is £4, 10s. How long have you been living there as a crofter?—Twenty years myself, and my father was there before me. It is not in the same place that my father was.

10,782. But in Strathfarrar?—In Kilmorack.

10,783. How far is your croft from Beauly?—About 3 miles.

10,784. Do you find your croft too small for occupation?—Little enough, and big enough in a way.

10,785. Are you in need of additional grazing?—Yes.

10,786. Then is it your desire to get additional arable land, or only additional grazing?—I would rather get the hill my father had.

10,787. What hill was that?—Farley Hill.

10,788. Is that now deer forest?—Yes, always.

10,789. How long ago is it since the hill was turned into forest?—I believe it is about fifty-eight years since the wood was planted.

10,790. Had it been taken from your father before that?—Not until the wood was planted.

10,791. What stock did your father keep upon that ground?—I do not know what stock my father kept; he was in the habit of putting the cattle on to the hill.

10,792. Is there land on the forest, not under wood, available for grazing purposes?—Yes.

10,793. What extent?—I cannot tell.

10,794. How far is that land you refer to from your croft?—About 300 yards.

10,795. Are there other crofters near you?—Plenty.

10,796. Are they in need of grazing?—They have no pasture, any of them.

10,797. Are they desirous of obtaining pasture if it can be got?—Yes.

10,798. I understand your view to be that you do not wish to leave your holding for a better, but to get grazing added to your holding?—Yes, the place I have will do me all the days of my life.

10,799. Does your holding march with the forest?—It is quite near to the wood.

10,800. Are there a number of crofters near you?—Yes, full of them.

10,801. How many?—I cannot tell you the number.

10,802. Have you an application for enlargement of holdings before the Crofters Commission at present?—Yes.

10,803. And is the application for a portion of this land of Farley?—Yes.

10,804. Then is this the way of it, that if that application is granted, you get all you want in the way of additional land?—Just that; I would have my share of it like any other crofter.

10,805. But if you had your share of it like any other crofter, that would satisfy you, would it?—Yes.

10,806. Now, besides this land for which you have made application to the Crofters Commission, is there any other land in the locality which you ask our attention to?—Yes, to Urchany. There was no forest there during my time, between Kintail and Farley.

10,807. You recollect when there was no deer forest between Kintail and Farley. Is that so?—No; I was only 21 years of age when there was plenty of deer forest.

10,808. You don't remember then when there were no deer forests there?—Yes.

10,809. How were these lands occupied before they were afforested?—Cattle and sheep.

10,810. Were they in the hands of large farmers or crofters or of both?—Not first, but eventually came to that.

10,811. Now before they were in the hands of large farmers, how were those lands occupied?—They put off the crofters, and sheep farmers took it.

10,812. Before the sheep farms came there, the lands were in the hands of crofters to a great extent: is that what you say?—Yes.

10,813. Now were these crofters in townships?—I don't remember the crofters, but I remember the farmers that put them out.

10,814. But were the crofters of whom you speak whom the farmers put out, individual crofters with large holdings, or were they townships?—I cannot say a word about that.

10,815. Can you mention the name of any old place where crofters were, any old village or clachan?—In Urchany.

10,816. Any other one?—No.

10,817. How many crofters do you remember occupying that ground?—I don't remember one of them, but I have heard it said there were fifteen men.

10,818. In Urchany?—Yes.

10,819. Do you remember any anywhere else in that quarter?—No.

10,820. Do you remember the establishment of the large farms; I think you said you did?—Yes.

10,821. How many farms were formed out of the lands to which you refer?—One, Urchany.

10,822. What was the extent of it?—I don't know; there was a great deal of sheep on it.

10,823. Is that farm part of the forest now, or is it still a farm?—A forest.

10,824. Is it part of the forest of Farley?—It is bordering with it.

10,825. What is the name of the forest to which it belongs?—Farley Hill.

10,826. Is the land you are speaking of at Urchany just now embraced in the application to the Crofters Commission?—Well, I don't know about that, but I was thinking that we should get part of the wood.

10,827. Now, besides Urchany, is there any other land suitable for occupation?—No, I don't know but these two hills—Urchany and Farley Hill.

10,828. Farley Hill, I think, is between Urchany and Druim-an-dorsair?—Farley Hill is a little to the east of my house and a little to the west.

10,829. Now, the land you are speaking of at Urchany, as I understand, is not under wood?—No.

10,830. What sort of land is that: is it old arable or grazing land?—They were telling me it was good land, those parties that were working there.

10,831. What kind of land is it: is it under rotation?—Both arable and grazing, arable below and grazing above.

10,832. It is part of a farm of Urchany, you said: what is the name of the farm tenant?—There is no tenant there. The first man that I saw there was Sherriff.

10,833. It is part of the deer forest, is it?—It is a forest altogether.

10,834. Going west from Urchany, is there land west of Urchany suitable for occupation?—No, there is not much worth speaking about till you go into Glen-Strathfarrar.

10,835. Well, we will go into Glen-Strathfarrar; is there land there?—Yes, plenty.

10,836. Now, what part of Glen-Strathfarrar?—It is commencing at Culligran, and continuing as far as Inchvuilt.

10,837. Is Culligran under wood?—Yes, under birch wood.

10,838. And does the wood terminate at Loch Bunucharan, or where does the wood terminate?—On this side of Deanie.

10,839. That is exactly what I mean. Now, after you pass that, what kind of land do you come to near Camus-ochairidh?—Good land.

10,840. But is it grazing land or old arable? Give us a general description of it?—Old arable land with hill along with it.

10,841. Is it land suitable for occupation by crofters, in your opinion?—According to my opinion, it would be very good. The parties that were put out of it were very sorry leaving.

10,842. Who were put out of it?—I did not see but three.

10,843. When did you see three?—In the year 1849 or 1850; I am not sure which.

10,844. Going further up the glen, is there any other land suitable for occupation?—There is a fair share up to Inchvuilt.

10,845. How far is it from Deanie Lodge to Inchvuilt? How long would you take to walk it?—Six miles.

10,846. Is there land lying along the north bank of the river suitable for occupation?—Yes.

Beauly. James Campbell.

10,847. Is there land on the south side?—Not much; there are three places that a person could live on very well.

10,848. Just give us the names of these places?—Inchlair; it is of the worst end I am speaking, and coming along.

10,849. Well, take the west end. Is that on the south side of the river?—Yes.

10,850. What sort of a place is it just now?—A forest.

10,851. Is it near Inchvuilt wood?—Not very far from it.

10,852. What is the name of the next place?—Camus-ochairidh.

10,853. How many crofters could be planted there?—I don't know how many.

10,854. But is there old arable there?—Yes.

10,855. And grazing?—Yes.

10,856. What is the next place?—Blatrale.

10,857. Is there old arable?—Yes.

10,858. Can you tell us of any places on the north side of the river?—Yes.

10,859. What are the names?—Deanie.

10,860. Is there old arable there?—Yes, plenty.

10,861. Now, passing on, and going further up, what is the next place?—Bunacharan.

10,862. Is there old arable on the banks of that loch?—There is old arable there in every step.

10,863. What is the next place you would mention?—Muillie.

10,864. It is close on the loch?—Not very far from it.

10,865. Is there old arable there?—Yes.

10,866. What is the next place between that and Inchvuilt?—Ardchuilc.

10,867. And is there old arable there?—Yes.

10,868. What is the next place?—Uachdar.

10,869. Is there old arable there?—I cannot say very much about it.

10,870. There is a place called Lochavullin?—I am not acquainted with it.

10,871. Are there any mills between Inchvuilt and Farley Wood?—I don't remember.

10,872. Do you know the name Lochavuillin? I think it is a mistake on the map. Now tell me, is there any land, do you think, suitable for occupation beyond Inchvuilt?—No, but Inchvuilt itself.

10,873. I take it, speaking more generally, that along both banks of the river, but especially the north bank from Inchvuilt down to Deanie Lodge, there are considerable tracts of ground that might be profitably occupied by crofters. Is that so?—Yes.

10,874. Is the land low enough in level for occupation?—I did not hear but it was.

10,875. But you know it yourself, I suppose?—Yes.

10,876. Do you yourself at Druim-an-dorsair suffer from blight from late seasons and late harvests?—No; when there is a good season we will have a fair crop, and when there is not a good season it is quite the opposite.

10,877. That is to say, when the season generally is good, it is good with you too?—Yes.

10,878. Is there much danger from serious floods from the river?—I never heard of them making any damage.

10,879. Can you give us any information about any other glens?—No, I cannot say a word about them.

10,880. Do you know anything about Monar?—No.

10,881. *Mr Macleod.*—Are you speaking of your own knowledge of Glen-Strathfarrar?—Yes, from what I know myself.

10,882. You said that there was a considerable area of old arable land there now without wild birch. Do you remember when it was cleared of birch?—No.

10,883. Do you think there would be any great difficulty in getting rid of the birch?—I think there would. There is a place under it called Gortanmor that would be very suitable.

10,884. You would not say that this land that the birch is growing on would be suitable land for the formation of arable holdings?—No, but it would be suitable for pasture in connection with the arable.

10,885. In connection with the arable at Gortanmor? Beauly. James Campbell.—Yes.

10,886. Then, with regard to the wood at Farley, you think that could be made available for grazing too?—Yes.

10,887. *Mr Maccallum.*—Are there many crofters in your township, or where you reside at Druim-an-dorsair, in your neighbourhood?—Yes, it is full of them.

10,888. How many have joined in the application for an increase?—I don't know.

10,889. You are one of them?—Yes.

10,890. Besides these, are there others who would like to get more land?—Yes; there are very few there but would like to get what their fathers had.

10,891. You spoke of a number of places in Glen Strathfarrar. Do you remember the whole of these places having been occupied?—I remember three, and gamekeepers.

10,892. You mentioned a number of places; were they townships as a rule?—Three.

10,893. Three in each of these places?—One in each place, so far as I remember.

10,894. All these places are now a deer forest, are they?—Yes.

10,895. Were they made into large sheep runs before being turned into deer forest?—It is the sheep runs that they were. The sheep put the crofters out, and the deer put the sheep out.

10,896. And, in your opinion, are all these places suitable for reoccupation?—According to what I know, they are the best places that I have heard mentioned here.

10,897. Can you give us any idea of the size of holding that you think would be successful in these places that you have mentioned?—Twelve acres, by getting the hill pasture.

10,898. And you would contemplate having a club stock?—(Question repeated in Gaelic by Mr Maccallum.)

10,899. Would you have any stock in common between you?—Common stock would be better, but I am afraid they might disagree about it.

10,900. But their stock would thrive better?—I am not going to say about stock. There would not be as much noise.

10,901. What reason have you to think they would disagree about it?—There was a disagreement in every one that ever was in the world; one man was trying to be bigger than the other.

10,902. Have you had experience of these disagreements about a joint stock?—I saw a part.

10,903. Where did you see a joint stock?—At Farley Hill.

10,904. There was a joint stock there?—The crofters there had it altogether at one time.

10,905. And was it one common stock they had?—Yes, one stock.

10,906. Was it under the management of one shepherd?—At one time every man was looking after his own, and at other times they had a shepherd.

10,907. *Mr Shaw Stewart.*—You say these lands that you told us of could be occupied by crofters. Do you say so from your own knowledge, or from what you hear others say?—I have my own opinion on that.

10,908. You know the lands well?—Yes, for a long time.

10,909. Do you mean that they could be profitably occupied?—Yes, they were very much against being put out of it.

10,910. Will you kindly tell me what you mean by profitable occupation?—What do you mean by that.

10,911. It is an important point. Do you know any men who would undertake to settle on these lands, cultivate them, put on the stock, build the houses and pay rent?—I don't go to look after that, but I am sure that could be found.

10,912. Do you know the men who would undertake it?—No, it is not in my mind just now.

10,913. With regard to the wood at Farley, what kind of wood is it?—Good wood.

10,914. What kind of wood?—Fir and larch. I was there planting it myself.

10,915. You have told us that the available land is where the wood is now?—It is that part that we were using for pasture until our own grass would grow.

10,916. But in order for crofters to occupy that land now, it would be necessary to clear the wood?—It will not do any harm although the cattle were in the wood now, the wood is so grown.

10,917. Grazing in the wood?—Yes.

10,918. *Mr Donald Macrae* (for the Highland Land League).—Would your lordship kindly ask him how many acres of old arable land there are in Urchany, and if there are over 150 or 200 acres?

10,919. *The Chairman.*—Can you tell me how many acres of old arable are in Urchany?—I think there is between 50 and 60, but not much of that was turned over since Mr Sherriff left it.

10,920. When did he leave?—More than fifty years ago.

10,921. Is the extent of old arable not greater than that?—I cannot say how much.

10,922. *Mr Macrae.*—Would he be surprised to know that there are over 150?

10,923. *The Chairman.*—Have you ever heard that there were as many as 150 acres?—I cannot say how many acres there were, but there were fifteen families on it.

10,924. *Mr Macrae.*—He said fifteen families, and every one of them having enough, and well doing.

10,925. *The Chairman.*—I want to ask you this question. Is there included within what is known as Farley Wood, considerable tracts of ground which are not covered by wood?—No.

10,926. It is all covered with wood, more or less?—Yes, I think it is.

10,927. *Mr Shaw Stewart.*—You say you helped to plant the wood. Have you not practical knowledge of the management of wood?—I have no knowledge but of planting it.

10,928. You don't know then that it is impossible to manage a wood properly if you once graze cattle on it, because it interferes with the proper course of cutting and planting?—I don't think it would.

10,929. *The Chairman.*—Mr Peter, you represent the Lovat estate?—I do.

10,930. *The Chairman.*—And this witness has been giving evidence with regard to the Lovat estate?—Yes.

10,931. *Mr Burns.*—I have some questions to ask, my lord.

10,932. *The Chairman.*—I thought you were only for The Chisholm estate?

10,933. *Mr Burns.*—No, I am appearing for the Lovat estate. (*To Witness.*) You pay £4, 10s. of rent, don't you?—Yes.

10,934. Do you know that the rent of Farley Forest is £1000 a year?—We heard sometimes it would be that, and sometimes not.

10,935. We will take it as it is in the Valuation Roll, at £1000 a year. How are you going to pay that when you get it?—That is not what we ask, but fair rent.

10,936. But have you any method of thinking how you are going to pay this thousand a year for Farley when you get it?—I am not speaking of that at all.

10,937. You are wanting the Farley Forest, and I am telling you Lord Lovat gets £1000 a year for it. How are you going to pay him that rent, if you intend to pay it?—Although Lord Lovat would get £5000 for it, that is not the price of the place.

10,938. Supposing anybody thought it was right that you should pay Lord Lovat as much as he is getting just now, what is your scheme about you and the rest of you paying the money?—I have no scheme.

10,939. *The Chairman.*—I don't think you should press this witness about that?

10,940. *Mr Burns.*—I would not, if there were other witnesses who might be asked. (*To Witness.*) But I don't suppose you could pay half that rent?—We did not make up our minds yet what to do.

10,941. You had no plan about the rent?—We have a plan that we shall never give that for it.

10,942. Have you any plan how far you should go? Beauly.

10,943. *Mr Macrae.*—My lord, this man applied for a definite portion marked on the Ordnance Survey Sheet. They don't want this forest. James Campbell.

10,944. *The Chairman.*—The total rent of the forest of Urchany and Farley is £775 in the Valuation Roll, and I have no doubt this application is only for a very small portion.

10,945. *Mr Macrae.*—That is so.

10,946. *The Chairman.*—You can hardly ask this man what rent he would give for a whole forest, of which the rent is not £1000, and of which he only asks a fraction.

10,947. *Mr Burns.*—The rent is £1000, but it includes household furniture, and servants' wages, &c.

10,948. *The Chairman.*—It is a little awkward that we have not got the application.

10,949. *Mr Burns* (*to Witness*).—What is your notion, Mr Campbell, of what you would give if you got it?—I did not make up my mind, but I think it would be dear enough at 6d. to 9d. per acre.

10,950. You said, and I rather think you said it inconsiderately, that there was no deer forest between Farley and Kintail. What time were you referring to?

10,951. *The Chairman.*—What he did say was that he remembers a time when there was no deer forest. —*Witness.*—In my early days I remember when there was no forest between Kintail and Farley.

10,952. *Mr Burns.*—Do you remember a time when there was no Fasnakyle Forest?—Yes.

10,953. And no Struy Forest?—No.

10,954. And no Glen-Strathfarrar Forest?

10,955. And no Glencannich Forest?—No.

10,956. And no Glen-Affaric Forest?—I don't know; I was not going there.

10,957. And no Guisachan Forest?—I can't give any account of it.

10,958. And no forest at Monar?—I cannot go up there either.

10,959. Did you ever see a map? Do you know that these names are on the maps 150 years ago?—No.

10,960. Did you ever live in Glen-Strathfarrar?—Yes, on the bottom of it for five years.

10,961. When?—Forty years and over.

10,962. And you have not been there since forty years ago?—Yes.

10,963. When?—Yes, with Finlay Macrae that was in Culligran.

10,964. Staying for a night?—For four years.

10,965. But Culligran is at the foot of the glen?—Yes, the first farm.

10,966. *The Chairman.*—Did you say that you lived there for four years?—Yes.

10,967. When was it you were four years there?—I went there in 1845, and left in 1851.

10,968. *Mr Burns.*—What arable land is at Camus-ochairidh?—A nice place, but it is the worst place of the whole.

10,969. Is it occupied now?—Gamekeeper.

10,970. It is only a bit of potato ground, is it?—Yes, and oat land.

10,971. It is a croft for a keeper or a shepherd?—Yes.

10,972. Is not this the story, that these little bits of arable land are either little crofts for keepers or shepherds: they are not farms?—Gamekeepers and shepherds never had them until they were taken from the people.

10,973. But there are small bits of land suitable for keepers and shepherds, suitable for having three cows and their followers?—Yes, as gamekeepers are situated there now.

10,974. *The Chairman.*—And they would be very good for crofters?—Yes.

10,975. And a greater number of crofters could live there than the gamekeepers at present?—Yes, three times.

10,976. How many keepers are there?—I don't know. There are four or five.

10,977. How many crofters would you place there if you had a chance?—If we got the pasture along with it, I will put two on Camus-ochairidh

Beauly. — James Campbell.

10,978. How many in the whole glen?—I would require to make up my mind

10,979. Could you put twenty?—Yes, twenty.

10,980. Can you name some other figure yourself?—Yes.

10,981. How many?—Twenty.

10,982. You think twenty would do. How much rent would they pay apiece?—I don't know what they would pay.

10,983. Can't you suggest?—I am not going to say.

10,984. How much land would they have—arable land?—Six or seven acres each.

10,985. Would they pay £10 a piece?—I don't know what they would pay, but that would be too dear.

10,986. Well, £5?

10,987. *The Chairman.*—He does not enter on the subject of rent, Mr Burns. I will put this question. What would you consider to be a fair rent payable by the crofters whom you propose to see settled on this ground of which we are speaking?—If we get the pasture along with it, about 12s. per acre.

10,988. How much rent would you make payable by each crofter?—I cannot tell.

10,989. What rent would you propose to fix, supposing the rent to be a fair rent; what rent would you propose to make payable by each crofter?—Unless the hill is along with the arable, 8s. an acre is dear enough.

10,990. *Mr Burns.*—Would you pay £100 for the whole glen amongst you?—I don't know what will be just now.

10,991. *Mr Sutherland.*—I wish to make this point clear with regard to the application. You were asked if you wanted £1000 worth of land without paying £1000 of money. Did you ask the £1000 worth of land?—I did not ask that.

10,992. You only asked for Farley Wood: is that so?—No.

10,993. And you were asked if you were to pay for that the whole rent of the Farley Forest?—No.

10,994. And you said that you were not willing to pay that. You only wanted the Farley Wood?—Yes.

10,995. But not the Farley Forest?—Yes, and the hill at the back.

10,996. But not the whole of the Farley Forest?—Every bit of the forest.

10,997. And you were willing to pay the same rent for it as you paid for the other part of your holdings?—Yes, according to what the Commissioners would fix.

10,998. You are perfectly willing to pay any fair rent for any additional land that is given to you?—Yes.

10,999. And everything you told us about Glen-Strathfarrar was spoken from your own information and experience?—Yes.

11,000. *Mr Burns.*—You said that the sheep put the crofters out of Glen-Strathfarrar. Were there ever crofters in Glen-Strathfarrar?—Yes, it was the sheep that put them out.

11,001. When?—I cannot tell you.

11,002. *Mr Macrae.*—The man said, my lord, that there were crofters there.

11,003. *Mr Burns* (question repeated).—I never saw there but three tenants, and I saw the place where they were in.

11,004. What was the place?—One of them in Inchlair, the other in Ardchuilc, and the other in Camusochairidh.

11,005. But there were no club farms?—No, everyone was on his own land.

11,006. *The Chairman.*—What rent did these crofters that you speak of pay? Do you know the rent any of them paid?—I cannot tell.

Duncan Campbell.

DUNCAN CAMPBELL, labourer, Beauly (80).
(Examined in Gaelic through an Interpreter.)

11,007. *The Chairman.*—Do you reside in Beauly?—Yes, for some time back; for the last forty years.

11,008. Do you know about Farley Deer Forest?—Yes, I was shepherd there twice.

11,009. Did you hear the evidence given by Campbell?—No, I did not hear what he said. Beauly. —

11,010. When were you shepherd there?—Sixty years ago, with the farmers. Duncan Campbell.

11,011. Was it under wood then?—No.

11,012. When did it go under wood?—I believe thirty-seven or thirty-eight years ago.

11,013. Is it larch or birch?—I was not working at it, but I think it is larch and fir.

11,014. Is the whole of the land there called Farley Wood under wood, or is it partly wood and partly rough ground?—Yes, so far as the march came to The Chisholm's ground. The tenants in the Farley district went to this hill ground, and the hill was let to them by the factor on the Lovat estate.

11,015. Are you one of the applicants for additional land from that quarter?—No.

11,016. What is it you desire specially to tell us?—Anything that is asked of me.

11,017. *Mr Donald Macrae.*—I think he undertook to speak about Strathconan.

11,018. *The Chairman.*—The note furnished to me is 'Farley Deer Forest and Strathconan.'

11,019. Do you know about Strathconan?—Yes, I was born there.

11,020. In what part of Strathconan were you born?—Clachundulan; my father paid rent there for thirty-five years.

11,021. What is the length of Strathconan?—I am not very sure, but I suppose it will be 12 miles long.

11,022. Is there land there suitable for occupation by crofters?—Yes, for farmers or crofters, good land in Strathconan.

11,023. On both sides of the river?—Yes, both sides.

11,024. And is it land that would do partly for arable and partly for grazing?—Every 'town' has the hill along with it.

11,025. Can you give us the names of any of the old places or townships?—I hope I can.

11,026. Well, go on and do it, if you please?—On the south side, Coire-Feola, Achadh-an-Eas, Ach-na-h-Uidhe, Inbhir-Chomhrain, Blair-na-Bidh, Baile-na-Creige, A' Chrannaich, Dail-Breac, Baile-an-Uillt.

11,027. Are there tenants there?—It is in the hands of the landlord. Glaic-Odhar, Annat, Baile-an-Uillt (there are two places called Baile-an-Uillt) An Caorann. On the north side of the river, Coire-bhuic, Bac-a'-Lianian, Scaird-Ruadh, A' Charnach, Innis-Longard, Clachundulan Dail-riabhach, A' Chroit, Innis-Mheanaidh, Druim-an-t-Suidhe, Goirtean-nan-Ullag, Baile-'Bhlair, Druim-Fearna, Strathan-Mor, Baile-Mhuilinn, Am Por-Ruinn, Daile-na-Croiche, Achadh-Lorachan, Druimean-Buidhe, Creagan-nan-Mollachd, Leac-Ruadh, Bun-an-t-Srath (or Druimean-Riabhach), Fearnach.

11,028. Were these places at one time occupied by crofters?—Yes.

11,029. Every one of them?—Yes.

11,030. All these places were occupied by crofters?—Yes, and there were nice farms during that time also.

11,031. Were these individual holdings—individual crofts, and small farms, or were they townships?—Three and four in some places.

11,032. Some of them having as many as three or four separate families and some of them individual crofts?—No, there were no individual crofts.

11,033. Then in every one of these places was there more than one family?—Yes.

11,034. That is within your recollection, is it?—Yes.

11,035. Then was the glen cleared of the small holders?—Yes.

11,036. What year, or years, was that?—A great many of them went out when the property was under trustees. Before Mr Balfour bought the property it was under trustees.

11,037. Did the main clearances take place while the property was under trustees?—Yes, one man, John Fraser, had Urchany at one time.

11,038. I cannot get a sequence of question and answer from you. Who was John Fraser?—He had a farm over at Inchberry here.

11,039. What had he to do with the clearances?—To

Beauly. Duncan Campbell.

put sheep on and shepherds; it was he who got the place.

11,040. *Mr Donald Macrae.*—The witness mentioned that fifteen were put out in one day.

11,041. *The Chairman.*—But that does not help me except to a very slight extent.

11,042. *Mr Macrae.*—It was stated by the witness, and it might lead your lordship to follow it up. It was not repeated by the interpreter.

11,043. *The Chairman.*—What I want to get from you just now is the particular date; how many years ago was it that these clearances took place?—I am sure fifty years ago.

11,044. The property was in the hands of trustees,—whose trustees?—Lord Conan's trustees.

11,045. Can you tell us when Lord Conan died?—I don't know.

11,046. Was it this century?—Pooh.

11,047. Can you tell me when it was that the late proprietor's father bought the property?—There are three there in succession: I am not very sure.

11,048. It was the late proprietor's grandfather, I think, that purchased it?—Yes, the grandfather of the present Mr A. J. Balfour. He was the first that came there.

11,049. And no clearances have taken place since then?—Oh yes, plenty; they were demolishing the houses, and the factor has demolished my own house, too.

11,050. How many years is it since the last clearance took place?—About forty years ago.

11,051. You said you remember of fifteen being cleared at one time?—I might remember that: they were pulling down the houses.

11,052. I suppose you mean you do remember it?—Yes, and they pulled down the house myself and my mother were in.

11,053. How many years ago was that?—The best part of forty or forty-four years.

11,054. They pulled down the house your mother was in. What rent did she pay?—We had a value of £20 of rent. It is from another party we took it, not from the landlord.

11,055. Who did you take it from?—Eben Macaulay.

11,056. Was he a farmer?—He was a farmer, but he gave it up; he came over to Cabrich and had a croft there.

11,057. Was your mother a sub-tenant?—Yes.

11,058. Were most of the crofters that were removed sub-tenants, or were they tenants of the proprietor?—Some of them were sub-tenants and some were tenants of the proprietor.

11,059. Had all these tenants that were removed portions of arable land?—Yes.

11,060. And hill grazing?—Yes, the hill along with it.

11,061. What class of stock did they keep: did they keep cattle?—Cattle and sheep.

11,062. Did any of them keep horses?—One horse each.

11,063. Had all of them a horse?—Yes.

11,064. All that land, as I understand you to say, was turned into sheep farms?—Yes, it was a hill for sheep.

11,065. Are the remains of the houses of these crofters still quite visible?—Yes.

11,066. Over the whole extent of ground to which you have referred?—Yes, all over the ground.

11,067. Were these holdings situated on the bank of the river on each side, near the river bank for the most part?—The south did not belong to the north.

11,068. What do you mean by the south not belonging to the north?—The whole place belonged to the same landlord.

11,069. Are you of opinion, because you are giving us much information, that the whole of that land, arable and grazing, would be suitable for occupation by crofters now?—Yes, and it would keep five.

11,070. What do you mean by 'it'?—Blair-na-Bidh.

11,071. That is the place you were in yourself?—Yes.

11,072. And would each of the other places you have mentioned keep more than one crofter?—Yes, I am sure two.

11,073. There are thirty-five places, so that would be accommodation for at least seventy to eighty crofters. Is that land all under forest now, or is it under sheep?—All under forest.

11,074. How long after the last of the removals was it turned into forest?—I am sure over forty years ago.

11,075. Is any of the land which was formerly in the possession of crofters under wood now?—Yes, they put a plantation there in a good lot of it.

11,076. Can you tell us what part was turned into wood: is there a wood called Strathconan Wood?—Yes, there is a wood at Coille-Bhùiridh.

11,077. Can you give me the names of the places where there is wood growing now, formerly in the occupation of crofters?—Near Dail-na-Croiche there is a wood at Bun-an-t-Srath.

11,078. Any more?—No.

11,079. Were you going to say anything about the wood of Bun-an-t-Srath?—It is a birch wood.

11,080. Is it the only wood?—Yes.

11,081. Is all the land that was formerly in the occupation of its small holders at a low enough level for cultivation and grazing purposes?—Yes, it was wintering the sheep for us and wintering the cattle.

11,082. And did your crops ripen there in the general case?—Yes, as early as it would here [Beauly]. There is not a Highland district in the country before Strathconan for ripening.

11,083. And you were able to grow oats and barley, and turnips and potatoes?—Yes, and very good oats, too, but no barley nor turnips. Turnips were not in fashion at the time. We had plenty grass and straw.

11,084. *Mr Macleod.*—You gave the names of those townships where there were people, but you said there were tenants as well, didn't you? Were there any large tenants as well as those small ones?—Not very big. £20 was the highest.

11,085. Besides the people that were in these places that you mentioned, were there any other tenants in the Strath?—I mentioned all the 'towns' to you.

11,086. And there were no people on the Strath except those that were on these 'towns'?—No.

11,087. Can you tell us how many sheep farms the Strath was formed into after it was cleared?—I don't know of anyone but Mr Gordon's, the proprietor of Arabella.

11,088. I thought you mentioned some people who came from Inchberry and turned out some of the people. Who was the man that came from Inchberry?—John Fraser.

11,089. What was he?—He had the arable farm of Inchberry, and he also had Glengowrie and Urchany grazing farms, and he had a brother called Dr Fraser, who had Kerrow in Strathglass.

11,090. You cannot tell us how many families were in the Strath altogether; you never heard that?—There were six or seven families in the 'town' that I was in myself.

11,091. If I gave you time to go over each of them, could you give the number of families that were in each 'town'?—Yes, I can tell it now. In Coire-Feola, 4 families; Achadh-an-Eas, 5 families; Ach-na-h-Uidhe, none there lately, but it would maintain one crofter; Inbhir-Chomhrain, 6 families; Blair-na-Bidh, 7 houses, but there were only 5 holdings. Some of the cottars were small.

11,092. It is the number of families. I don't mind whether they were tenants or cottars?—In Blair-na-Bidh, 7 families, as I said; Baile-na-Creige, 4 families; A' Chrannaich, 4 families; Dail-Breac, in my time there was only one tenant, John Macdonald, but there were small tenants before my time.

11,093. Did you ever hear how many small tenants?—There was one part forming a portion of Dail-Breac called Cnoc-Dubh, where there were 2 tenants. In Baile-an-Uillt, 2 families Glaic-Odhar, 3 families; Annat, 1

Beauly.

Duncan Campbell.

family; Baile-an-Uillt, 4 or 5 families; An Caorann, 2 families; Coire-Bhuic, 7 families; Bac-a'-Lianain, 2 families; Scaird-Ruadh, 9 families; before they were cleared out. They were removed by Colin Munro. A' Charnach, 4 families; Innis-Longard, 1 family; Clach-lonndrain, 2 families; Dail-Riabhach, 2 families; A' Chroit, 2 families; Innis-Mheanaidh, 5 families at any rate; Druim-an-t-Suidhe, 1 family; Goirtean-nan-Ullag, 1 family; Baile-Bhlair, 4 families; Druim-Fearna, 3 families; Strathan-Mor, 3 families; Baile-Mhuilinn, 6 families I believe; Am Por-ruinn, 4 families paying rent; Daile-na-Croich, 4 families; Achadh-Lorachan, 3 families; in my early recollection there were 3 tenants, but there is only 1 now; Druimean-Buidhe, 4 families; Creagan-nam-Mollachd, 1 family; Leac-Ruadh, 1 family; Bun-an-t-Srath, 2 families; Fearnach, 2 families.

11,094. *Mr Macleod.*—Would you take the trouble of reading them out to him, as it is a matter of some importance. (List read over by the Secretary.)

11,095. *The Chairman.*—Are these all correct?—Yes, as far as I know.

11,096. In Bac-a'-Lianain were there not 4, 1 principal tenant and 3 cottars?—No, just the 2.

11,097. Of course you remember all these places yourself?—Yes, and I remember the people who were there. It was the father of Mr Macrae, the horse-hirer here, who was in Bac-a'-Lianain.

11,098. And he had 2 cottars, or how many?—He used to give houses to people there, but they had only got the houses. He was the tenant of the land.

11,099. How many houses then were there?—3.

11,100. Besides Mr Macrae's own house?—Yes.

11,101. So that is 4?—Yes; there was the family of the tenant himself, and the other 3 tenants.

11,102. Were there any other houses that you have not counted in this list?—I believe there was a house or two in Coire-Mhuilt that I did not mention. In addition to these there was a school-house in Baile-Mhuilinn.

11,103. Except for these one or two, you think you have mentioned every family that was in the Strath at the time you speak of?—I think I did, as far as I know I mentioned them all; but there might be a good many since I left the district. I left the district long ago.

11,104. What year do you speak of?—I cannot well tell the year, but I believe there are some men in the village here who could tell the year. There is an old man from Strathconan living in the village here, I believe he could give you the year; he is the father of the coachman in the employment of Mr Mackenzie, banker, Beauly.

11,105. Can you give me within ten years of the time?—It is at any rate forty years ago; it is a little over forty years; I am forty years here.

11,106. What were you doing at the time you were speaking of?—I had been droving, and it was not to my profit. I used to go to Mull and the Isle of Skye, and travelling the world. I lost £100 in one year in Mull transactions.

11,107. That is at the time you speak of?—But since I came down here I was in the employment of Mr Maclennan, Tomich, and I was in the employment of Mr Archibald Maclennan, attending to his sheep so long as he had any.

11,108. Would you be 30 years of age at the time you speak of?—I was for two years a shepherd in Strathconan; but I have been thirty-five years in Beauly, and these two years were before I was in Beauly. I was a shepherd before.

11,109. You are speaking of forty or fifty years ago?—Yes, that is so.

11,110. Were the people put away all at one time, or was it over a number of years?—By degrees. They were not sent away at the same time, and those who did not willingly remove, had their houses pulled down.

11,111. Can you tell me how many years the sheep were there after the people were put away?—In the township that I was in, it was only a year or two under sheep before it was put under deer after the small tenants left; but Scuravuillin, the place where I was a shepherd, is still under sheep belonging to the proprietor.

Beauly.

Duncan Campbell.

11,112. So that there was no great length of time between the putting away of the people and the putting away of the sheep?—No.

11,113. Going back to the condition of things before the Strath was cleared at all, can you tell us now about the crops?—They would have a good crop in a good year, and when it was not a good year, they would not have a good crop. We made meal there.

11,114. How often would you have a bad year?—Strathconan is low lying, and if there was a bad year they felt it down here as soon as they felt it in Strathconan. I have travelled over many a district, but I never saw a Highland district more natural than Strathconan.

11,115. Speaking from your own experience, you would say that the crops grow as well in Strathconan as down in the Aird here?—I think so, in parts of Strathconan.

11,116. What about the other parts?—When crops were done they were obliged to earn their food otherwise, and buy it.

11,117. What was it that was against these places: is it that the land was poor naturally, or that there were floods, or frost, or what was it?—There were too many people in some of these districts, and they did not go away to earn their living elsewhere.

11,118. But I am speaking just now about the crops, not about the condition of the people?—The land was not so good, it was drier.

11,119. Were the potatoes ever frosted within your knowledge?—Not often; the water ran.

11,120. You spoke about the corn crop; were there any mills in Strathconan?—Yes, and they are there still.

11,121. How many do you remember in your first days?—There was only 1 mill and there is only 1 mill now, and the place where the mill is is Baile-mhuillin.

11,122. I suppose they made meal there every year more or less?—Yes, no matter how little it would be. Although it were only a boll, we ground it.

11,123. About the stock that you had on the place. I think your own father died when you were pretty young?—No, he did not.

11,124. You said about yourself that you were put out of there with your mother. Where was your father then?—He was in Clach-lonndrain. He was thirty-five years paying rent there.

11,125. Where was it that you were put out of yourself?—Blair-na-Bidh; my mother was then a widow, and they pulled down the house, and then she came to Beauly.

11,126. What sort of stock did you put on the hill there?—There were 150 sheep for every £20 of rent, and the rent of the town was £100.

11,127. Then had they cattle in their souming as well for the £20?—We had three milk cows each on the low ground; the sheep were on the hill ground. There was not a town nor a place in the district better for a milk cow than it.

11,128. For the £20 they had three cows and their followers and 150 sheep?—Yes.

11,129. Then tell me how you held the sheep. Were they held in common, or did each one hold his own flock?—In my time each tenant had his own sheep, but Mr Smith, the former factor for Mr Balfour, got some tenants to have a joint stock, but that does not refer to the township I was in, but some other townships on the estate. In this particular place the factor himself took the stock at valuation from us, and the place was converted into a forest.

11,130. Then as to the place where you had this stock in common, was it a bigger place or a smaller place?—The place is Glaic-odhar; it is not a big place.

11,131. I don't want you to answer this question unless you can speak from your own knowledge, but do you remember how they got on with this stock in common?—They got on very well. Mr Smith himself took the stock from them since then and sent the

tenants away. The two tenants in Glaic-odhar saved money.

11,132. Now about the sheep stock and the cattle that they had. You were, of course, a drover yourself, and you had been seeing something of the world. How did the stock they had compare with the other parts of the Highlands? How did the Strathconan stock compare with the Mull stock?—The principal parts of Strathconan will produce sheep as good as any place. It is in Glenorran, a place called Coire-nan-Stuc and Aonach-mor. That was the first deer forest in Strathconan.

11,133. Can you tell us how much stock the tenants had there before they were cleared out, compared with the stock elsewhere?—The stock was good then, but not so heavy as now. In the old times they used to have yeld cattle and horses on the hill, and that would deteriorate the quality of the sheep.

11,134. It was black cattle that they had?—Yes, Highland black cattle.

11,135. Speaking with all the knowledge that you have got of Strathconan, do you think that it could be profitably cultivated by small tenants?—Yes, it is them that could do that, if they got the place.

11,136. *Mr Shaw Stewart.*—I want to ask you first about four places—Coire-Feola, Achadh-an-Eas, Scaird-Ruadh, and A' Charnach. Were not the people removed from there before the year 1839, before Mr Balfour purchased the property?—Not from A' Charnach, but they were sent away from Invermeany. Colin Munro put the tenants away from Coire-Feola and Achadh-an-Eas before Mr Balfour acquired the property.

11,137. And Scaird-Ruadh?—The same Colin Munro also sent them away from Scaird-Ruadh.

11,138. Now, with regard to the other places, do you remember the potato famine of 1846?—Yes, I remember that well.

11,139. Was there not a great deal of distress among the crofters at that time?—Yes, meal was dear; it was 36s. per boll.

11,140. And was it not on account of the poverty and discomfort in which they lived that the late Mr Balfour removed some crofters?—The factor, Mr Smith, saw that the land was not sufficient to support them all.

11,141. Too many crofters for the land?—Yes, in every township, and they did not go away elsewhere to earn anything.

11,142. Was not every care taken in their removal that they should not suffer more than could be helped?—He was sending them away, pulling down the houses.

11,143. Were they not given two or three years' notice before they were removed?—I don't think it; he did not give that to our township, at any rate.

11,144. And were not some of them excused two years' rent before they were removed?—I never heard that. We did not get the place for nothing, at any rate.

11,145. Were they not supplied with as much work as could be found for them at a full market wage?—Those down at Milton and Am Por-Ruinn, in the neighbourhood of Mr Balfour's own house, got labour, but not those in the upper parts of the Strath.

11,146. Did not some settle at Knockfarrel, near Strathpeffer?—Yes, they were obliged to leave Strathconan, and they came in and settled in Knockfarrel, and they are there still to-day; and Mulbuie and the Black Isle are full of people removed from Strathconan.

11,147. And they did well after they left?—Every man of them did well there. Each man will have a cow.

11,148. Did not the removal of these crofters who did well when they went away give more room and therefore benefit those who remained behind?—Yes, Mr Smith thinned them down until he reduced the number to such as the district would maintain, but the best lands were put under deer.

11,149. But if the crofters were replaced in the places you have named to the same number as they existed fifty years ago, would there not be great difficulty for them to live?—No, the land is so long out of cultivation that it would yield a first-rate crop to-day.

11,150. But for how long would the land go on yielding that?—If it were kept well, and manured, it would keep in good crops for a long time; but under present conditions it would give crops for three years in succession with very little manure.

11,151. It would require considerable expenditure on the land to keep it yielding good crops?—Not much; the greatest difficulty would be the building of the houses.

11,152. *The Chairman.*—I think it is only fair in this inquiry to call attention to the statement made *a propos* of the line of examination by Mr Gerald Balfour before the Colonisation Committee, of which the present Secretary for War was the chairman, on 21st July 1890. The account of the matter he gives is this:—'After the advent of the potato disease in 1846, 'the destitution upon the estate became so great, and 'the outlook so serious, that my father, who had by 'that time entered into possession of the property, 'determined to effect a complete reorganisation of the 'management of the estate, and to establish it once for 'all on a basis such as would make a permanent rise in 'the standard of comfort possible. The essential con-'dition of success was that the population should bear 'a reasonable relation to the capacity of the crofts, 'together with the opportunities of earning wages from 'labour on the estate. In my father's judgment the 'number of the inhabitants, reduced as it was, was 'still too large to fulfil this condition. He came to 'the conclusion that it must be still further diminished, 'and that the holdings of the small tenants must be 'rearranged, and the practice of squatting (that is to 'say, allowing the children on marriage to settle upon 'the parents' holdings) must be abolished. This led to 'the removal in 1850 of twenty-seven families, or, in all, '123 persons, including children, 385 persons remain-'ing on the estate. There were 385 persons after 'these removals, and that number has now dwindled to '233. There have been no evictions and no removals 'since that time. All the old people were left on the 'estate; no old people were removed; they have 'gradually died off. In consequence of my father's 'reforms in the management of the estate, the people 'have been far more active-minded, and far more 'willing to go; many are living in Inverness or else-'where; there is far less disposition to cling to the 'land than there was. The children have gone off on 'their own account, and anything like squatting has 'been strictly prohibited upon the estate, so that this 'reduction from 385 to 233, at which it stands at the 'present time, has been effected independently of any 'compulsion exercised by the proprietor.' That is the account given so recently as 1890.

11,153. *Mr Sutherland.*—I don't know whether it would be to advantage that I should read the cross-examination upon that statement of Mr Gerald Balfour's, but perhaps the facts may be brought out by the few questions I have to put to the witness.

11,154. Was it in your opinion a good way to improve the state of the people by putting them away?—Those who remained had a better chance.

11,155. Would you kindly say how many are remaining now?—I don't know; I left the district long ago.

11,156. Do you know if Mr Balfour made any provision for the places to which these people went?—I did not hear, I am not aware.

11,157. You did not hear that he made any such provision before he removed them?—The greatest kindness that he did in my own experience was to send his horses for our furniture to Dail-Breac. I did not hear of their making any provision in the settlements to which the crofters went.

11,158. You don't know that he went to Knockfarrel at Strathpeffer, and made arrangements for them there as to places to which they should go?—I did not hear

Beauly.

Duncan Campbell.

that. I heard it said it was Mr Mackenzie of Millbank who got places at Strathpeffer.

11,159. So that if they were indebted to any person it would be to Mr Mackenzie?—Yes.

11,160. Did Mr Balfour make any arrangements about Mulbuie before they were sent there?—I don't know. I did not hear. Mulbuie belongs principally now to Sir Kenneth Mackenzie of Gairloch, and Mr Gillanders of Highfield.

11,161. Did the people find homes made for them?—No, they did not. They got lots of dry heathery land, and they had to build their own houses.

11,162. And did they get any compensation for the houses you said were pulled down?—No, I did not hear of it.

11,163. So Mr Balfour's improvement of them was limited entirely to turning them out of their houses?—That is all.

11,164. *Mr Macleod.*—You were speaking about your droving experience. I forgot to put one question to you. You said that you lost some money by it?—Yes.

11,165. You had that money on leaving Strathconan, hadn't you?—Yes, it was since I came to Beauly that I lost most money.

11,166. But you had money on leaving Strathconan?—Yes.

11,167. And that is the money that you spoke of losing?—Yes.

11,168. *Mr Burns.*—As to the Mr Balfour you are talking about. What is your date?—Was it the grandfather of the present Mr Balfour who tried to re-arrange the glen by removing the population?

11,169. *Mr Macleod.*—Allow me to say this, that if you will kindly remember—I say this, because I was chiefly responsible for it—I mentioned the name of no proprietor, and desired to make no reflection on any proprietor, because I know nothing of who the proprietor was.

11,170. *Mr Burns.*—Still it has a relation to some things that were said. (*To Witness.*) What is the date you refer to?

11,171. *The Chairman.*—Mr Balfour purchased the estate in 1839. The proceedings we are now hearing of took place under the father of Mr A. J. Balfour.

11,172. *Mr Burns.*—You are not suggesting that the present Mr Balfour had anything to do with it?—No, no.

11,173. The Mr Balfour you speak about tried to re-arrange the estate as best he could, and the result was that he thought that the population should be somewhat decreased, and that was done. Did you suffer by it?—I lost by being sent away.

11,174. Where did you go?—To Beauly.

11,175. And you became?—A drover.

11,176. What did you do in Strathconan. You were a crofter, I suppose? Your mother was the tenant?—We took the share that one Eben Macaulay had in the township, and we were there for ten years. We did not take it direct from the proprietor, but Eben Macaulay assigned his tenancy to us.

[Adjourned.]

Beauly.

TWELFTH SITTING.

BEAULY, JUNE 15, 1893.

Present:—

David Brand, Esq., Advocate, Sheriff of Ayr, and Chairman of the Crofters Commission, *Chairman.*
Michael Hugh Shaw Stewart, Esq., M.P.
Angus Sutherland, Esq., M.P.
James Noel Muller Forsyth, Esq.
Rev. Malcolm Maccallum.
John Macleod, Esq.
Henry Munro, Esq.
William Mackenzie, Esq., *Secretary.*

Roderick Maclean, Manse Cottage, Fasnakyle, Strathglass, (50)—*examined.* Roderick Maclean.

11,177. *The Chairman.*—Are you a crofter?—No, I am a watcher in Mr Winans' service.

11,178. Is Manse Cottage where you live?—Yes.

11,179. What wage do you get from Mr Winans?—3s. a day.

11,180. And how long have you been in his employment?—About eighteen years.

11,181. Did you enter his employment when he first acquired land in the north?—There were some before me.

11,182. But not many, I suppose?—I was in his service before he took any of The Chisholm property.

11,183. And you have been with him ever since?—Yes.

11,184. Can you tell me the different additions that have been made to the Winans' forest during the last eighteen years: begin with the first?—All Chisholm's property was added to it since.

11,185. All The Chisholm property that is in forest has been added since you became his servant?—Yes.

11,186. Was all the property previously under sheep, or partly under sheep and partly under deer?—Partly under sheep and partly under deer; Comar was under sheep. Mr Winans took it over from Lord Tweedmouth; it was a forest before he got it. He had the low part from Mr Robertson, Comar, and was getting £500 a year for the grazing.

11,187. Mr Winans took it from Mr Robertson?—Yes.

11,188. And then after he held it some time he turned it into forest?—Immediately after he got it.

11,189. What extent of land belonging to The Chisholm estate was added to the Winans forest, altogether, within the last eighteen years, roughly?—I could not exactly tell you the amount; he had very near the whole of the west part of it—nearly the whole of the estate.

11,190. Nearly the whole of the west part of the estate?—Yes.

11,191. Did that include some tracts of arable land?—At Knockfin.

11,192. The arable land at Knockfin. Was that land under rotation?—Yes.

11,193. Did it include any other arable land?—I was here yesterday, and I heard that two parts of it were taken up then. Some part was added this year; part of Fasnakyle was added to the forest: that was not "taken up" at all yesterday.

11,194. I will come to that; but was there arable on Knockfin added to the Winans' forest?—All the land in Knockfin was handed over to Mr Winans, the same as it is now.

11,195. And was there arable land then?—I could not exactly tell you; there is plenty arable land there.

11,196. And, of course, when Knockfin became part of the forest, that land also became part of the forest?—Yes.

11,197. Was there a considerable tract of it, or was

it only a small portion?—It is in different places; there is some of it in wood.

11,198. And some is arable, is that so?—I could not exactly say; I would say myself that there would be something over 100 acres arable.

11,199. Had that been reclaimed land, or had it always been arable in your time?—I have seen part of it worked.

11,200. Part of it was reclaimed?—It was worked about thirty years back when Mr Williamson was in Knockfin.

11,201. He was working that arable?—Yes.

11,202. Did he reclaim land in his time or did he not? Just say what you remember about it: you need not have any hesitation in answering?—He was working all the bottom part of it; but there were some crofts up there that Mr Williamson was not taking in at all.

11,203. Passing on to Fasnakyle, what were you saying about it?—There are 12 to 16 acres arable.

11,204. Where is that?—It is down where Fasnakyle Lodge is.

11,205. It is near Fasnakyle Lodge, is it?—Yes.

11,206. Is that land under wood now?—No, it is under crop now.

11,207. How far is it from Fasnakyle Lodge?—About 200 yards.

11,208. What is the extent of it?—I think between 12 and 16 acres arable, and about 30 acres altogether of land under crop; that is what the petitioners were wanting.

11,209. Mrs Chisholm's petitioners were wanting that for a cow's grass and additional land?—Yes.

11,210. And that is part of Fasnakyle?—Yes.

11,211. Who is cropping that land at present?—Duncan Robertson, Comar.

11,212. Part of his farm?—I was told that it was added to the forest lately.

11,213. But was it formerly part of his farm?—Yes, and the crop belongs to him now.

11,214. But you have heard in the district that it has been recently added to the forest?—Yes.

11,215. Now do you mean to Mr Winans' forest?—No, I don't believe it is Mr Winans' forest.

11,216. What forest?—I could not tell whether Mr Winans took the place or not.

11,217. Do you know whether it has been re-let to Mr Robertson?—No, I am not sure; but we were told that it was to be added to the forest, but we put in the petition before Comar got it. Comar's lease was out when we put in the petition.

11,218. Were you one of the petitioners?—Yes.

11,219. How many petitioners were there altogether?—We put in three petitions, and I would like Mr Grant to hand over the other two.

11,220. There were three petitions altogether?—Yes.

11,221. To whom was the first petition presented?—It was sent open, through Mr Grant the factor, to Mrs Chisholm.

11,222. Addressed to Mrs Chisholm but sent to Mr Grant in an open envelope?—Yes.

11,223. How many people were in that petition?—I think it is ten.

11,224. How long afterwards was the second petition presented?—I could not give you the date, but very shortly.

11,225. Were they the same petitioners or different petitioners?—The same.

11,226. Ten again?—The same.

11,227. Then there was a third petition?—Yes.

11,228. Were the second and third petitions addressed to Mrs Chisholm or to Mr Grant?—I could not say: Mr Mackenzie, our Free Church minister, sent the other one in the name of the meeting.

11,229. In the name of a public meeting?—Yes.

11,230. Whose petition was the third one: was it from Mr Mackenzie?—Yes.

11,231. Were the petitioners the same?—Something of the same, wanting the grazing of a cow each.

11,232. The petition was to get the grazing of a cow and nothing more?—The keep of a cow all the year round.

11,233. What was the answer or answers returned to these petitions?—For my own part I did not get any answer at all.

11,234. But I suppose you know an answer came somehow or other?—That they had no ground to give us.

11,235. Who returned that answer?—I believe it was Mr Grant.

11,236. Was there any written answer returned?—Not that I am aware of.

11,237. You never saw one?—No.

11,238. Now, I don't think I got from you—I missed it if I did—what was the date of the first petition?—I could not exactly give you the date.

11,239. But about what time?—I am not prepared to say.

11,240. Was it this year?—Yes.

11,241. They were all presented one immediately after the other, I suppose?—Yes, we put them in soon after the other: we heard that they were going to let the place.

11,242. Was the first of these petitions put in before the land was let to Mr Robertson?—Yes.

11,243. Before that?—The first two were.

11,244. You mentioned part of The Chisholm estate as having been added to the forest within the last eighteen years. I want you to tell me what other additions have been made to the forest during that time?—The sheep are in Comar's ground yet. Mrs Chisholm still had the sheep on that part of it.

11,245. What other additions, if any, have been made to the Winans' forest in your time?—There is Kerrow.

11,246. When was Kerrow added; about what time?—It was handed over from The Chisholm to Lord Tweedmouth. Lord Tweedmouth cleared the ground for the forest.

11,247. He afforested the land, and then did it become part of Mr Winans' forest?—Not then. Lord Tweedmouth handed it over.

11,248. Lord Tweedmouth handed it over to Mr Winans?—Yes.

11,249. Is it also part of The Chisholm estate?—Yes.

11,250. Were there any other additions made?—Not that I am aware of.

11,251. Now do you know—I suppose you know well—the tract of country held by Mr Winans under forest?—Yes, I know it well.

11,252. You have been over the whole of it?—Yes.

11,253. More than once?—Often.

11,254. Is there land there suitable for occupation by crofters?—There is plenty.

11,255. Now just begin and tell us, going from east to west, or west to east, where that land is?—There are about 60 acres above Comar that were not mentioned at all yesterday.

11,256. Not mentioned yesterday at all?—They call it Auchinan. That is old arable land.

11,257. Is it East Comar or West Comar you mean?—Above Comar, near Beinn-a'-chirein.

11,258. Is it near Craskie?—Nearer Comar than Craskie.

11,259. Is it near Loch Longard?—No.

11,260. Well, is it east of Fasnakyle or west of it?—East; between Fasnakyle and Cannich.

11,261. How far is it from Comar Wood?—It is just close on Comar Wood, just above the wood.

11,262. What is the name of the place?—Auchinan.

11,263. Now, the extent you said was 60 acres?—I would take it to be about 60. It is in crofts, the same as the old people used to work it.

11,264. You mean to say there are the remains of old buildings there?—Yes.

11,265. Houses and steading?—Well, the houses are there.

11,266. How many houses were there, can you make out?—I could not exactly tell you. Three or four; there are only the walls of them.

11,267. Was that the old nameof the place, do you know?—As far as I know.

Beauly.

Roderick Maclean.

11,268. Is there land there, in your opinion, suitable for cultivation by crofters now?—I would take it myself if I could get a bit of it.

11,269. You would be very glad to take a small holding there if you could get it?—Yes.

11,270. What extent of arable would you require?—If I was not in any other occupation I would require about 25 acres.

11,271. Of arable, and some hill grazing?—Yes.

11,272. What carry of hill grazing would you require?—There is pretty good hill grazing above that place.

11,273. I want to know what carry of grazing you would require for an arable croft of 25 acres to make the thing a reasonably profitable concern?—I would like to get as much as would keep 100 sheep or so.

11,274. And any cattle?—Two or three.

11,275. Two or three cows and followers and a horse?—Yes.

11,276. Will you venture to say what rent you think you should be asked to pay for a holding of that kind on that place?—If I got the like of yon place for a number of years I would not grudge to give the price they give now for it.

11,277. And what is that?—About 1s. 6d. an acre for the arable. That is the average of Winans' deer forest.

11,278. Would you not give more than 1s. 6d. an acre for the arable?—It is all over the same as paying for the arable and all.

11,279. I thought you said there was a considerable tract of arable land there?—Sixty acres. It is old pasture.

11,280. I know; but it is easily ploughed up, you know. Only 1s. 6d. an acre for old arable land, easily ploughed up; is that your answer?—I mean that for the whole between old arable and pasture; the same as they now pay for it.

11,281. Do you know what the carry of the place formerly was?—Not in my time.

11,282. And you cannot tell us anything of the carry of the place?—I saw the place the same as it is now.

11,283. You did not see it under sheep?—Yes.

11,284. What I want to get from you is what carry had that land when it was under sheep?—I could not give you any information about the sheep stock; I was not paying any attention to it.

11,285. Besides that arable land, is there any other land of a similar kind?—There is some land up in Glencannich there.

11,286. Where is it? Can you localise it for us?—The first place is Tombuie.

11,287. Can you give me the extent of arable there?—I would say it would be about 5 or 6 acres.

11,288. There is land there that should be looked at?—Yes.

11,289. It is presently under grass and heather, I suppose?—It is under grass.

11,290. Then do you know Dalreoch?—Yes.

11,291. Is there old arable there?—A little bit there.

11,292. Can you tell me the carry of Tombuie, or do you not know?—I have seen a man keeping 2 cows and a horse there.

11,293. Any other place in Glencannich where there is arable land?—Muckrach.

11,294. That is on the north side. Confine yourself in the meantime to the south side. Do you know Luibguish?—I don't think that side would be much benefit to any crofters—the south side.

11,295. You do not think so?—I do not think so.

11,296. I invite your attention to Luibguish and Fraoch-Choire. Is there no arable land worth mentioning at either of those places?—There is a little of arable land in Luibguish.

11,297. How much?—About 2 acres, I would say.

11,298. At Fraoch-Choire is there any?—I don't think there is any.

11,299. Now pass to the north side of Glencannich. You mentioned Comar, I think?—Yes.

11,300. Is there land there?—Plenty land there.

11,301. What extent?—I would say 8 acres or so at Muckrach.

11,302. Old arable?—Some of it is out of crop, and some I have seen in crop.

11,303. Carrie. Is there any land there? Mention the places yourself, as I do not wish to suggest anything?—Carrie is the next place.

11,304. Well, what about it?—In most of these places the pasture is better than the arable land, but there is some good land down at Carrie.

11,305. What kind of land do you mean, arable or pasture?—Arable.

11,306. Old arable do you mean?—To keep 2 cows and a horse.

11,307. For grazing you mean?—For crop or anything.

11,308. Any other place to which you would like to invite our attention?—Leitrie.

11,309. Is there old arable there?—I have seen a keeper there with 7 or 8 cows.

11,310. What extent of arable would you say is there?—I could not exactly tell you.

11,311. Now, Shalavanach, do you know it?—Yes.

11,312. Is there land there?—Yes, there is a bit of land there.

11,313. How much?—About 4 or 5 acres.

11,314. Old arable?—Old arable.

11,315. Mullardoch, do you remember it?—Yes.

11,316. Is there land there?—Very little arable land.

11,317. Then, do you know Luibardchaig and Coire-nan-cuilean?—There is some arable land there.

11,318. Do you mean not much?—There was, but I have only seen it under grazing, the same as it is now.

11,319. I understand you to indicate there is not much of it?—Not much that I have seen.

11,320. That is on the east side of Coire-nan-cuilean. Now, what about the west side?—There is a little arable land there, but I did not see it except the same as it is now.

11,321. You only saw it under grass?—Under grass.

11,322. And is it small in extent, or is it considerable?—Oh, it is a good place. It is as good a place as is in Glencannich for grazing. It is the best in Glencannich for grazing, and 20 acres at least could be easily cultivated.

11,323. How much of it is there; what would its carry be?—The bottom part?

11,324. Well, I have not seen it. You know I am speaking of land I have never seen, so you must meet me half way?—Oh, I can't tell you how much stock there might have been.

11,325. Now, do you know Auchinan?—Yes.

11,326. Is that the place you mentioned before?—Yes.

11,327. Then Airidh-Dhuibhein?—Yes, it is on the west side of Auchinan.

11,328. You know the place I am referring to?—Yes.

11,329. Is there old arable land there?—A small bit of croft.

11,330. You mean by that that there are the remains of a holding?—Yes.

11,331. The walls are there?—The walls are there.

11,332. There is nobody living there?—No one living there.

11,333. But at one time there had been a holding there with a crofter in it?—I did not see the croft, but it looks as if there had been.

11,334. That is to say, there is green ground and walls of a former building?—Yes.

11,335. That is the land you have spoken about in Glencannich. Is there any other land that you would like to speak of?—No, for my own part I would not like to go up the glen any further. I would like to get a bit of the low part.

11,336. What is it you call the low part?—Fasnakyle and Auchinan.

11,337. Is there accommodation there, according to the best of your judgment, for a considerable number of crofters?—The place would keep about four.

11,338. That is the place nearer to Auchinan?—Airidh-Dhuibhein.

11,339. Is it near any of the lochs?—No, it is above Fasnakyle—in the wood up above Fasnakyle.

11,340. Is it on the south side or the north side?—On the north side of Fasnakyle.

11,341. Could you show it to us when we go there?—Yes, it is only a few yards from my house.

11,342. You said at the commencement of your examination that you wanted to see all, or as many as could be got, of the petitions presented for land?—Yes.

11,343. Well, I should like to see them too, if we can get them. Where were you born?—In Breackachy.

11,344. That is in this district?—It is on the Chisholm estate. My father was put away the time that Roderick Chisholm of Chisholm came from America. He was summoned out of the farm of Breackachy.

11,345. Were you removed yourself, or was it your father?—My father and the whole family.

11,346. What year was that?—I cannot exactly say. I could give you it afterwards.

11,347. *Mr Sutherland.*—You stated, Mr Maclean, that you know the land, and that you think it is suitable for new holdings, and that you yourself would be willing to take a holding if you got it under favourable conditions?—Yes.

11,348. And you have also stated that you would be quite prepared to pay as much as is being paid for it now per acre as deer forest?—Yes.

11,349. And that you stated at 1s. 6d.?—Yes.

11,350. That is all that is being paid per acre according to the evidence of the factor yesterday, is it not, and you are perfectly willing to pay that for land if you got it?—Yes, for the arable and the pasture.

11,351. Would you take your share of the arable and pasture just as the deer forest takes it now? Well, then, have you taken this into account, Mr Maclean, that you would not have so much use of the land as the deer forest has at present—that is to say, that the deer forest has the sporting right, and you would not expect to get that, would you, for 1s. 6d.?—I was not expecting that.

11,352. So that you would actually pay a good deal more than is being paid for it as deer forest now?—Yes, for that part.

11,353. How much do you think is the sporting worth per acre per year? Is not the whole rent at present a sporting rent? It is not used for any other purpose, is it?—I could not exactly tell you.

11,354. Is Mr Winans' deer forest used for any other purpose than sporting purposes at present?—Not at present.

11,355. And he is paying 1s. 6d. per acre for it?—Yes.

11,356. Then you would not get that part that Mr Winans is using at all?—No.

11,357. And yet you are willing to pay 1s. 6d. an acre for it?—Yes, we are willing to pay 1s. 6d. an acre for it; but if we got a lower part than that we would rather have it.

11,358. Then you say that you saw crops on some of these places you have mentioned—Muckrach?—Muckrach and Tombuie.

11,359. Did they get good crops?—Yes, very good.

11,360. You never heard but the harvests averaged as good as in the average of places round about here?—No. I have seen it thirty years back.

11,361. And they bear good crops?—Good crops.

11,362. Some of them are under cultivation yet. There are some crops being raised in that glen yet, are there not?—There are very little.

11,363. Are there not?—I don't think it.

11,364. None at all?—Except potatoes.

11,365. Do they get good potatoes there?—Very good.

11,366. You never heard of them being utterly destroyed by frost, did you?—Yes, the whole Strath would be sometimes destroyed by frost.

11,367. And are they ever destroyed anywhere else by frost?—I don't think the glen is worse than any other places in the Strath.

11,368. Not more subject to destruction by frost than any other place?—No.

11,369. And did these crops that you saw yourself in Muckrach ripen?—Yes, as early as down at Cannich or Comar.

11,370. You also stated that there was good land in Carrie?—Yes, but in my day I did not see a crop there.

11,371. Then you have, no doubt, an intimate knowledge of the land up there; you have known it for a number of years?—Yes.

11,372. And, though you are in regular employment at the present time, would you be quite willing to take a holding there again under the circumstances you have mentioned to the Commission?—Yes, if I would get a suitable place.

11,373. About the size and the nature you have indicated to the Chairman?—Yes.

11,374. Perfectly willing?—Perfectly willing, and very glad to get it.

11,375. Now, you mentioned something I would like to get a little information on with regard to the farm of Comar. You stated that there was a part of it sublet to Mr Winans?—Well, I was told by the head keeper that the factor promised to add that addition to the forest.

11,376. But let me understand it, if you please. Was Comar nominally a sheep farm?—Yes.

11,377. And while that was so, did Mr Winans get a sublet of part of it: did I understand you to say that that was the case?—I could not exactly tell how it was; we were told that Mr Winans threw it up, and I could not say whether Mr Winans had it or not.

11,378. Did you ever see the valuation roll of the county?—No.

11,379. You could not tell us whether Comar was entered as a deer forest or a sheep farm in the valuation roll?—It was a sheep farm in the last valuation roll.

11,380. It was entered in the valuation roll as a sheep farm?—Yes.

11,381. Can you tell us what year this arrangement was entered into, so far as you remember?—This new arrangement must be lately.

11,382. This one that you refer to? I think we are not understanding each other. I thought you made a statement that part of the Comar farm was given to Mr Winans?—That is a part of Fasnakyle there of arable land, and about 30 acres between arable and pasture.

11,383. Well, what happened to them?—It was added to the forest. It is under crop now and belongs to Mr Robertson. I was told that it was added to the forest.

11,384. But you don't know, then, about the arrangement?—No, I don't; I am not sure of it. I was told about it.

11,385. You were told that part of the sheep farm of Comar was sublet to Mr Winans, and that Mr Winans added that to the deer forest: was that what you were told?—Yes.

11,386. What year was that?—This year.

11,387. That is the arrangement you referred to when the Chairman asked you questions about it?—Yes; that is what we put in the petition for.

11,388. That while this was being transferred you understood that a certain arrangement was made by which Comar farm was going to change hands: was that it?—Yes.

11,389. And then you thought that was a good opportunity of applying to the proprietrix for the grazing of the cow?—Just so.

11,390. These are the circumstances that gave rise to it?—Yes.

11,391. And are you quite willing to pay the proprietrix the same price per acre for the grazing of the cow as she would likely get for it as a deer forest?—Yes.

11,392. Or a sheep farm?—Yes; the whole of the petitioners would give the same.

11,393. Did the whole of your petitions state that?—Yes, we said that at the meeting.

11,394. And these were the petitions to which you got no direct answer beyond that there was no land to give you?—Yes.

Beauly. Roderick Maclean.

11,395. *Mr Shaw Stewart.*—I want to ask you one or two general questions first. You say you would be willing to give for such a holding as you have mentioned 1s. 6d. an acre, grazing and arable?—Yes, old arable.

11,396. I am speaking of the holding that you told us you would like to take up, some 25 acres of arable land and grazing for 100 sheep, and you would be willing to pay 1s. 6d. an acre for such a holding?—Yes.

11,397. But the whole forest is rented at the rate of 1s. 6d. an acre, is it not?—Yes.

11,398. Well, then, supposing that other holdings were taken up like the one you speak of, that would be the best land taken from the forest, would it not? Such holdings as you would have in your mind would be of the best land in the forest?—Yes, it is in the best part of it.

11,399. Then, if you take up the best land in the forest—first of all, let me ask you this. Is not the forest composed of a great deal of poor land and a certain amount of better land?—Of course; the highest part, we could not get a crop out of it.

11,400. You could not get the higher parts into cultivation?—No.

11,401. Is there not a great deal of high land in the forest?—Yes, a great deal.

11,402. Then it would be the low lying lands that would be taken up for cultivation and grazing by such holdings as you mentioned?—Not the high land; not the higher land at any rate. There would be about four or five in that place I mentioned, Auchinan.

11,403. But you tell us that the forest consists of a great deal of high land which no one could possibly think of cultivating. I want to get this from you. I think it is a plain enough question; would not the land that would be taken up by new holdings take the better land of the forest, leaving the highest ground alone?—No, the best part of the forest is the highest, for grazing.

11,404. But up to the 2000 feet. Is there good grazing up to the top of Beinn-a'-chirein?—Not very good; the worst part of the glen.

11,405. Not good grazing at the top of Beinn-a'-chirein?—No.

11,406. Then you would not contemplate taking the top of Beinn-a'-chirein into your holding?—No. There is passable grazing, but not so good as in the west part.

11,407. Then there are considerable tracts in the forest which are not very suitable for sheep grazing on the high ground?—I don't see any bit in Strathglass not suitable for sheep grazing.

11,408. Well, then, would you propose that the whole of the forest should be taken for the grazing of these new holdings?—No, I would not propose to take the highest place; I don't suppose it would be so much benefit to crofters.

11,409. Now, in the rental of the forest at 1s. 6d. an acre, the highest ground is included as well as the better ground, is it not, in your estimate of 1s. 6d. an acre for the whole forest?—The poor ground is included as well as the better ground in that rental. The west part of the ground is better than the nearest part of it, and it is higher.

11,410. But there are some tops, you tell me, that are not worth much for grazing, but those tops you rent at 1s. 6d. an acre, just the same as the rest of the forest which is suitable for grazing?—It would not be worth for the crofter to give the same; I said for myself that nearer part; 1s. 6d. would be too dear, taking it all over the pasture. I only say that for certain places.

11,411. I understand it would be too dear a rent for grazing, but at present that rent is paid for it as a forest?—That is for shooting and grazing and all.

11,412. When you speak of the whole forest being rented at the rate of 1s. 6d. an acre, surely you include these barren tops as well as the better pasture, do you?—No, I was only just mentioning the part that people could live in.

11,413. I am not speaking now with regard to the holdings at all. I am speaking entirely now as the ground is at the present time let as a forest. If you estimate the rental of that forest at the rate of 1s. 6d. an acre, you include the whole forest, do you not, bad tops and all?—Yes.

11,414. You quite understand that the sporting rent of the forest takes in the rock as well as the grazing at present?—(No answer.)

11,415. I think that is clear enough: do you not understand the question?—No, sir, I don't understand what you mean.

11,416. 1s. 6d. an acre is the rent paid, we were told yesterday, for the whole forest, poor land and good: you understand that?—Yes, I understand that, for the sporting and grazing.

11,417. That is what is paid at present for everything?—Yes.

11,418. Now, what I want to ask you is this: if you take the best grazing out of the forest, do you not make the worst land, which is now paying 1s. 6d. an acre under deer, quite useless for rent?—No.

11,419. Well, who is going to pay rent for those high tops if you take the lower part for sheep grazing or crofts?—I believe they would get plenty there to go. A club farm would take the whole of the forest.

11,420. You told me yourself you would not?—I would not go myself, but they will get plenty to go.

11,421. You would not mind seeing others take the barren tops, but you would not take them yourself?—No.

11,422. Well, supposing you could find nobody to graze these barren tops and pay 1s. 6d. an acre for them, would it not be reasonable for the proprietor to expect more than 1s. 6d. an acre for the better land which is taken?—No; between pasture it would be dear enough.

11,423. It might be dear enough from your point of view, but the rental of the whole area would be much less, because nobody would be paying any rent for the barren tops, supposing you could get nobody to take them for grazing?—(No answer.)

11,424. Now, I will ask you about the land you speak of above Comar. How many crofters do you think could live there at the place you mentioned, Auchinan?—I think about four or five.

11,425. But you have told us that there is only 60 acres of arable land there?—Just about that.

11,426. But you want 25 of them for yourself, do you not?—Yes.

11,427. That leaves only 35 acres to be divided among the other four?—Well, I would take that into consideration. We would divide it amongst us if we would get the chance of it.

11,428. Then you would not get the 25 acres you wanted?—I am not expecting we would get that, however.

11,429. You would have to be content with considerably less than 25 acres arable?—I must take what I will get.

11,430. But, supposing you could get no other work there, could you make a living to profit of such a small holding as that?—Well, I would try it.

11,431. And suppose you failed, what would you do then?—We had to go and work for our living any place that we could get it.

11,432. But now you get wages from the deer forest?—Yes.

11,433. But you don't suppose there would still be a deer forest there with all the best land taken up with holdings and sheep. There would be no work on the deer forest for you then?—The way that we are now, we are not sure about a day. We might get one day and be put off to-morrow. We are not sure of our work. We want to get a place where we would be sure of a home.

11,434. Yes; but you understand what I mean when I say that if there would be no deer forest, where would you get the work. If you found your holding too small to make it profitable, where would you get your work?—I would work at the croft.

11,435. But you would be getting no wages for that.

If you did not get enough money out of your croft you would have to try and get wages elsewhere, would you not, to help you out? If your croft was not paying you, where would you look for wages?—I would just go about the country the same as any other labourer.

11,436. You would have to leave the district for work?—Yes.

11,437. One other point. There is only a limited quantity of good land through these glens for arable holdings to be taken up along with grazing. There is not very much land in these glens for this purpose. You could only put three or four crofters here and there, I suppose?—Just so.

11,438. Well, supposing these holdings were made and portioned out—mapped out—would there be much competition for them in the country? Would there be many people anxious to take up these holdings?—I think there would, taking the glens. They would take Glencannich whatever for a club farm. That is what I hear them speaking about.

11,439. You think there would be many coming forward ready to take such holdings, club farms, or however best they thought they could do?—Yes.

11,440. You think there would be a good many after them?—Yes, I think so.

11,441. Well now, should these holdings be let to the highest bidder?—I think they should be valued. It should be given to the Royal Commission to value the ground.

11,442. You think, then, that some tribunal should fix the rent of these holdings before that tribunal knows what kind of tenant is going into them?—Yes.

11,443. How could they tell what kind of a living would be made out of these holdings without knowing what kind of man was coming forward to cultivate it?—I don't understand you.

11,444. I will put it in another way. Who would choose the tenant for each holding if there were several applicants for each; would you put it on to the tribunal to choose, or how?—Yes.

11,445. Then the tribunal is to choose the holding, and to pick out the man who is to go into each spot, is that it?—Yes, to pick the men amongst themselves, and make a club farm of it.

11,446. *Mr Munro.*—I wish to make it a little more plain, with reference to your statement, that you are willing to take a proportion of arable land and hill land at 1s. 6d. per acre. Now, are you willing to take the proportion of hill land that would properly fall to your proportion of arable land at the 1s. 6d. per acre? Or I will put it in this shape to you: Supposing there were 100 acres of arable land and 10,000 acres of hill pasture, that would give 10 acres of arable land to each, dividing it into lots of ten, and 1000 acres of hill land, would you be willing to take the 10 acres of arable land and the 1000 acres of hill pasture as you apportion it?—The pasture would be too big for the arable.

11,447. Yes; but you can see that it might result in considerable hardship to the landlord if you were simply to take your portion of arable land to suit you and only the portion of the hill land to suit you, leaving probably the worst part of the land in the landlord's hands?—(No answer.)

11,448. *The Chairman.*—Try and answer.—This ground that I refer to is the worst part of it for pasture; although it is arable land, it is the worst part of the glen for pasture.

11,449. *Mr Munro.*—But you have not strictly answered my question yet. Take it that there are 100 acres of arable land and 10,000 acres of pasture, and that they were divided into lots amongst crofters—divided equally into ten parts. That would give you 10 acres of arable and 1000 acres of hill land. Now, would you be willing to take the land in these proportions—1000 acres of hill land and 10 acres of arable?—Not so much pasture as that; there is too much pasture in it for the arable.

11,450. So you would like to pick and choose the land you would like to take along with your arable land?—No, I would just take it in front of me, but I don't want much pasture.

11,451. But don't you see that it might result in considerable injustice to the landlord if you were simply to pick and choose the hill pasture and leave the rest in his hands, probably the worst part of it?—Well, if they gave us the lower part we would not go up there at all.

11,452. Would you take the arable and the pasture in the proportion in which it exists there?—For the same money they are paying for it to-day?

11,453. Yes; of course I understand that is 1s. 6d. per acre?—I will take so much of it.

11,454. *The Chairman.*—Perhaps I might propose this question, Mr Munro. Would you like to get such an assignment of arable, with a corresponding proportion of grazing, as would enable you to live?—Yes.

11,455. Is that what you would be at?—Yes.

11,456. *Mr Munro.*—But you would wish to have the selection of the grazing land yourself?—Yes.

11,457. *Mr Forsyth.*—Do you think it a wise thing to offer for this holding at a rate, say, 1s. 6d. per acre—I mean by the acre. Do you think that would be profitable for yourself?—Yes, I think so.

11,458. You want a holding of 25 acres of arable, say, and grazing for 100 sheep; and you propose to offer for these at the rate of 1s. 6d. per acre. Do you not see that in order to get land to carry 100 sheep, if you pay per acre, then if the land be bad, you would require a great many more acres to carry the 100 sheep, and certainly you would have to pay a much larger rent. Can you see that?—I mentioned that I was only wanting just the bottom part of it. A certain place I alluded to.

11,459. You wanted the better land, so that the 100 sheep would be carried on a certain number of acres, not too big. But don't you see that it might be very bad for yourself. You would have to take as few acres for your 100 sheep as you possibly could keep them on, because you would be paying per acre. Otherwise your rent would come very heavy?—Yes, it would be heavy if the pasture was big, but I was wanting little pasture.

11,460. Well, try it from another point of view. How many acres do you fancy you would require of grazing for your 100 sheep?—The place I am alluding to, at Auchinan, there are only a few crofts, and there are bits between them which you would have to take in before you got it into arable.

11,461. But I wanted to get at this: How many acres of grazing do you think you would need for your 100 sheep at the place you mentioned?—I could not exactly tell you.

11,462. But I was trying to get it from you whether you did not think it unwise to estimate your rent at a rate per acre when sheep-grazing comes in. You don't think that?—(No answer.)

11,463. Then you would prefer to offer by the acre?

11,464. *The Chairman.*—Might I venture to put it: Don't you think it is a dangerous thing, Mr Maclean, to offer 1s. 6d. an acre for grazing which may not be worth half of that? Would not it be better to have your rent adjusted on some principle?—I was meaning the place—the low part.

11,465. The arable?—The old arable.

11,466. *Mr Forsyth.*—Then your 1s. 6d. would apply merely to the old arable land?—Yes.

11,467. We understood that you meant 1s. 6d. right over the grazing, because that was the average rent of the place as a forest; but now I find from you that it merely is the rent you propose to give for the old arable?—Yes.

11,468. Then have you any idea of the grazing rent; what would you put upon the grazing for 100 sheep?—I would say 6d. an acre.

11,469. I think your method—with all deference—I think the method per acre is not a good one for sheep grazing; that is my own experience; but you seem to stick to the rent per acre. Therefore you think 6d. an acre on the whole?—On the pasture.

11,470. *Mr Macleod.*—You are a watcher, I think you said, with Mr Winans?—Yes.

11,471. You heard what Mr Burns said here yesterday on Mr Winans' behalf, that no one who was in his employment would suffer in any way from giving evidence here?—Yes.

Beauly. — Roderick Maclean.

11,472. You heard that?—Yes.

11,473. And you are quite satisfied with that assurance?—Yes.

11,474. Now you know generally the purpose that has brought us here to-day?—Yes.

11,475. You said something about the people in your district talking about things. What was it that you understood when you came here to-day to give evidence?—I came here to give evidence about these petitions that were sent and did not get an answer. It was not for ground; only for petitions.

11,476. It was with regard to that particularly?—Yes.

11,477. You sent certain petitions to the proprietor, and, not having got any satisfactory reply, you thought that possibly you might get what you wanted by coming here; is that it?—Yes.

11,478. Have you not got copies of these petitions yourself? Did you not keep copies of them?—I think there is a copy of them: they are not in my possession.

11,479. Whose possession are they in?—Archibald Chisholm, Cannich, it should be in his possession.

11,480. Is he here to-day?—No.

11,481. And he has not got them?—He had them once.

11,482. But you did not think of bringing them?—No.

11,483. And is there any other person but yourself here to-day from that particular district?—Not that I know of.

11,484. Only yourself?—Only myself.

11,485. Were there any more appointed?—Yes, there were a few appointed.

11,486. Why are they not here to-day?—I don't know.

11,487. What were their names?—James Grant, Fasnakyle; Roderick Maclennan, Fasnakyle; John Campbell, Cannich; Angus Cameron, Balmore. That is all.

11,488. And why are they not here to-day, do you know?—I could not exactly tell; but one of them told me, James Grant, that he would not be allowed to come unless he got a man in his place.

11,489. What does he do?—He is a gardener in Fasnakyle.

11,490. Whose employment is he in?—Mr Winans.

11,491. Who told him that he would not be allowed to come unless he put another in his place?—The head keeper, he said to me.

11,492. What is the head keeper's name?—Donald Mackenzie.

11,493. Is he here to-day?—I did not see him.

11,494. Was this man Grant appointed at a meeting called for the purpose of appointing delegates to come here?—Yes, it was himself who gave his name in to come.

11,495. And the meeting appointed him?—Yes.

11,496. And is he a man that knows about the land in the district?—Yes, he was about thirty years in the place as shepherd, back and fore in the glen.

11,497. Then can you tell us about any of the others?

11,498. *Mr Burns.*—But as to Mr Grant, you can see him to-morrow. I will undertake that he should appear.—*Witness.*—I don't know the reason that is keeping the others.

11,499. *Mr Munro.*—But you are the only witness here to-day from that particular district?—Although Grant said that to me, Mackenzie told me himself that he did not ask leave to come.

11,500. *Mr Burns.*—Grant did not ask to be allowed.

11,501. *Mr Macleod.*—Excuse me, Mr Burns, but I have got the witness, and I object myself strongly to your interfering with me in anything.

11,502. *Mr Burns.*—I want you to understand.

11,503. *Mr Macleod.*—But I want you to understand that you have no standing here at all. (*To Witness.*) What did you say with regard to Mackenzie?—He told me that Grant did not ask leave at all to come.

11,504. Mr Mackenzie told you that Grant never asked leave?—Yes.

11,505. Well, it is only proper to state that. Now, leaving that matter and coming to the land in the district that you have been speaking to, do you think yourself, is it your opinion, that small tenants or crofters could profitably cultivate, and otherwise advantageously occupy, land in this district that you have spoken of?—Yes.

11,506. That is your opinion? Now, do you think with your experience—I think you said you had been a watcher for how long?—About eighteen years.

11,507. Do you think that the number of small tenants that you contemplate might be settled in this district could be settled there without any injury to the sport in the district?—I don't think they could.

11,508. They would injure the sport?—Yes.

11,509. To what extent would they injure the sport, or in what way?—The forest would not be the same as it is now.

11,510. In what way would not it be the same as it is now? Just tell us what the difference would be, in your opinion?—Mostly on it is deer, but if the crofters were put in the deer would go away.

11,511. Do you remember when there were sheep there?—Yes.

11,512. Were there any deer there then?—Yes, but not so many as now.

11,513. But there were deer then?—Yes.

11,514. But you think that the deer would go away if there were small tenants settled there?—Yes, they would have to go away.

11,515. Why?—They would go away from them.

11,516. Why?—They are not accustomed to small tenants being amongst them.

11,517. Then you agree with what Mr Grant said yesterday, that small tenants and deer cannot thrive together?—No, I don't believe what Mr Grant said. I don't think he told any truth yesterday.

11,518. You agreed: he stated yesterday that small tenants and deer don't thrive well together: surely you agree with him to that extent: that is what you said just now?—Well, I say that the deer forest must be so far separate.

11,519. To the extent that small tenants grazed their stock upon it?—Yes.

11,520. But would you be prepared to say that it would entirely destroy the sport?—No, I don't say that: I have seen better deer than what they get there thirty years back, the time that Colonel Inge was in Fasnakyle.

11,521. Then why do you say that it would destroy the forest?—There would not be so many of them.

11,522. That stands to reason. But you think, then, that at any rate it would not utterly destroy the sport?—It would not altogether; there could be sport also.

11,523. You think there could be sport as well as small tenants?—Yes.

11,524. You were speaking about the question of rent. I don't suppose that you have any personal knowledge as to how rents are fixed?—No.

11,525. You don't know anything about that matter?—No, not much.

11,526. But in any land that would be assigned to you or assigned to your neighbours you would be prepared to pay a rent that an impartial tribunal would fix for it?—Yes.

11,527. Now about the character of the ground assigned there. Are there many barren mountain tops in the district that would not be of any value for grazing?—No, there are not many: the whole of it is value for grazing.

11,528. It is fit for grazing, the whole of it?—Yes.

11,529. Would it graze cattle and sheep to the tops, or sheep alone?—Yes.

11,530. Tell me, then, as to those who are settled on the districts—those whose names were on the petitions. Did they contemplate holdings of the character that you described here to-day?—No, they were wanting smaller than that; the most of them were only wanting a cow.

11,531. They were only wanting a cow's grass, but

you had an idea that you would like a larger holding than that?—Yes.

11,532. You said something about the people in the district talking about a club farm. What was it that was being said with regard to that matter of a club farm?—That three of us should take a place like Muckrach in Glencannich.

11,533. Three of them would take, say, the township of Muckrach and the grazing going along with the township?—Yes, between the three they would keep about 800 sheep or so, and a cow or two each.

11,534. That was the idea, that it could be done in that way?—That is the idea.

11,535. Now, in that particular place, do you think that it would destroy the sport if there were three tenants settled there?—No, if they don't commence to poach them—to kill them.

11,536. Do you think now, supposing that there were small tenants settled on these townships that you spoke of here to-day, and that they were on good terms with the sportsmen, do you think his sport would be entirely destroyed by these small tenants being there?—No, I don't think it, it would not be entirely destroyed: it would be, so far.

11,537. Do you think it would be so very much worse than it is now, except as you said now to the extent that the sheep and other stock of the tenants would eat up probably some of the grazing that the deer have now?—It would not harm the forests, but the place that these crofters would take, no deer would come and stop there.

11,538. Then, have you any knowledge of land where there were sheep and deer together on?—Yes, plenty.

11,539. And is it your experience that where the sheep are the deer won't go?—But crofters were not there: where I have seen them it is only big sheep farms. Perhaps a shepherd would go there once a week or so.

11,540. But, supposing there were three small tenants taking this place of Muckrach, they would just have a shepherd to look after their sheep in the same way as a farmer would. What you fear is this, that if there were a number of small tenants there each of them would be going out to the hill at all times herding their sheep, and in that way disturbing the deer. That is what you think, is it?—Yes, that is what I think.

11,541. But if they made such an arrangement that there was only a shepherd, as it was when the sheep farms were there, you don't think it would do the same injury to the sport?—No, if they make up with the sportsman they can take care of the deer as well as the sheep; the shepherd could do both.

11,542. And you can quite conceive an arrangement being made by which they could give the sportsman as good sport as he is getting just now?—Yes.

11,543. Now, with regard to the deer, you said that you saw heavier deer many years ago than now?—Yes.

11,544. How do you account for them decreasing in weight?—They used to come to the corn, and there is no corn in it now to come to.

11,545. So that the deer have suffered by the small tenants being put away?—Yes.

11,546. They are not so heavy?—They are not so heavy as they used to be in the corn.

11,547. You say now, though, that they are more numerous?—Yes.

11,548. But they are not so heavy, and are they as good?—No, not so good in quality. There are ten for one.

11,549. Ten for one in number, but they are not so good in quality or in weight?—No.

11,550. Then, are they changing in character: are they tamer than they were?—They are tame enough about this place.

11,551. About that district?—Yes.

11,552. *Mr Maccallum.*—You told us about Auchinan, and you said you thought there were about 60 acres of arable there?—Yes.

11,553. Is that ground that was cultivated formerly?—It was some time back; I did not see it.

11,554. But it bears marks of having been cultivated?—Yes.

11,555. Now, is there any more land there that could be improved besides the 60 acres that were cultivated formerly?—Yes, there is a bit between the crofts that could be taken in.

11,556. Do you know the meaning of the word Auchinan? Do you speak Gaelic?—No.

11,557. You speak Gaelic, don't you?—Yes, but I don't know what the word means.

11,558. Don't you know "Achadh"?—Yes, if it means the bottom.

11,559. Does not "Achadh" mean a field, and does not "Auchinan" mean 'green fields'?—Well, it is green.

11,560. Well, is not that the meaning of the word?—I don't know.

11,561. Well, it is so. Is it your opinion that the whole of Glencannich could be taken up by small tenants?—It is my opinion that the whole of the north side could be take up for small tenants.

11,562. And what do you say about the south side: could it be taken up by small tenants?—It could be taken up by a club farm.

11,563. Now, what sort of rent could they pay. You were questioned at great length about that, but what sort of rent could they pay for these farms?—I could not exactly tell you.

11,564. But not so much, you think, as is paid just now?—Not in that farm.

11,565. But, of course, the rent that is paid just now includes the grazing and the sporting?—Yes.

11,566. And it is 1s. 6d. an acre for everything, over all?—Yes.

11,567. Now, if it were occupied by small tenants, would it not still be worth a good deal as sporting ground? I wish you to answer that question strictly. If it were occupied by small tenants, would the ground not be worth a good deal as sporting ground?—Yes, if it was. I daresay to the landlord it would be more.

11,568. I am not speaking of the landlord at all, but would it not be a sporting place still: supposing the tenants had the grazing, would it not still remain a sporting place?—Of course it will: it would spoil the sport so far, but not much.

11,569. And rent could be got for it as a sporting subject?—It was in my time: they were getting good sportsmen in that time as well as they are now.

11,570. It would still afford sport?—Yes.

11,571. Then you don't agree with the evidence which we had yesterday, that no sportsman would take land on which there was a crofter?—I don't believe that.

11,572. You think that there are people who would still take land with crofters on it for sport,—that is, the hill being used as grazing by these small tenants, could the places not be used for sport after all?—Yes, of course they could.

11,573. Is it your idea of sport that the place must be wholly devoted to game: that was the idea that was given us by the factor, that a place is not worth anything for sport unless it was devoted to game; is that your theory?—No, that is not my opinion at all.

11,574. Was there any sport in the country until land was wholly devoted to game?—Yes, better sport than what it is now.

11,575. And your idea is that there would be true sport though the land were not wholly devoted to game? There would be true sport still, although the land was not wholly given up to deer?—Yes.

11,576. Then with regard to this application that you put in for grazing for a cow. When you made that application to Mrs Chisholm had she it in her power to give you land?—Of course it was in her power to give us land.

11,577. Had she land out of lease?—Yes, the whole of Comar was out of lease at that time.

11,578. When you sent in your application?—Yes.

11,579. Did you get any reply?—No, but that she had no ground to give us. Three of the petitioners got a small bit. I don't know what the value of it is.

Beauly. Roderick Maclean.

11,580. But those who did not get what they wanted, had they a reply from Mrs Chisholm?—No.

11,581. Of any kind?—Not that I am aware of.

11,582. Or through the factor?—No.

11,583. Then you say that the application was sent in, and that some of them got no reply at all. Yourself, for instance, have you got any reply?—No, I did not get any.

11,584. Then, do you understand now that this land you were asking has been given to another: the land from which you were wishing to get grazing, has it been let to another since your application?—We did not allude to it; we only just put it in when Comar farm was broken up.

11,585. And did you wish to get the grazing on Comar farm?—Yes.

11,586. Then has that place been let to another?—It is let now to the old farmer.

11,587. To Mr Robertson?—I believe so.

11,588. And that was after your application?—It was after our application.

11,589. But we understand that it is only the arable ground that he uses?—Yes.

11,590. And the rest of Comar, what use is it put to now?—It is under sheep to Mrs Chisholm.

11,591. And is it currently reported that it is to be made a deer forest?—Yes, that is the current report.

11,592. You were asked some questions about the fixing of rents for the holdings that are proposed, and you think that rent ought to be fixed by an impartial tribunal—that it should not be let to the highest bidder. If small holdings were made available out of deer forests or otherwise, do you think that the rent should be fixed by an impartial tribunal?—Yes.

11,593. And not given simply to the highest bidder: is that your idea?—Yes.

11,594. And it was pointed out that there might be this difficulty, that if it were made available there would be a difficulty in selecting the person to whom the holding should be given?—I don't understand.

11,595. Would you leave it to this proposed tribunal to select the tenant as well as to fix the rent, if there were many applicants for the same place?—I would think that the men among themselves to take it.

11,596. *The Chairman.*—Do speak a little more articulately.—I don't understand.

11,597. *Mr Maccallum.*—There is a supposition that there is a holding and a fair rent fixed, and there are several applicants for that holding. Would you leave it for the tribunal that fixed the rent to select the tenant?—I don't follow that.

11,598. You would leave it with those that fixed the rent to say who would be the most useful tenant, would you not?—Yes, yes.

11,599. And they might go on some principle of selecting their tenant; for instance, would it not be reasonable to give a preference to such a one as this, one who had land in a congested township—in a township that was overcrowded—would it not be reasonable to take a man from that place to such a holding?—Yes, it would be reasonable enough.

11,600. *The Chairman.*—Where is the sanctuary of Mr Winans' forest?—I think it is all sanctuary together. There is not a sanctuary as far as I know.

11,601. Is there not a sanctuary?—No, it is all the same.

11,602. *Mr Maccallum.*—Are there sanctuaries in deer forests?

11,603. *The Chairman.*—Is there not a place to which they resort?—Not since Mr Winans took it.

11,604. Is that because of the way in which it is preserved?—There was not one killed since thirteen or fourteen years.

11,605. Is it in this way, that there has been so little deer stalking of late years that you don't know?—No.

11,606. How long is it since there has been deer stalking in the forest?—It is over ten years.

11,607. You say, speaking solemnly, there has been no deer stalking there for ten years, to the best of your knowledge?—No.

11,608. None in which you took any part?—No.

11,609. How long is it since Mr Winans was sporting or visiting?—He was never sporting there.

11,610. How long is it since he has been visiting there?—I could not exactly tell.

11,611. Is it a number of years?—Yes.

11,612. Five at least?—It is over five.

11,613. Now, has there been no use made of the forest as a deer forest for a number of years?—No.

11,614. And when Mr Winans is not there, is there anybody else there deer stalking?—No.

11,615. No friend or relation?—Well, part of it is let.

11,616. But as to what is unlet, there is nobody there?—No.

11,617. And nobody has been there for a number of years?—No.

11,618. Neither himself nor any of his friends or relations?—Well, some of his friends were there fishing.

11,619. I mean deer stalking?—Not one.

11,620. Nobody deer stalking for five years at least?—No.

11,621. For over ten years?—No.

11,622. *Mr Maccallum.*—You were asked by the Chairman about the sanctuary of the deer forest. Do you know what a sanctuary is?—Yes, a place to keep the deer quiet.

11,623. Do you know the meaning of the word sanctuary?—It means a holy place, does it not?

11,624. Or a place for refuge?—I don't know the meaning of it.

11,625. Is there a sanctuary where no man is allowed to go?—I don't know.

11,626. Is that the meaning of it in the forest—a place where no man is allowed to go?

11,627. *Mr Shaw Stewart.*—Is it not a place where it is not usual to shoot a rifle?—No, it is a place to preserve the deer. Not to move them out of there.

11,628. And, therefore, it is not usual to fire a rifle in the sanctuary?—No.

11,629. *Mr Burns.*—You said there has been no stalking for ten years. Mr Winans was shooting, I am told, there in 1885. That would be eight years ago?—Not that I am aware of.

11,630. In Glencannich?—They were shooting in Glencannich. They were driving them to Lord Lovat's place.

11,631. Mr Winans was shooting in Lord Lovat's place?—Yes, he was driving them to Lord Lovat's place.

11,632. This sanctuary is the place where no man shoots during the shooting season: is not that the meaning of the sanctuary?—Yes, and preserve the deer as well.

11,633. The notion is, that when a rifle is fired in the forest, the deer shall run to the place called the sanctuary, and not run out of the forest, is that it?—Yes.

11,634. Do you know that this land you have been talking about—Mrs Chisholm's land—let to shooting tenants, is let for £6700 a year?—No.

11,635. I am telling you that from the valuation roll. Now, have you any scheme by which crofters, if they occupied it, could pay anything like £5000 or £6000 a year.

11,636. *The Chairman.*—You mean occupy the whole of it.

11,637. *Mr Burns.*—Yes, occupy the whole of it?—Not for the whole of it.

11,638. Have you any scheme by which you could get crofters profitably to occupy the land so as to pay a rent of about £6000 a year, supposing they had the whole of it?—I did not come here to answer that question. I could not do it: I did not come here for a land question, but only for the petitions.

11,639. Now, assume this—I am telling you what is the truth from the Government returns—that there are 2,616,000 acres of land in Inverness-shire, and the total rent is £332,000, which is half-a-crown an acre; do you know any reason why Mrs Chisholm's land should be let for less than the average of the county?—

The arable ground is not so good as down here, nor near-hand it.

11,640. But taking it overhead?

11,641. *The Chairman.*—Is there any reason, in your judgment, why land should be let at less than taking the average of half-a-crown per acre for the county?—Yes, the only reason I could give is that the arable land is not so good. An acre down here at Beauly is worth four or five up there.

11,642. *Mr Burns.*—You have been saying it was good; you said there was not much of it, but it was good?—It is as good as there is in the place.

11,643. But, seeing that it is so scanty, it might not average so high; but you would average it at 1s. 6d.?—I average it for pasture.

11,644. Then you have no scheme by which this 1s. 6d. can be got overhead for the 80,000 acres, which would be £6000. You have no scheme by which occupation by small tenants could return to Mrs Chisholm this large rental?

11,645. *The Chairman.*—You may take his answer as negative.

11,646. *Mr Burns.*—You said that Mr Winans made part of Comar from sheep?—I was told that.

11,647. Was it not Major Boyd who changed Comar from sheep to deer, before Mr Winans came? Major Boyd had Luibnadamph and Fasnakyle?—Yes.

11,648. And Mr Peter. Don't you remember them?—Yes.

11,649. They were within your eighteen years. Wasn't it them that cleared the sheep?

11,650-1. *The Chairman.*—Do you know if it was Major Boyd who cleared the sheep?—It was Lord Tweedmouth that cleared the sheep.

11,652. *Mr Burns.*—So long as you free Mr Winans I don't mind. It was Lord Tweedmouth that cleared the sheep off Corrie?—Yes.

11,653. And off Beneveian and Ath-nam-Muileach and Comhlan?—I don't know who cleared the sheep.

11,654. But it was not my friend, Mr Winans, at any rate.

11,655. *The Chairman.*—He does not know anything more about it.

11,656. *Mr Burns.*—Wasn't it the sheep farmer that cleared the sheep?—It was.

11,657. The sheep farmer, not the shooting tenant?

11,658. *Mr Sutherland.*—What date was that?

11,659. *Mr Burns.*—All the time, eighteen years.

11,660. *The Chairman.*—Was the clearance, in your recollection, by the sheep farmer or the shooting tenant? or do you know?—There is part of it that was cleared by the sheep farmers and part by the shooting tenant.

11,661. *Mr Burns.*—And the shooting tenant was Lord Tweedmouth and Major Boyd?—Yes.

11,662. You were at Breackachy at one time, you said?—Yes.

11,663. That was not a small farm?—Something about £50. There were two of them in my time.

11,664. What was the rent?—Something about £50.

11,665. £150 it is now, but there has been something added to it perhaps?—There were two farms at the time.

11,666. Now, about your 1s. 6d. an acre. Would you take Scuir-na-Lapaich at 1s. 6d. an acre?—No.

11,667. Nor Mam-Soul?—No.

11,668. Nor Carn-Eige?—No.

11,669. These are all in this place you are talking about.

11,670. *The Chairman.*—You would not take them for nothing?—Oh yes, I would take them for nothing.

11,671. But they are very good grazing for summer sheiling, are they not, these mountain tops?—Oh yes.

11,672. *Mr Burns.*—Do you remember the story about the man that went up to the top and Mr Winans built a house for him on the top of Scuir-na-Lapaich? It was not you, was it?—No.

11,673. You know about the man. You remember the story?—No.

11,674. Did you watch the deer?—Yes.

11,675. Don't you remember the man that was snowed up, 16 feet of snow on the top of his house, and he only found out it was daylight by the snow coming down the chimney in the afternoon?

11,676. *The Chairman.*—Don't answer that.

11,677. *Mr Burns.*—You did get some reply to the petitions, except the last one?—No.

11,678. You have no reason to suppose that Mr Mackenzie, the minister, did not get some reply?—No, he did not get any reply.

11,679. He did not tell you he got a reply?—He told me he did not get a reply.

11,680. To the last one, but to the two previous ones?—Well, Mr Grant there will be able to state.

11,681. Didn't you get a general reply to some of them that the land had been let to Mr Robertson, Comar?—Not I.

11,682. Mr Mackenzie didn't tell you that?—No.

11,683. Mr Robertson, Comar, had the land all the time, hadn't he, for the last twenty years?—Yes, but his lease was out then.

11,684. *The Chairman.*—And you wanted to embrace the opportunity of the lease being out?—Yes.

11,685. *Mr Burns.*—His lease was expiring at Whitsunday last, and you thought you would get some of the land?—Yes.

11,686. Now you can tell us this, as you are a deerman, to clear it up. Can you have a deer forest, in the method by which they are now managed, and sheep successfully; can you have both a deer forest and sheep on the same ground?—You could not have a deer forest and sheep on the same ground, but you could have some sporting.

11,687. I know you can get grouse shooting?—Yes, and deer too, to some extent.

11,688. But not in the method by which you manage the forests now?—No, no.

11,689. *The Chairman.*—Is that because the desire is to kill a much larger number of deer than used to exist?—Yes.

11,690. *Mr Burns.*—The reason is, that the shepherd and his dog in going about the sheep interrupt the ground. That is the reason; you want stillness and quiet?—Yes.

11,691. *Mr Alexander Mackenzie.*—I should like to ask one or two questions: Who cleared Knockfin?

11,692. *The Chairman.*—Who cleared Knockfin, it was cleared?—Mr Winans.

11,693. *Mr Alexander Mackenzie.*—I think your lordship has the amount of sheep cleared already in evidence—over 4000 sheep. (*To Witness.*) Who cleared Beneveian and Achagiat, which was part of the grazing of Mauld?—It was Mr Winans that cleared that.

11,694. *The Chairman.*—Mr Fraser, Mauld, sold over to Winans, and Winans cleared the ground. Is that the way of it?—Yes.

11,695. *Mr Alexander Mackenzie.*—What do the watchers do in the deer forest—such men as yourself and the gamekeeper—what is their occupation?

11,696. *The Chairman.*—What is the occupation of a watcher and a forester on a deer forest? What is his particular duty?—There are some of us only keeping the deer from doing any harm—keeping them up from going on low ground.

11,697. What kind of low ground; it is all forest?—Corn and crop.

11,698. Whose corn?—There is Mr Robertson, Comar.

11,699. Keeping them off Mr Robertson's corn, and any other duty?—There are some standing watchers up the glen.

11,700. What does he stand and watch?—To see there is no poachers or anything.

11,701. Anything else?—Not that I am aware of.

11,702. Is that their whole duty?—I think so.

11,703. *Mr Alexander Mackenzie.*—Are they allowed to carry any rifles or keep any rifles, either watchers or keepers?

11,704. *The Chairman.*—Are you allowed to carry or keep a rifle?—Not I.

11,705. Are the foresters allowed to carry or keep rifles?—I don't think there is any except the head-keeper, Mr Mackenzie.

Beauly — Roderick Maclean.

11,706. Are you allowed to carry or keep guns?—No.

11,707. Then you have no gun?—No, I have no gun.

11,708. Have you a sporting dog?—Yes, I had a small terrier.

11,709. But you have no regular sporting dog?—No.

11,710. *Mr Alexander Mackenzie.*—Then, what is your occupation?—I can suggest the occupation if your lordship will allow me, but perhaps you had better get it.

11,711. *The Chairman.*—He says he watches poachers, and he watches that Mr Robertson's corn is not eaten up. I have not heard anything else.

11,712. *Mr Alexander Mackenzie.*—Have they to report to Mr Winans daily, or pretty often, the number of stags they see browsing on the hillsides, and have they to report to himself and his keeper daily, or send duplicate reports of any people they see walking along the highway through these forests, their names and addresses, and whether they are off the highway or not.

11,713. *The Chairman.*—Do you make that report?—Some of the men are employed to do that. Some of those who are up the glen had to report the number of deer.

11,714. And do they also report, as far as they can, the names and addresses of people passing through the forests by the road?—I am not aware of that.

11,714*a*. *Mr Alexander Mackenzie.*—Is the forest used for any purpose whatever connected with what was understood in his early years as sport? Are these forests used now in any sense in a similar manner to what forests—they were not called forests in those days—to what sporting preserves were used in his earlier years?

11,715. *The Chairman.*—This is the question: Are these forests used in any sense in the way in which sporting ground was used in your early days?—No, it is not used in the same way.

11,716. Now, what is the special difference?

11,717. *Mr Alexander Mackenzie.*—Do they shoot anything at all?—The difference is, that in my first days there was shooting there, and there is not shooting there now.

11,718. *The Chairman.*—You mean they don't shoot game?—No.

11,719. And for a number of years, as you told us, they have not even stalked deer?—No.

11,720. *Mr Alexander Mackenzie.*—Doesn't the fact that there is a great deal more arable land on the lower grounds throughout this county, than there is proportionally in these glens, account for the difference in rental that Mr Burns referred to?

11,721. *The Chairman.*—I think you might put the question if you can get him to understand it.

11,722. *Mr Shaw Stewart.*—These forests of Mr Winans, are they not used exceptionally: you never heard of any other forests in Scotland where there was no stalking every year: you never heard of any other forest dealt with in the same way as this?—Yes, Glen Strathfarrar is in the same way.

11,723. All other forests in Scotland, except those under Mr Winans, are used every year for sporting purposes?—Yes.

11,724. And if Mr Winans gave these forests up, I suppose these forests would in all probability be stalked over again?—Very likely.

11,725. *Mr Burns.*—Do you know that these forests have been let, the whole of them for this year, to be shot?—Yes, I know that.

11,726. *The Chairman.*—Has Mr Winans not kept any part of the forest?—He has kept some.

11,727. What some, now?—Luibnadamph.

11,728. *Mr Burns.*—You told us the story about how you would work your own croft—25 acres of arable and 100 sheep. What rent would you pay for that?

11,729. *The Chairman.*—I will put the question again, as I don't think he answered it?—I gave you a proper answer for that.

11,730. *Mr Burns.*—Would it be twenty-five one-and-sixpences?—I mean that for a certain place. I would not give that for the pasture.

Beauly. — Roderick Maclean.

11,731. *The Chairman.*—Would you like to see an equitable rate for the arable land or old arable land and so much per sheep for the sheep?—Yes.

11,732. And an impartial body of men with competent knowledge fixing rent on that basis would satisfy you?—Yes.

11,733. *Mr Burns.*—Have you any notion how much it would come to, 25 acres of land and 100 sheep?—No.

11,734. *The Chairman.*—He has given us what enables us to form an opinion.

11,735. *Mr Donald Macrae*, Plockton.—I should like to ask a question or two, my lord.

11,736. *The Chairman.*—As short as you can.

11,737. *Mr Donald Macrae.*—Oh, decidedly.

11,738. *The Chairman.*—We wish to finish to-day.

11,739. *Mr Donald Macrae.*—This is a point that I consider of some importance, and I hope your lordship will bear with me for a moment or two. I understand Mr Maclean to say that he did not consider himself an authority as to the question of the amount of stock that the various places would carry. I should like to ask him now, was he present at a public meeting in Cannich within the last fortnight, where the question of evidence to be submitted to the Royal Commission was fully debated for two or three hours.

11,740. *The Chairman.*—Were you present at a meeting in Cannich of that kind?—Yes.

11,741. *Mr Donald Macrae.*—Does he remember the names of the men who were appointed by the people there to give evidence? Does he remember of an old man speaking as to evidence for over an hour, and giving the names of every single place in Glencannich on both sides, and mentioning the names and the number of the various farmers who were in those places, and the amount of stock they had, of horses, of cattle, and of sheep, for every single one of them separately? I think over twenty places in Glencannich alone.

11,742. *The Chairman.*—Do you remember hearing a statement upon these matters at that meeting from a very old man?—Yes.

11,743. What was his name?—Angus Cameron.

11,744. *Mr Donald Macrae.*—Do you remember of another man there who was appointed as a delegate, and who was very anxious to be here to give evidence, and who said that he was afraid to come because of a threat?

11,745. *The Chairman.*—Do you remember that?—Yes.

11,746. What was his name?—James Grant, Fasnakyle.

11,747. *Mr Donald Macrae.*—Can you remember the name of any other man who was appointed a delegate, and who was very anxious to come, and who also told me in your presence that he also was afraid to come because of a threat?—Maclennan was afraid to come. They were threatening to let his house down.

11,748. *The Chairman.*—Who threatened to put his house down?—He told me it was Robertson, Comar.

11,749. *Mr Donald Macrae.*—I simply want to point out, my lord (I feel the evidence would be at second hand from me), but these old men gave the names of over twenty places, farms that were cleared and that are now under deer, and the names of the tenants, if not farmers, the number of milk cows and followers, the number of horses and the number of sheep at every one of these places; and as an illustration of them I may mention one where there were three and four head of cattle and 3000 sheep. In other places, six and eight and ten head of cattle, and 500 and 600 and 700 sheep, quite a common thing.

11,750. *The Chairman.*—Of course, you know as well as I do, we can hardly take that as evidence.

11,751. *Mr Donald Macrae.*—I know; but what I wish to point out is the loss sustained to the country through the fact that this vital part of the evidence is suppressed because of the terrorism that has been referred to.

11,752. *Mr Burns.*—We are denying that.

11,753. *The Chairman.*—I quite understand that, but I think it is only fair to allow this to come out.

11,754. *Mr Maccallum.*—It is a fact, is it, to your knowledge, that there are people in Glencannich much better qualified to speak as to the quality of the land than you?—Yes, the whole of them have better knowledge of the land.

11,755. They could give better evidence than you could give?—Yes.

11,756. And they were willing to come, and made arrangements to come?—They were willing when I was speaking to them.

11,757. Now, you were engaged yourself as a watcher: was there any threat against yourself coming?—No.

11,758. Did you ask permission to come?—No, I did not ask. I thought I would be at home in time.

11,759. And so there was no refusal of permission?—No, there was no word said to me.

11,760. *The Chairman.*—I should ask you this in fairness to the estate. Have you any reason whatever to anticipate any harm to yourself or to your employment from having come here and given evidence?—Well, I believe they would not be pleased at me to give evidence.

11,761. But have you any reason to anticipate any harm?—I could not tell you. It might.

11,762. Mr Sutherland mentioned yesterday, and I was much obliged to him, and I beg to repeat, there is an Act of Parliament passed very recently which affords special protection to a person giving evidence in similar circumstances to yours. Now that will do.—Thank you, my lord.

WILLIAM BURNS, Solicitor, Inverness (52)—*examined.*

[I wish to go into the box and contradict this.]

11,763. *The Chairman.*—Do you wish to be examined?—Yes, about this point. I give as evidence, my lord, that this statement, and the reflection upon the management of the estate and upon Mr Winans, that has been made to-day and yesterday, with regard to preventing witnesses coming forward, has not the remotest foundation on earth, so far as I know. It is perfectly well known to all the people in this district that my firm are, and have been for many years, agents for The Chisholm estate and for Mr Winans and for Lord Lovat; and there was no mention made to me or to any factor, or so far as I know to any manager or any assistant manager upon any part of the estates, of any desire of any person to come forward to give evidence. I need hardly say to your lordship that, if the thing had been communicated to me, directly or indirectly, I would instantly, without regard to the Act of Parliament, have prevented any person interfering with any man coming forward and giving your lordship the most full evidence possible; and the thing is—I don't say got up on purpose, because these people do go and think and in their own minds have notions that we would threaten or interfere with them—but the notion that I, or any person connected with me, would interfere with the inquiry at the instance of Her Majesty, is absurd.

11,764. I did not understand at all, Mr Burns, that any harm was dreaded from you personally or from your firm or anyone connected with you?—But from Mr Winans or Mrs Chisholm, or the factor, or anyone, the thing is not possible. It would have been communicated to me. We have a general supervision of all this district of country — Mrs Chisholm's estate with the aid of the factor, Mr Winans' without the aid of anyone.

11,765. Your evidence, among other things, comes to this, that if anything of that sort has occurred you have no knowledge of it whatever, and it would be wholly without your consent or instructions?—Entirely; and I have inquired, and expect if Mr Donald Mackenzie of Fasnakyle, who does not happen to be here——

11,766. *Mr Donald Macrae.*—He was here yesterday when the statement was made. He denied it yesterday.

11,767. *Mr Maccallum.*—It was not denied by Mr Mackenzie before the Commission. Beauly.

11,768. *Mr Burns.*—He told me that the thing was nonsense; but the suggestion now is made that Mr Robertson of Comar, who is not one of our people, and who is a tenant and is a rich man, has done something on his own account, but he could not influence our people. They don't care a snuff for Mr Robertson of Comar. I also want to say this about yesterday's evidence, that these sheep farms of Kerrow and Knockfin proved commercial failures during the last years of their existence. I took over the sheep stock, in the first place, of the farm of Kerrow in 1872 from a Mr Rogerson, who had lost many thousands of pounds in the adventure, for Lord Tweedmouth. We carried it on; there was a loss. We did not lose in any year less than about £800 on the farm of Kerrow, and then we sold the stock. William Burns.

11,769. *Mr MacCallum.*—During how many years?—*Mr Burns.* From 1872 to 1878, I think, so far as I can get the figures. Then in Knockfin I took the sheep stock over for Mrs Chisholm of Chisholm in 1882. Mr Winans repaid the money; that was part of the bargain. We carried it on, Lord Tweedmouth being the shooting tenant, at a great loss, although we never took the trouble to ascertain exactly what it was; but in 1886 I sold off the whole stock and cleared the land, but there was a loss, I am bound to say—a considerable loss. We did not realise it, because we did not keep any separate capital accounts; it was of no great consequence to Mr Winans. But, in the case of Kerrow, we did keep accurate accounts, and I think the loss was never less than £800.

11,770. From 1872 to 1878?—As far as I can get the figures.

11,771. During each of these years?—Each of these years. I ought to qualify that, to some extent, in fairness to you, by saying that both these places were occupied with a view as much, or perhaps more, to sport than profit. That may have had to do with it.

11,772. That, of course, has a good deal to do with it. I have no questions to put, but some of the other Commissioners may have.

11,773. *Mr Munro.*—Perhaps you would kindly take your pencil memorandum that you had before you to refresh your memory: First, as to the acreage of the county of Inverness, what did you say?—I got the acreage from *Oliver & Boyd.*

11,774. I have it here stated in Lord Napier's Report as 2,723,501 acres. That is quoted from an extract in the *Highland Sportsman*, advertising some estates in the county for sale?—Well, I have taken the figures from Mr Malcolm, who has got them from *Oliver & Boyd's Almanac.*

11,775. I don't for a moment mean to impugn the accuracy of these figures, but I think it is right, Mr Burns, to direct your attention to the discrepancy?—We will get it in a moment.

11,776. Turning from that point in the meantime, we come to the question of rental. What did you state the rental of the county to be?—I got it from Mr Malcolm again—£332,000.

11,777. The gross rental of the county of Inverness is £332,000, but that is inclusive of the Highland Railway—£16,000, and the Caledonian Canal—£2500?—That would increase the rental per acre if you knock the railways out.

11,778. I think it is stated here, in *Oliver & Boyd*, 2,616,545. *Oliver & Boyd*, p. 1005:—'Inverness 'covers an area of 4255 square miles, or 2,723,501 acres. 'The ordinary rental of the county for the year 1892–'93 is £303,700, 4s. 3d.; Highland Railway, £16,536; 'Great North of Scotland Railway, £2551.'

11,779. I don't undertake to say which statement is the accurate one; but now about the rental?—I see in *Oliver & Boyd*, p. 634, the figure given is £331,916. I took it roughly as £332,000.

11,780. The rental given here, in the abstract for 1892–93 of the Valuation Roll, is £322,787, 4s. 3d. I presume you will take that as accurate?—I will get that in a moment from the Valuation Roll. We will

Beauly. William Burns

take it at £322,000. I fancy the Valuation Roll must be taken before Oliver & Boyd. It is only £10,000 difference.

11,781. I beg your pardon, it is a considerable deal more. If you eliminate from these figures the value of the Highland Railway Company and the Caledonian Canal it brings you down to £303,000?—Obviously, but we took the biggest figure, because, if you take the gross amount, you increase the rate per acre.

11,782. Included in the £303,000 of gross rental are there not the houses of the county,—the rental of the houses in the county?—Oh, surely; it is the heritages in the county if they have done it right.

11,783. What proportion would you estimate that at, roughly speaking?—That is a question it is absolutely impossible to answer on a moment's notice, but I will give you a guess, if you like. Take, as an example, the Chisholm estate; what are the houses down at. I am bound to say they will not be one-tenth of the value of the whole land.

11,784. I would not be disposed to take The Chisholm estate as a typical example?—Well, take Lord Lovat's; although he has built that tremendous big castle, Lord Lovat's estate is probably assessed at £28,000 a year, and I would be astonished to find that there was £2000 under houses.

11,785. I would be astonished to find that there was not double?—You can get it. What do you say Beaufort Castle was down at. £500 a year. I would say it was a big rent. They always accuse us of putting down too little for mansion houses, but what do you put it down at? I don't believe there would be £2000, and that would be 10 per cent.

11,786. *The Chairman.*—(Turning to Mr Peter). But you must know, Mr Peter, what Beaufort Castle is?—I think £250.

11,787–8. *Mr Burns.*—Well, put down other £250. That would not be more than one-hundredth.

11,789. *Mr Munro.*—Surely, Mr Burns, you would not seriously allege that the valuation of the village of Beauly would only be £200?—But I am not talking of the village. Inverness-shire is a very curious place. There are almost no towns in it except the town of Inverness, and the villages are few. There are Beauly and Fort William, and Fort Augustus and Kingussie. You have about exhausted the lot, and the rentals are not very heavy. I don't believe that 10 per cent. of the rental is houses.

11,790. In addition to that, you have got mansion-houses, farm-houses, and the like?—The farm-house is a sort of implement of the land it is on.

11,791. Would you estimate the valuation of the houses in the county as £70,000 a year over all?—I said 10 per cent.; that would give you £30,000. Chuck in these villages. I would split the difference with you and give you £45,000, but really this is a wild guess.

11,792. But you made rather a wild statement to begin with?—I took it out of *Oliver & Boyd.*

11,793. You made out that the average rent per acre in the county of Inverness was 2s. 6d., and on that you based a question to Mr Maclean, asking him if he was prepared to pay a sum equal to that, or did he consider it reasonable that Mrs Chisholm should take a less rental than the average of the county. Now, the average of the county is very considerably under 2s. 6d. per acre; it must of necessity be?—No; you reduced your gross rental, and therefore increased the rate per acre, and you have knocked off as much the one way as you have added the other way.

11,794. I am afraid your arithmetic has got a little confused.

11,795. *Mr Sutherland.*—Don't you see you are decreasing your dividend without increasing your divisor; you are attributing the value to the land that is given to the railway and the canal?—He has shown me that my total rental was too great; then that gets your rate per acre up.

11,796. *The Chairman.*—Isn't it the other way?—No, it is not. It is an arithmetical inquiry, and Mr Munro thinks he is right.

11,797. *Mr Munro.*—You have reduced the rental very considerably by £70,000 or £80,000, but you have not reduced the acreage of the county. Must not, therefore, the average rent be considerably less per acre? You have reduced the amount to be divided without reducing the divisor?—Our brains don't work the same fashion. I say no, supposing it was £1 instead of £332,000, the rate per acre would be two millions.

Beauly. William Burns.

11,798. *Mr Sutherland.*—You are attributing to land the value of railways and canals?—I admit that, and I say you can take off 10 per cent. and you will not appreciably alter the difference. That would be 3d. off the 2s. 6d.

11,799. That is merely the houses, without including the Railway and the Caledonian Canal?—You will not get it down to 2s., do anything you like in the way of deduction or addition.

11,800. *Mr Munro.*—Would it put you to an excessive amount of trouble if you made up a statement showing the actual amount paid for agricultural holdings in the county?—Really, it is impossible to do it except by a tremendous estimate. There is a farm paying, say £500, and there is on it a house—good, bad or indifferent. You would have to keep that off, and try and take the acreage of the land without the house.

11,801. You are rather gifted in that way?—I am absolutely gifted in lots of ways, and if you want me to do it I will do it, but the county assessor will do it for you.

11,802. But, speaking in the slump, you will acknowledge frankly, no doubt, that you overestimated the average rental of the county of Inverness?—No, Mr Malcolm took the figures out, and he has divided them, and it makes 2s. 6d. You can have the calculation there and check it. I believe it is correct.

11,803. You are responsible for the statement. You made the statement.

11,804. *The Chairman.*—He is responsible for it, because he based questions to a witness upon it.—I did, my lord, and I say it is correct.

11,805. I must say that the figures were rather hurriedly furnished by Mr Malcolm?—We have checked them by *Oliver & Boyd.*

11,806. *Mr Maccallum.*—Do you still hold to that statement that the rate is 2s. 6d. an acre on the land in Inverness-shire?—Yes, I hold to that statement, with the qualifications that Mr Munro has suggested—that the houses are included and some other things are included.

11,807. *Mr Sutherland.*—And the railways and the canal?—Yes.

11,808. *Mr Maccallum.*—Having made these admissions, it comes to this, that the rate is very much less than 2s. 6d.?—No, it is the other way.

11,809. Surely you can make that simple calculation, Mr Burns.

11,810. *Mr Donald Macrae.*—Might I ask a question of Mr Burns on the statement he made.

11,811. *The Chairman.*—Oh, certainly.

11,812. *Mr Donald Macrae.*—Mr Burns stated the loss on certain farms during certain years. Is he prepared to state the profits on the same farms during the other years that he was very careful not to refer to?—There is an insinuation, 'Mr Balallan,' that I was very careful to conceal something. I was not at all careful. I may tell you very frankly I know nothing about it.

11,813. Mr Burns knows nothing about it?—But there was a loss every year that I had to do with it. I don't think there was any profit at any other time.

11,814. What explanation has he to give of the fact stated by the factor yesterday, that on the expiry of the lease of Comar, the valuation of which the other day embraces 8500 sheep, that farm was not advertised at all for a grazing tenant? It was not at all advertised. What explanation has Mr Burns to give of that fact. How can he give an explanation consistent with the other statement that they were most anxious to get a grazing tenant and yet took no means to secure one?—But did Mr Grant say they were most anxious to get a grazing tenant?

11,815. *The Chairman.*—Oh yes.—*Mr Burns.* Then

that is Mr Grant's affair. I may tell you that there have been, I think, interrupted negotiations between Mr Winans and Mrs Chisholm, and probably also Mr Robertson, Comar, for the last fifteen years, and there are still negotiations of all kinds. Mr Winans has a very inventive mind when he is proposing this, that, and the other thing, and what is going to happen to this sheep stock has not yet been settled. I believe that the probability is—but that is a thing I cannot vouch for, it is in Mr Winans' hands—the probability is that we will not see him here again, and, if he does not come back to shoot, I cannot tell you what is going to happen to that sheep stock. Mr Winans has the grazing of that land in succession to Mr Robertson, Comar. What arrangements they are making, I don't know: I don't suggest there are any. I can't tell; that is not in my hands. Mr Winans is grazing tenant of that place just now in law, whatever he spends on it.

11,816. *Mr Donald Macrae.*—My next question to Mr Burns is this:—Did he hear the factor for The Chisholm admit yesterday that the factor and Mrs Chisholm were informed by the delegates themselves in a petition to Mrs Chisholm, through the factor, that they were threatened with having their houses pulled down about their ears if they would ever say a word about land?—I heard Mr Grant read a letter yesterday.

11,817. *The Chairman.*—And you heard his evidence?—I heard his evidence.

11,818. *Mr Donald Macrae.*—You heard his admission?—I heard whatever he said.

11,819. *The Chairman.*—He made that admission. I will read the passage:—*Mr Macrae.*—'Are these 'people sufficiently independent to come before the 'Commission and speak for themselves?—Certainly. 'Is it not the fact that in one of these petitions they 'stated to Mrs Chisholm that the tenant of Comar 'threatened to pull their houses about their ears if 'they appeared before the Commission?—That was 'said in one of the petitions.'—*Witness.*—I think I heard that, but I was out during a part of Mr Grant's evidence.

11,820. *Mr Donald Macrae.*—I wish to ask what steps Mr Burns has taken, if any, since yesterday, to give these people an absolute assurance in the event of their coming down to give evidence before the Royal Commission?—I think I made some statement in the Court here.

11,821. *The Chairman.*—You made a further statement, Mr Macrae, in which you informed the Commission of what had happened to delegates then present.

11,822. *Mr Burns.*—Mr Macrae suggests that the estate did not help the people, but did he ask us?

11,823. *The Chairman.*—Mr Macrae added:—'These 'people approached Mrs Chisholm through the factor, 'and it is from that quarter, I hold, that the offer of 'protection should have come.' Then I interpose a statement about the number that had come forward. Then Mr Burns says:—'In the name of Mrs Chisholm 'and Mr Winans, I offer them the utmost security.'

11,824. *Mr Donald Macrae.*—These people live a considerable distance from this place; it is inaccessible. Has Mr Burns taken any steps whatever beyond that statement? Has he any reason to believe that the statement he made in Court yesterday has been communicated to these people?—Not unless it has been done in the public prints, but if you give me the names of any body,——

11,825. The names were given here?—You never gave me the name of Mr James Grant.

11,826. I gave the names yesterday.—Well, take the trouble to write their names on an envelope, and I will send a special messenger to get them to come and see the Commissioners.

11,827. How can you explain the fact that the petition of these people, for the simple and small matter of cow's grazing, has been ignored, while Mr Robertson, who has been threatening to pull the houses about their ears if they would dare ever say a word, has got a renewal of his lease?—Well, Mr Robertson is an old tenant of The Chisholm estate: he is 76 years of age, and he has given up the grazing, which is at a distance, I suppose, of about 15 to 20 miles from his house, on account of advancing years, and he wants to retire from that part of his business, and he wishes to continue in the place where he has cattle and sheep, and where he cultivates an arable farm close to his house, and Mrs Chisholm thought it was a very proper thing to do not to turn out an old man. These petitioners are servants of Mr Winans, whose tenancy may terminate, probably will terminate, next May, and the notion was that we should take from Mr Robertson part of his possession and give it to these people. That did not seem to the factor or to Mrs Chisholm to be reasonable or fair, and there is an end to it. Supposing Mr Winans, who is a different person from The Chisholm estate altogether, terminates his connection with them,—that is to say, pays them off, what would be the use of their holdings to them?—They may take them, if they like, from Mr Robertson. I have no doubt if they apply to Mr Robertson for a cow's grass they may find him reasonable. I have found him sometimes reasonable. I may also add, three of the men who had applied got land. We could not manage the rest.

Beauly. William Burns.

DUNCAN ROBERTSON, Farmer, Comar, Strathglass (70)—*examined.* Duncan Robertson.

11,828. *The Chairman.*—How many years have you been in Comar?—Thirty-four.

11,829. You entered thirty-four years ago, on a sixteen years' lease, did you?—A fifteen years' lease.

11,830. And that was succeeded by a lease for how many years?—I don't remember, but there were two leases since. There were ten years added to it.

11,831. There were ten years added to the fifteen years?—Yes.

11,832. That is twenty-five?—And nine again.

11,833. And the lease is out now?—The lease expired at Whitsunday of this year.

11,834. Were any additions made to your farm during this lease?—Yes.

11,835. What were these additions?—There was one farm added to it.

11,836. What was the name of it?—Mam.

11,837. What was the extent of it?—I am not sure about the extent of it. It is not a very large farm. It is a hill farm altogether.

11,838. And it is now part of Comar?—Part of Longart farm in Ross-shire.

11,839. Is that what you call East Comar?—It is not in Comar at all; the top of Glencannich.

11,840. Now you heard the statement—I want to take this shortly and to help you so far as I can up to the point. There was a statement made. The question was put by Mr Macrae—'Is it not the fact that in one 'of these petitions' [the petitions we have heard so much about] 'they stated to Mrs Chisholm that the 'tenant of Comar,' meaning you, 'threatened to pull 'their houses about their ears if they appeared before 'the Commission.' Do you wish to make any statement to the Commissioners with regard to the implication in that statement?—Yes, I wish to say that that is not the fact. It is not true. I never made such a statement, or any statement bordering on it.

11,841. Neither that statement nor any statement of the kind?—No, nothing of the kind.

11,842. I should, in fairness to you, ask you this further question,—Did you threaten anybody if they appeared before this Commission?—No, my lord, I never did.

11,843. Did you say anything to anybody about what might happen to them if they appeared before the Commission?—No, I never did.

11,844. Had you any conversation with anybody with reference to his or her evidence before the Commission?—No.

11,845. Did you speak to anybody on the farm or in your neighbourhood on the subject?—No, I never thought of doing anything of the sort.

Beauly. Duncan Robertson.

11,846. Can you suggest how this idea has arisen?—I can't say, and I never knew of it till I saw it in the papers this morning. That was my reason for coming here.

11,847. I must tell you, that you are quite entitled to come here when your name was involved. Now, as you have come here and are giving us information, I would like to get this from you if you can give it. You know Tombuie?—Yes.

11,848. What was the carry of cows there before it became forest?—I cannot say; I never had cows, it was sheep I had on it.

11,849. What sheep did it carry?—It would carry about 200 cheviots.

11,850. What sheep would Dalreoch carry?—Dalreoch would not carry much; I am not sure of the boundaries, but the land is not so good.

11,851. What did it carry in your day; would it carry 300?—I am not sure of the marches; I never had that place. I had not Dalreoch.

11,852. But do you not know what it would carry? Can you not give us an estimate?—Dalreoch and Slios-garbh might between them carry 1800 altogether.

11,853. What does that include?—Away up to Coire-buie march.

11,854. Now you know Luibguish?—Yes, that is included in the 1800.

11,855. Then you know Fraoch-Choire?—Yes.

11,856. Is that included?—That is included.

11,857. That is all on the south side of Glencannich?—All on the south side.

11,858. Now, passing over to the north side of Glencannich, what would the carry of sheep on Muckrach be?—Muckrach and Carrie together would be——

11,859. About 1000?—No, about 700.

11,860. Would there not be nearly 900?—I don't think it. I don't think it ever had 900 on—about 700 I would say.

11,861-2. Pass on to Leitrie: what would the carry in sheep on Leitrie be—500?—Not quite.

11,863. How many?—Perhaps 400.

11,864. Then Shalavanach—you know it very well—what is the carry on it?—About the same.

11,865. And the carry on Mullardoch?—That would be 600.

11,866. Then, take Luibardtaig and Coire-nan-cuilean on the east side, what is the carry there?—Something over 500.

11,867. And the carry of Coire-nan-cuilean on the west side?—Not quite so much.

11,868. Taking Comar and Fasnakyle: Auchinan, what is the carry of that?—It was wintering I had there; it would keep about——

11,869. 250?—Oh, it would keep over 1000.

11,870. For wintering?—It would keep 1500 for wintering.

11,871. And how many at other times of the year?—Perhaps about 1000.

11,872. Does that include Airidh-Dhuibhian?—Including Coire-dubh and all up to Airidh-Dhuibhian, and round by Tombuie. Tombuie is included in that.

11,873. 1500 wintering, and how many in summer?—It would only keep, summer and winter, about 1000.

11,874. Now I would like if you could give me—I have not taken you over it,—but can you give me the carry of these places in cows and horses?—No, I can give you what the farm of Comar keeps.

11,875. Do you not know whether Tombuie would carry 6 cows?—I don't think there would be keep for 6 cows there.

11,876. You are not able to speak with the same confidence of the carry in cattle as of the carry in sheep?—No.

11,877. You never had cattle there?—No, never.

11,878. Now, Mr Macrae, you raised this question in your examination yesterday. Have you any question to put to Mr Robertson.

11,879. *Mr Donald Macrae*, Plockton.—Your lordship has almost exhausted all I should like to ask Mr Robertson, but I may put this question,—Did he visit the house of Roderick Maclennan and speak to him upon the question of their asking hand?

Beauly. Duncan Robertson.

11,880. *The Chairman.*—Allow me to guide you so far. In a question of that sort you have given him the place, and you must also give him the date.

11,881. *Mr Donald Macrae.*—About the time of these petitions, within the last three months?—*Witness.*—No.

11,882. Did Mr Robertson say anything to Roderick Maclennan or to James Grant, or to any other of these men in the neighbourhood of Cannich; did he say anything to them about pulling down their houses?—Never did.

11,883. There is no use following that up. We have it from the men themselves?—Some of the people that you named there as coming to the Commission, came to my house and said they had no money to bring them down, and my niece gave them money to bring them down, and they did not appear here to-day.

11,884. *The Chairman.*—How many got money?—One.

11,885. What money did he get?—As much as what would bring him down.

11,886. A few shillings?—Yes.

11,887. What was the name of the man?—Angus Cameron.

11,888. He had his expenses here and to help him back?—Yes.

11,889. And who gave him the money?—My niece.

11,890. She lives with you?—She lives with me, and that shows that I was not keeping them back.

11,891. *Mr Maccallum.*—Do you know that the person who got that money was one of those appointed at the public meeting to give evidence?—I heard his name mentioned here to-day.

11,892. And those who were appointed to give evidence here, are they in any way dependent upon you?—No. One of them has a house from me, and pays me £1 a year.

11,893. That is the only one that is indebted to you in any way?—No other one.

11,894. *Mr Munro.*—You are leaving the sheep farm of Comar, I understand?—Not at present; I have Comar.

11,895. But you are leaving it, I understand?—No, I am not.

11,896. What land is it that you are leaving?—I am leaving Ross-shire.

11,897. You are leaving the Ross-shire part?—Yes.

11,898. Did you make application to the landlord to be relieved of that part of the farm?—No, I don't think I did.

11,899. You were not willing to continue the lease any longer?—Well, I never considered it much.

11,900. But you yourself made application to be relieved of it?—No, I did not; but I sent a renunciation in.

11,901. But we had it here in evidence that you yourself took the initiative in the negotiations for giving up the farm?—Yes, I did that.

11,902. How do you reconcile that with the statement that you did not make application to be relieved of the farm?—Not to any person; I just sent the renunciation when my time was out, that I was to be cleared.

11,903. You were not willing to continue as tenant there?—I don't say I was particularly willing.

11,904. You know the purpose to which the farm is now to be applied, I suppose?—No, I can't say.

11,905. Not of your own knowledge?—Not of my own knowledge. It was supposed that it was to be a deer forest when I gave it up.

11,906. That is the common notion, that it is to be converted into a deer forest?

11,907. *Mr Sutherland.*—You said the Ross-shire part of your farm?—The Ross-shire part and the hill part of Comar farm was a deer forest some years back.

11,908. *Mr Macleod.*—Mr Munro, you will notice Mr Robertson, was rather surprised when you said you had not given up Comar—that you still had Comar?—I have the low part of it.

11,909. As I understand it, you some years ago yourself sublet a portion of it?—Of the hill.

11,910. Of the hill?—Yes.

11,911. As a deer forest?—Yes.

11,912. In fact you yourself took the sheep off it and let it?—I had no sheep on it; it was wintering I had.

11,913. So that you sublet it in that way. Now you gave the Chairman a number of figures as to the number of sheep that could be carried on different places?—Yes.

11,914. And then you said you could not give any information as to the cattle, because you hadn't any cattle there?—No.

11,915. Now, do I understand that the number of sheep that you gave is the total stock that the place would carry—that is to say that, supposing that you were putting cattle on, would you have to reduce the number of those sheep?—I would have to reduce the sheep stock, certainly.

11,916. So that this is really the total carry of the places, in your opinion?—Yes.

11,917. If there were cows put on, or any other animals.

11,918. *The Chairman.*—Horses?

11,919. *Mr Macleod.*—Horses. It would be necessary to reduce the sheep stock to the number of the other animals you would put on?—Yes, I would fancy so, but these are not my own places; I have only guessed the thing—given my opinion upon it.

11,920. One other question as to the number of sheep that were on the ground that you gave up at Whitsunday term. Might I ask you what the number was?—About 8000.

11,921. I may tell you that it was stated here yesterday at between 7000 and 8000, and it has been stated in another place at over 8000?—There are not 8000 delivered yet, but there should be.

11,922. There should be about 8000?—Yes.

11,923. *The Chairman.*—I may mention at this stage, gentlemen, we are extremely anxious to complete the evidence to-day.

11,924. *Mr Alexander Mackenzie.*—I wish to ask some questions of this witness.

11,925. *The Chairman.*—We want to finish our work this afternoon.

11,926. *Mr Alexander Mackenzie.*—I hope your lordship will give us an opportunity, as well as Mr Burns.

11,927. *The Chairman.*—Certainly.

11,928. *Mr Alexander Mackenzie.*—Will your lordship ask if this is in the handwriting of Mr Robertson [hands document to witness].—*Witness.*—Perhaps it is.

11,929. *The Chairman.*—I suppose it is?—I think so.

11,930. *Mr Alexander Mackenzie.*—Mr Robertson supplied me with these figures on a certain occasion when I went up to see what that glen would carry. That was two years ago, and he was good enough to give me these figures which I have already used publicly. Would your lordship ask Mr Robertson if he has there given the carrying capacity of Tombuie as 6 cows, with followers, 2 horses, and 300 sheep?—No, it will not keep that.

11,931. Has he given this to me, my lord?

11,932. *The Chairman.*—He says that is in his writing, and, of course, therefore he admits that he differs from the figures you have given, I suppose.

11,933. *Mr Alexander Mackenzie.*—Well, I will ask for an explanation of that after I have given the figures, if you will allow me. Dalreoch, 3 cows, with followers, 1 horse, 300 sheep; Luibguish, 5 cows, with followers, 1 horse, 400 sheep; Fraoch-Choire, 4 cows, with followers, 1 horse, 300 sheep. Glencannich, north side, Muckrach, 8 cows, with followers, 2 horses, 360 sheep; Carrie, 8 cows, with followers, 2 horses, 580 sheep. The cows were estimated at the time, I may be allowed to state, on the basis of what the arable land in each place would maintain through the winter.—*Witness.*—How many sheep does that keep on the south side altogether?

11,934. I will give you that directly you have added it up yourself at the end. Leitrie, 10 cows and followers, 2 horses, 500 sheep; Shalavanach, 8 cows and followers, 2 horses, 500 sheep; Mullardoch, 6 cows and followers, 1 horse, 900 sheep; Luibaltaig and Coire-nan-cuilean, east side, 4 cows and followers, 1 horse, 800 sheep. Coire-nan-cuilean, west side, (there are two Coire-nan-cuileans apparently), 8 cows, with followers, 2 horses, 840 sheep. Comar and Fasnakyle, part of Auchinan (that is the district that your lordship had some difficulty in discovering on the map early in the examination of the witness Maclean), 10 cows, 2 horses, 250 sheep; Airidh-Dhuibhein, 4 cows, 1 horse, 300 sheep. And our friend adds, in his own handwriting, at the bottom: 'The whole of the above farms have been possessed by 'substantial and well-to-do tenants, who lived com-'fortably and happy.'—*Witness.*—I never saw a tenant in either of them but one.

11,935. Oh, I can't tell you that?—Make up the number of sheep and you will find that it will come to the number I have said. That is the summering of it, but what would it winter?

11,936. *The Chairman.*—But were the figures you gave me summering or wintering?—The figures I gave you were the average it would keep the whole year.

11,937. And what are those figures?—Those are the summering.

11,938. *Mr Alexander Mackenzie.*—And the wintering for the cattle, you will notice, my lord.

11,939. *The Chairman.*—What about the cattle?—It would summer the cattle, but it would not winter these cattle. There is no land in that ground that would provender all these.

11,940. Your answer is this, that the figures you gave me relate exclusively to wintering?—Just so: and these are the summering.

11,941. *Mr Macleod.*—It is a pure misunderstanding, I think.

11,942. *Mr Alexander Mackenzie.*—I may say that the number—I totted them up—is 84 cows, 10 horses, 4310 sheep, and Mr Robertson was good enough to go into the calculation with me and point out to me at the time that the horses and cows were based entirely upon the amount of arable land in the district, and the amount of fodder and food for the cattle which could be produced for wintering them on the ground. Is that the case, Mr Robertson?—No.

11,943. *The Chairman.*—Then what is the fact?—They might summer a few cattle there, but there was no wintering for cattle there; there is no arable land there to winter cattle to that extent.

11,944. Then do you say this, that having in view the explanation you have given, there is no real inconsistency between the answers you gave to me and that paper?—Just so. This is the summering, but I gave the figures for the whole year.

11,945. The evidence you gave me related to the whole year over, and this relates to the summering?—Yes.

11,946. *Mr Alexander Mackenzie.*—I cannot take that.

11,947. *The Chairman.*—That is his answer!

11,948. *Mr Alexander Mackenzie.*—Quite so, but it is not consistent with the information given me at the time all the same.

11,949. *The Chairman.*—That may be!

11,950. *Mr Alexander Mackenzie.*—Now, may I ask if part of the farm of Comar was sublet by Mr Robertson to Mr Winans?

11,951. *The Chairman.*—When?

11,952. *Mr Alexander Mackenzie.*—For several years until last Whitsunday, at a rental of £500.

11,953. *The Chairman.*—The question is this. Was part of the farm of Comar let by you to Mr Winans consecutively for some years till recently?—I let it to Major Boyd.

11,954. Did you let it to Mr Winans?—No, I did not, but he took it over from Major Boyd; it was transferred to him.

11,955. When was that?—That is some time ago. I can't really give the date.

Beauly. Duncan Robertson.

11,956. *Mr Alexander Mackenzie.*—It will be ten or more years ago?—More, I would say.

11,957. And it continued as a deer forest till last Whitsunday, I think, or the Whitsunday before that?

11,958. *The Chairman.*—Did it continue as a deer forest?—It is a deer forest to this day.

11,959. *Mr Alexander Mackenzie.*—Was the rental—the sub-rent paid by the shooting tenant—£500 or thereabouts?

11,960. *The Chairman.* — Was that the shooting rent?—The shooting rent was £500.

11,961. *Mr Alexander Mackenzie.*—Was that entered, to your knowledge, in the valuation roll at all? Did it ever appear? Of course it was no part of your business to put it there, Mr Robertson, but do you know whether it appeared?

11,962. *The Chairman.*—Do you know whether it appeared in the valuation roll as a deer forest?—No, I don't know, but I was paying income tax on everything, and rates for it.

11,963. *Mr Alexander Mackenzie.*—I was going to ask that.—*Witness.*—I was paying the full rent to The Chisholm. I was paying something over about £1200.

11,964. *Mr Sutherland.* — Was it entered in the valuation roll as a sheep farm or as a deer forest?—It was entered in the valuation roll as a sheep farm, because I was paying the rent and the rates, and I was getting this from the shooting tenant.

11,965. *Mr Alexander Mackenzie.*—Was the arrangement this, that he should pay all taxes and continue nominally as the tenant of the place as far as the public knew, or as far as the valuation roll was concerned?

11,966. *The Chairman.*—Was this the arrangement, that you were to pay the taxes and appear to be the farm tenant, but that the real tenant was the sportsman who paid you £500 a year? Was that the English of it?—That was partly the English of it.

11,967. *Mr Alexander Mackenzie.*—Did the estate recognise, as a tenant, Major Boyd or Mr Winans?

11,968. *The Chairman.*—Were you recognised as the tenant?—Yes.

11,969. Quite so; then the other people were not.

11,970. *Mr Alexander Mackenzie.*—And that has now continued a deer forest after you gave up the farm?—It is a deer forest now.

11,971. Was that cleared of sheep by Major Boyd or Mr Winans?—There were no sheep on it: it was for wintering it was kept.

11,972. But it was for wintering sheep?—Yes.

11,973. And who stopped the use of it for wintering sheep: was it Major Boyd or Mr Winans?—Major Boyd.

11,974. *Mr Burns.*—One word about the valuation of the farm, Comar. You sublet part of your land to Major Boyd?—Yes.

11,975. But you continued to pay your rent to Mrs Chisholm just the same?—Yes.

11,976. And the entries made in the valuation roll by the factor were correct, and Mrs Chisholm knew nothing about this business?—Knew nothing.

11,977. Whether you were a sort of sub-laird or not?

11,978. *Mr Alexander Mackenzie.*—In reference to this question, has Mr Burns, as agent for the estate, returned this portion of the farm as a deer forest in that parliamentary report.

11,979. *Mr Burns.*—What parliamentary report?—

11,980. *The Chairman.*—Mr Fraser-Mackintosh's parliamentary Return.

11,981. *Mr Alexander Mackenzie.*—Would your lordship also ask him if he ever returned Knockfin; he told us just now he was the practical manager.

11,982. *The Chairman.*—The question just now is, did you return Knockfin, and did you return this part of Comar as a deer forest?

11,983. *Mr Alexander Mackenzie.*—Are they mentioned in the Return?

11,984. *Mr Burns.*—Craskie, Fasnakyle, and Glencannich were returned in 1884; these include that.

11,985. *Mr Sutherland.*—It was a Return two years ago?

11,986. *Mr Burns.*—I never saw it. I suspect that was done by the assessors. It is in 'Glencannich, 'North Affaric, and Erchless' in this return, '78,000 'acres.' Mr Grant says roughly 80,000 acres. Beauly. Duncan Robertson.

11,987. *Mr Alexander Mackenzie.*—But Mr Winans pays a rental of £2200 for Knockfin alone, and there is not a penny of that appears.

11,988. *Mr Burns.*—It is in that 78,000 acres.

11,989. *The Chairman.* — Does this statement 'Glencannich, North Affaric, and Erchless, Mrs 'A. C. Chisholm; estimated extent, 78,000 acres,' include Knockfin and Comar?

11,990. *Mr Burns.*—Yes, you will find it on the plan that I put in.

11,991. *Mr Sutherland.*—Was a direct application made to you by the Crown agent for this Return?—

11,992. *Mr Burns.*—Yes, certainly.

DONALD MACKAY, Cottar, Camuiltmuir, Kiltarlity (48)—*examined.* Donald Mackay.

11,993. *The Chairman.*—You are described as a cottar: is that correct?—Yes.

11,994. Do you pay any rent?—Yes.

11,995. What rent do you pay?—I pay 10s., but I built the most of the house myself.

11,996. To whom is the rent paid?—To Lord Lovat.

11,997. Have you any land?—No, only a small bit of garden.

11,998. Do you carry on any employment?—I have a bit of the roads just now. I got it a year last Whitsunday.

11,999. As a road contractor?—Yes, a small bit of the road.

12,000. And you are desirous of obtaining more land?—Yes.

12,001. Now do you know of land to which you can invite our attention?—Yes.

12,002. Where is it?—There is part on the Belladrum estate, and part on the Lovat estate.

12,003. The Belladrum estate is in the hands of Mr Merry?—Yes, and I would like to take the Belladrum estate first.

12,004. What is the name of the part of Belladrum estate to which you refer?—I am going to commence very close to the Mains of Belladrum.

12,005. Where is it from Beauly?—About 4½ miles.

12,006. In which direction?—South-west; it is south-east from this.

12,007. What is the name of the nearest village?—The nearest village is Beauly itself.

12,008. Do you know Glackbea?—Yes.

12,009. Is it near Glackbea?—It is a little on this side of Glackbea, but a little to the south; it is south of Camuiltmuir.

12,010. Then the place you ask our attention to is?—The first place I would like to mention is Tenacrae.

12,011. What land is there there?—Well, I can't go very exactly into the acres, but I have seen two crofters there, with a horse apiece and two cows, and a few little stirks apiece. Sometimes they would have three cows, but not regularly.

12,012. Is that land under wood now?—No, but there is wood upon it in some parts.

12,013. What extent of ground is there there of the kind you refer to?—I would say, to the best of my knowledge—because I never measured ground—but as far as I understand I think there will be from 12 to 15 acres.

12,014. Of arable?—Of arable, and some pasture with the birch.

12,015. Now that, you think, is a place where two crofters could be settled?—Well, I think for a man to take his living out of it, I think it should be left to one.

12,016. Now passing from there?—The next place I would like to mention is Coire-Seilich.

12,017. What direction is that?—I believe ¾ of a mile.

12,018. In what direction?—Clean east; west from Beauly.

12,019. What land is there there?—Well, of the extent I cannot be exactly sure, but I have seen the crop and the corn yard with the stacks in it, with three or four, but the man that was there is present in the house and he can tell the number of acres, but I can't. He will be examined here, I think, for Strathconan. He is one Nicolson.

12,020. How many tenants were there?—One there.

12,021. Do you remember what stock they had?—Well, previously, once or twice or three times I happened to go there when I was there, and I must tell the truth, I did not count the stock.

12,022. Any other land?—Yes.

12,023. Where?—A place they call Torranherick, quite close to that again.

12,024. Is there arable land there?—I have seen two crofters situated there myself. I will give the names of them.

12,025. What are the names?—James Stewart was the oldest there, and John Fraser.

12,026. How is that land occupied at present?—Part of it is planted; most of it was planted, but plants don't grow much upon the arable land.

12,027. Part is planted, and how is the other part occupied?—The other part is all occupied by wood; it is planted out anew, but some of it is arable. The arable land that could not grow plants is just what it was.

12,028. No wood?—No wood; four years is the oldest. It is since the last Commission was around.

12,029. Now all the land at Torranherick is under wood, either young or old wood?—There is some of it that the wood would not grow on.

12,030. But it was intended for wood?—Yes.

12,031. Any other land?—Yes.

12,032. Where is that?—A place called Badton, on to Loch Ness.

12,033. What extent of land is there?—The man that was there had two horses and three or four cows. I think he had four for the most, and some stirks.

12,034. And how many horses?—Two.

12,035. Had he any sheep?—That is a thing that I can't go into; the pasture was tidy, but they planted the pasture; I think there were sheep before my knowledge.

12,036. Is that land at present grazing land?—No, it is closed in all for game.

12,037. Grouse?—Grouse and every kind of winged game, and hares and rabbits.

12,038. Not deer?—There are some deer.

12,039. Is any of the land at Loch Badton planted under wood?—Not of the arable land.

12,040. But there is wood close at hand, I suppose?—Yes.

12,041. Now is there anywhere else?—Yes, there is a farm we called Blairmore.

12,042. There is land there?—Yes.

12,043. Is it presently under game, or what?—In summer they graze the low parts—the arable land—but the whole of the hills are all under game.

12,044. And the lower parts are grazed?—In summer only.

12,045. There is no land under crop there?—No.

12,046. And what extent of land is there there?—Fifty or fifty-one acres in one place, and I think there is ten in another. There is another bit that I can't go into.

12,047. There will be at least 70 acres?—Well, I can't say if it would come to 70 altogether, but it is very close; it is past 60.

12,048. Have you seen crofters there, or small holders?—I did not see crofters, but I have seen a farmer in it. He is between ten and eleven years away, and the place is vacant.

12,049. What was his name?—Mackenzie: he is the father of Mr Mackenzie, the Free Church minister of Strathglass.

12,050. Since that time has the land been in the hands of the proprietors?—All the time.

12,051. Under game?—Under game.

12,052. Any other spot on the estate?—Yes, there is another spot down below Belladrum—nearer Beauly than Belladrum—one little farm. Beauly. Donald Mackay

12,053. What is the name?—Cnoc-a'-Chonais.

12,054. What is the nearest place to it?—It lies between Belladrum and Phoiness.

12,055. Is it under wood?—No.

12,056. Have you seen a tenant there?—I did not see a tenant, but they are coming after me, I believe, that saw the tenant.

12,057. Do you know how many were there?—One.

12,058. Are the remains of buildings there?—Yes, and the house walls are all there, excepting what I took out myself for wood-work for Belladrum.

12,059. Is there old arable there?—Yes, a good extent; it will be close on 30 acres whatever.

12,060. Of old arable?—I am not very sure about the extent, however.

12,061. What use is it being put to at present?—For game.

12,062. That is winged game and ground game?—Yes, and roes; I believe there will be some deer too.

12,063. Anywhere else?—There is another place that I was told to take up, by the last meeting that we had in the place,—some pasture that the people had close to Coulmill, on the up side, about 51 or 52 acres.

12,064. Is that grazing ground?—Grazing ground which Coulmill and the crofters had between them.

12,065. You mean the farmer of Coulmill?—Yes, and the crofters; they were getting the pasture between them, and the crofters had a complaint about it at the last meeting.

12,066. What was the name of the farmer?—Mr Macwilliam.

12,067. He is not there now?—Yes.

12,068. Do you know what rent he pays?—I am not sure: it will be over £200.

12,069. Is there a considerable extent of grazing there between Tomnacross and Coulmill?—It is not between Tomnacross and Coulmill, it is above Coulmill.

12,070. Anywhere else?—We are coming now to the Lovat estate. The first place is Inchstaing.

12,071. Where is that place?—That is up above Bruiach, next Boblanie, and then Inchstaing.

12,072. What direction is it from Belladrum?—West: the same as you were going to Strathglass.

12,073. It is on the river Bruiach, direct west from Glackbea?—Yes.

12,074. Are there remains of old houses there?—Yes.

12,075. How many?—One in that place.

12,076. How is the land occupied at present?—By game: I think there will be deer and everything there; there is plenty of them.

12,077. Can you tell me the extent of arable there?—I think there are about 18 acres in the place itself, and there is another small bit. I can't say whether there was a croft in it, or how it was before, but it will contain 8 acres, I think.

12,078. And that land is under game just now, and not under wood?—That is so.

12,079. Anywhere else on the Lovat estate?—Yes.

12,080. Where is that?—There is another place adjoining to it where there used to be a large farmer, but there is a keeper in it now (John Ross); but there is a part that he does not occupy. The large farmer does not occupy the whole of the land. The rest is vacant.

12,081. What is the name of it?—Clunvackie.

12,082. There was a farmer there?—Yes, I have seen him there; Chisholm, a large farmer.

12,083. That farm is partly occupied as a farm still?—Yes, by the keeper.

12,084. And the rest of it is thrown in for game?—Yes.

12,085. Can you tell me the extent of the land in the possession of the keeper?—No, I cannot; I cannot go into the keeper's land. It will not do to go round keepers. We must keep back from that.

12,086. There is some wood there?—Yes, there is some planting.

Beauly. Donald Mackay.

12,087. Anywhere else on the Lovat estate?—Yes.

12,088. Well?—Achatuloch.

12,089. Where is that from where you are?—Higher up, straight on, not very far away.

12,090. Is that north or south?—Straight on up the river.

12,091. Are these two places you mentioned pretty close on the river?—It is not a river we call it, it is a burn.

12,092. Well, call it a burn; not far from the burn?—Not far from the burn.

12,093. And both on the same side of it?—Both on the same side. The whole that I am mentioning as well are on the same side.

12,094. Are there remains of buildings there?—Yes, plenty, both of houses and steadings.

12,095. How many houses?—I cannot say; there was one in that place, and then there is the second place the crofters' farm is on. I am going to follow them by name.

12,096. Had it one tenant or more than one?—One tenant.

12,097. What name had the other place?—There are four places, and the names that I have got for them are two Achatulochs and two Cullichies.

12,098. Was there one tenant in each of these?—Yes.

12,099. And the remains of the houses are still to be seen?—Yes, and of the steadings too. There are four, but I may have a wrong name for one, but the ruins are there.

12,100. There is the evidence to show, now, on the ground, that there have been four tenants in these two places?—Yes.

12,101. Now is there anywhere else?—Yes.

12,102. Where?—Culnaskiach.

12,103. And was there one tenant there?—Yes, a good place for one tenant it is.

12,104. And the remains of a house there?—The whole house is there yet.

12,105. Is that ground under game?—Partly under game and sheep, but there is none stopping in either of the places. The only shepherd that is in one of the places stays in a croft of his own far away. There is no man there.

12,106. I should have asked you this. These four places that you mentioned before, are they under game?—One of them is entirely under game.

12,107. Which of them?—The nearest to us—the first Cullichy.

12,108. And the other three?—The other three are under sheep, but I believe the game is amongst the sheep. I can't say about that.

12,109. Who has the sheep?—William Fraser.

12,110. He has a lease of the grazing?—He has the grazing. I can't say whether he has a lease.

12,111. And he manages the sheep by a shepherd who lives at some distance?—Yes, on a croft of his own.

12,112. Is that shepherd a tenant of Lord Lovat?—Yes.

12,113. Now go back to Culnaskiach. Who has the sheep?—Alexander Maclean from Drumcroy.

12,114. Is he a crofter?—He is a farmer. He has 2 horses and 4 or 5 cows and some stirks about his own place, but the place is not tied to these. It will be a good bit away from it.

12,115. He will pay a rent of less than £30?—I can't say about that. I don't think it would be less than £30.

12,116. Can you give me the extent of Culnaskiach?—I think it is from 25 to 26 acres of arable land, but there is another place west. I cannot tell whether it has a house on it or not, but the ground shows that it was worked. There is no ruin to be seen of a house.

12,117. What is the name?—I can't give you the name of the place. I did not hear it. It is in connection with——

12,118. Can you tell me the extent of it?—No.

12,119. Passing from Culnaskiach, do you wish to mention any other places?—There is another crofter that is close beside the place they call—I can't get my tongue about the place—Achnyach. Beauly. Donald Mackay.

12,120. Is it in Glen-Convinth?—It is down coming back this way from Culnaskiach. A piece of land that is very close to Achnyach.

12,121. What is it called?—Torr-a'-Chapuill—that is the name of the place.

12,122. Was there a crofter there?—That is a thing I can't say, but the land is waste, and the crofter that is close beside it, his place will not keep him alive.

12,123. What is the name of the crofter close beside him?—I think it is the widow's name he is under, but it is the son that is applying for this. She is the widow Maclean.

12,124. What is the name of her holding?—I am not sure. I think the chap is here himself. No. 2 Lon-Mhic-Shim.

12,125. Is there any other place?—There is another place coming on near Beauly, they call Glascharn, on the river a little above Dunballoch, about a mile further than Beauly Bridge.

12,126. Was there a croft there?—Yes.

12,127. Are the remains of a house to be seen?—Yes, some of the stones, but not very much; they took them away for a dyke they made round the wood.

12,128. What is the extent of arable?—I cannot be sure of the extent, but I will give you the name of one farmer that was there; it was one Douglas: he was at Balchraggan.

12,129. This arable land is surrounded by wood, you know?—By deer.

12,130. That land is all under game?—Yes.

12,131. No sheep?—None.

12,132. Is there anything else you would like to mention?—Well, I think I am done.

12,133. All these are places, as I understand you to say, in former times in the occupation of individual crofters, and the land is at present suitable for occupation by crofters, and could be re-cultivated, and buildings put up?—I will be glad to see that the Commission will be satisfied with it on their looking over it; I am sure the places are quite suitable for it.

12,134. All that land is now under game or mostly under game—partly under game and sheep?—Partly under sheep.

12,135. Are any of these sheep in the hands of the proprietors?—It is all let ground, but their farms have no connection with the ground they have their sheep on.

12,136. These are special grazings?—Special grazings.

12,137. And they have farm lands besides?—They have lands of their own besides.

12,138. *Mr Shaw Stewart.*—Were these places formerly farms?—Some farms, and some crofts.

12,139. Do you know if the farms paid?—Well, I know if they were not rack-rented they should pay.

12,140. But do you know if they did pay?—Well, I think some of them were paying; I did not see the men worse than others.

12,141. Did those crofts pay?—That is the reason of their extending two of the crofts to make one—to let the men take their living out of them just now.

12,142. But these places when they were crofts before?—They were managing, but some of them had rather little to take their living out of, but when you put two into one they will take their living out of them.

12,143. *Mr Sutherland.*—This is all very low-lying ground?—Well, partly; you see there is Culnaskiach, which is the highest place I have mentioned.

12,144. But they are in this immediate neighbourhood?—All surrounding and all around is within 2 or 3 miles.

12,145. All low-lying ground?—Some of it is partly high.

12,146. And would be under none of the disadvantages we heard attributed to land up the glens?—No, it is just very good land, I think.

12,147. *Mr Forsyth.*—Do you think that if these lands were passed into the occupation of small holders they would be able to build houses themselves and stock them without assistance?—Well, I don't think

that that would be the way ; when there is such a cry for the land around us, I think it is the club system we should try.

12,148. [Question repeated.]—I think they should try the club system—we would be looking for that ; that there would come something on that would manage that.

12,149. Do you mean the club system of stocking, because that generally applies to a common grazing?—Oh, but I think we will come on with it, that we will take it, and that we will manage everything.

12,150. You mean that they would, from some source, require assistance?—Yes, with some assistance.

12,151. One or two of these are high-lying places, I think?—The highest place, as I mentioned, is Culnaskiach, and it is not a high place ; it is a place that I would go to,—either of the places that I mentioned.

12,152. *Mr Macleod.*—You have given us the names of a number of places where you say there were either small tenants or small farmers before. Do you know how these places came to be vacant? Did the tenants go away of their own accord?—That is beyond my knowledge.

12,153. You never heard the cause stated?—Well, on the Belladrum side I think some of them were just destroyed by game and stuff.

12,154. That is to say, they had to give up the places because the game was destroying the crops to such an extent that they were not worth having?—Yes, I think that was the most of the cause, but not the whole of them that way ; there was no game near Blairmore at the time Blairmore was let out. I think the cause of it was that they did not get enough of land, because the farmer that was in was offering a pretty fair rent for the place (which I have from good witnesses), and he could not get it. They tried it with the papers, and did not get enough, and then they put it all under game.

12,155. It was because it let better as a game preserve than as a small farm?—Most of them were put away to make room for game. Some of them, Coire-Seilich and Torranreach, were just cleared for game places.

12,156. We may take it that some of them went away because the places were destroyed with game?—One of them, especially, that I can speak about.

12,157. In another case that you know of, the farmer did, you thought, offer a fair price, but it was let out under game?—Yes.

12,158. And the others were put away for game?—There is another thing that I would like to take up about Torranreach. The man that is adjoining it is under the Crofters Act, and the time that the other tenants were put out he asked for this place, and was refused, to join it to his own place. The man is coming forward after me, and will tell about it for himself.

12,159. You have spoken of these arable holdings. Is there any available pasture round them?—Oh yes, around the most of them.

12,160. How is it occupied?—By game, the most of it ; the whole of it by game and wood.

12,161. What sort of wood?—Some birch, and some fir and larch.

12,162. Is the birch natural birch?—Yes, the whole of it.

12,163. Don't you think it would injure the wood if it was let out in grazing along with that arable?—No, I don't see that there is any wood in any of the two places that it would harm.

12,164. And you would not contemplate letting that out as grazing?—I don't see that it is right to be a wood, after the Commission was around last.

12,165. But you see the wood is there now?—And into arable land as well.

12,166. What place is it that you refer to particularly?—To Coire-Seilich, the place I am just speaking about. It was all hill pasture.

12,167. What estate was that on?—Belladrum.

12,168. There was one tenant there?—Yes, and he had a lot of pasture.

12,169. And it has been all planted?—The most of it is planted.

12,170. Has it grown?—Part did, and part not.

12,171. Did it grow on the arable ground, or on the rising ground?—I don't think much grew on the arable ground ; maybe some, but not very much.

12,172. But you think that, apart from two places that you have mentioned, which have been planted, it is all available now for small tenants?—Yes, the whole is quite fit for tenants.

12,173. And that the ground that is covered by older wood could be grazed without injury to that wood?—Yes.

12,174. *Mr Maccallum.*—Were you speaking of what happened within your own memory?—The most of it. The whole of the Belladrum place, except Cnoc-a'-chonais,—I have seen crop on the whole.

12,175. And on the Lovat estate?—I did not see crop on the whole of it, but I have seen a crop on Inchstaing and I have seen a crop once in Culnaskiach,—a little bit of it.

12,176. Did you see crop in Clunvackie?—Yes, plenty.

12,177. And in Achatuloch?—No, but there are fine fields for all that.

12,178. Now I would like to know why these tenants were removed from the places in which they were. Do you think it was because they were not able to pay a fair rent to the proprietor?—No, I do not believe that.

12,179. And after they were removed, or after they left, were the places advertised to let as individual holdings?—I told you the only one that ever I heard advertised was Blairmore, and they got in offers but did not give it ; the rent was too small.

12,180. And do you think they were offered a fair enough rent for Blairmore?—Yes, I think it was.

12,181. Are you aware whether there is any difficulty in this neighbourhood in letting small holdings?—No.

12,182. You think, do you, that there is a keen competition for any small holdings that may be to let?—We have a terrible cry for land, whatever.

12,183. So that if these places were again made available, do you think that there would be applications for them?—I know that we have more names at our last meeting than we can get land for.

12,184. Are some of these people who could stock a holding?—Well, they would be looking for some assistance, between club or something.

12,185. But are there some of them who could stock?—There may be some that will do it.

12,186. Are you aware that there really are some who could take these holdings and stock them?—Well, there might be this : I think there may be some of them that would be close on fit, but I don't know any man's pocket, and I cannot say. I heard them speaking of it, whatever, in the meeting, that there were many amongst them, but I cannot say if they were all. I am not going to say what I am not sure of.

12,187. And your own opinion is that they would be able to make a living on these holdings, and pay a fair rent?—Yes, if the ground would be given at a fair rent.

12,188. And make a comfortable living?—Yes, and to give them what would be a comfortable living off the ground.

12,189. *The Chairman.*—You have just told us that there is a terrible cry for land?—Yes.

12,190. Do you mean by that that there is a widespread desire among men of the crofter class in your district to get new holdings?—Yes, and some that have not crofts at all. There are a number of us who have no crofts at all.

12,191. Who would like to have crofts?—Yes. I am for one myself, and there are three or four others at my back.

12,192. These are people who would like to get holdings, and who have a considerable knowledge of crofting, and who would do their best to make these holdings pay?—Yes.

12,193. They are all people belonging to the district?—The whole of them ; to the estate whatever.

12,194. To the Lovat estate?—Yes, and back and fore about the place.

Beauly. Donald Mackay.

12,195. Has application been made, to your knowledge, within the last two or three years repeatedly for new holdings from the Lovat estate?—That is a thing I cannot say. Since the Commission there is no one applying about anything, because it is our own meetings we are keeping on until such time as we would come to some relief otherwise.

12,196. You are depending upon other means of a solution to the question?—Yes.

12,197. How many may there be upon the Lovat estate really desirous of obtaining holdings?—There are a good many.

12,198. In the parish of Kiltarlity?—There would be a great number.

12,199. Would there be fifty?—The holdings that they have are so small that they will not keep them half alive, and they want to work the two together, and the one could go: each would have what would keep him alive.

12,200. You are representing a general belief? You are at present stating a view which is entertained by yourself and by a great number of friends, that a number of the Lovat crofts are much too small, that these crofts ought to be in many cases combined, two or three crofts into one, and that those who are put out should get new holdings?—Yes.

12,201. Moreover, that a number of those who have no crofts and no land are desirous of getting crofts where they could sustain themselves?—Yes.

12,202. And that, you say, is a widespread desire on the Lovat estate, and in the locality?—In our locality.

12,203. *Mr Peter*, Factor for Lord Lovat.—You got a site from Lord Lovat how many years ago?—Nine years, I think.

12,204. It was a long while before you were able to put up a house?—No, I put up the house not six weeks from the day I got the ground from you. I was inside, stopping in it.

12,205. Regarding Inchstaing and Clunvackie, do you know that ground was planted and fenced round with a deer fence?—I know there was a part of it.

12,206. Do you know the elevation, 606 feet? Well, now, in regard to Achatuloch, do you know who occupies that?—I know that it is William Fraser that has it just now, under sheep; William Fraser, Knockholly.

12,207. How much does he pay?—I know he pays only £25 for the whole place we want.

12,208. I may correct you by saying it is £42. Then Culnaskiach,—do you know who occupies that?—Yes, I think I told that.

12,209. I think you did not put distinctly down where he lived: how far is it from Culnaskiach?—He is ¾ of a mile or ½ a mile whatever.

12,210. From the house, but not from the ground he rents?—Yes, from the arable ground.

12,211. That is all let to him as part of his farm.

12,212. *Mr Sutherland.*—Has he more land than this Culnaskiach?—Surely, he has a large farm.

12,213. *Mr Peter.*—Do you know the name of the place he occupies as well as Culnaskiach?—Yes, Drumcroy; I gave it up.

12,214. *The Chairman.*—What do you call it, Mr Peter?

12,215. *Mr Peter.*—Ardblair.

12,216. *Witness.*—Ardblair is the next place; it is Finlay Macdonald who is in Ardblair.

12,217. *Mr Peter.*—Do you know how high Drumcroy is?—I don't know, but I know one thing, that they have very good crops in it.

12,218. It is 800 feet high?—That might be, or 1000; but they have very good crops.

12,219. Do you know that this Widow Maclean had applied to the Commission and got her rent fixed by them?—Yes; but then supposing she got her rent fixed, surely she could get more land, if it was lying waste.

12,220. I understand: you mean to take the land from her?—No, no.

12,221. That is one of the places you wished to get land at. That is one of the places that you enumerated, that you wished to get possession of?—Which part?

12,222. Widow Maclean's lot?—No, I never mentioned such words.

12,223. I have taken them down here.

12,224. *The Chairman.*—What you mean is that she would like to get her croft extended?—Yes.

12,225. *Mr Peter.*—Then in regard to Glascharn, do you know that that ground is planted, and within the Beaufort Park?—I know it is birch; there is not a plant of tree down at the low grounds, but there is birch.

12,226. *The Chairman.*—Is it within Beaufort Park?—It is not on the same side of the river as Beaufort.

12,227. *Mr Sutherland.*—How many miles from Beaufort Castle?—To come around the wood, it will be over 2.

12,228. *Mr Peter.*—Do you think that if the Culnaskiach ground was taken from the party who holds additional arable land at Balblair, he could make a living?—Yes, I am sure he could.

12,229. Without Culnaskiach?—Many is the year he did without it. I have seen him more than twenty years without it.

12,230. In regard to William Fraser, Achatuloch if he were without that, do you think he could make a living?—I am sure of it, and more than that, he has to pay a lad for his own work, and I think that is quite sufficient for him without more at all.

12,231. *Mr William Burns.*—I should like to ask a question.

12,232. *Witness.*—I will not stand to that.

12,233. *The Chairman.*—What is your interest here, Mr Burns?

12,234. *Mr Burns.*—On behalf of Belladrum.

12,235. *Mr Peter.*—I should like to ask the witness How much do you make as a road contractor?—How much do I do a year, is it?

12,236. Yes.—It is very little that I make as yet, but I cannot say what I may do.

12,237. *Mr Burns.*—What arable land is there at Belladrum? You were talking about some near Phoiness?—You have got the names of the places I mentioned. Ask me about any place that I named; 'near Belladrum' is not enough.

12,238. How much arable land is there in Belladrum—Mr Merry's Belladrum?—What have I to do with what land he has?

12,239. *The Chairman.*—He specified particular places, and gave the acreage, and he gave the names of as many places as he could.

12,240. *Mr Burns.*—Did you want Easter Lovat for fun.

12,241. *The Chairman.*—No, not 'for fun.'

12,242. *Mr Burns.*—For business, then,—to take crofters down to Easter Lovat and Wester Lovat?—I am not speaking about Easter Lovat and Wester Lovat; I never said a word about them. Surely you don't mean to twine me into that. I want crofters yonder, if they could be settled on it.

12,243. On Easter Lovat?—No, I never mentioned it.

12,244. But you meant it?—Let us be satisfied with the land that is out before we touch the others. We have lands just now, without being occupied by farmers.

12,245. Where?—I mentioned it already.

12,246. *The Chairman.*—He went over the whole of them.

12,247. *Witness.*—I did not come here for that question at all.

12,248. *Mr Burns.*—Where is the land that you wished to settle crofters on?—I told it already and I am not going to tell it again.

12,249. *The Chairman.*—Coulmill is one of them.

12,250. *Mr Burns.*—How much there?—It is not arable land for that, it is pasture.

12,251. Tenacrae, how much is there?—I think I gave it up already; I put it down already, once.

12,252. If you could say it before you can say it again?—I am not going through the thing again.

12,253. Then you have none there, have you?—Yes, I told it already to my lord. Beauly.

12,254. How much land have you in Belladrum?—Altogether?

12,255. Yes.—Well, if you will allow me a little, I might give it in, but I am not going to an acre, but 10 or 20. My lord will tell you it as I gave it up already.

12,256. Add it up.—I gave it up to my lord already, and I will not give it again.

12,257. What do you suppose they are paying for it just now?—That is a thing I cannot go into.

12,258. You do not know?—Surely you don't think we would get it from the factors or the lairds what the people were paying?

12,259. Yes, you have the valuation roll?—I am not a man going into valuation rolls.

12,260. How much do you pay for it?—I never paid anything for it.

12,261. How much would you pay for it—for all the arable land?—I don't want all the arable, and I am not fit for it.

12,262. You are here to tell a plan to the Commissioners.

12,263. *The Chairman.*—No, he is not here to tell a plan.

12,264. *Witness.*—I am presented here by the people of Kiltarlity.

12,265. *Mr Burns.*—Well, the people have not sent you here to tell a story. Tell me how much land you would like to get, and how much you would pay for it?—It is not so.

12,266. I am only asking a question.—Don't you think you can come and say that against me—that I am coming to rob any man; I come here for justice.

12,267. How much land do you want to pay for, and how much do you intend to give?—I told my lord already.

12,268. Tell me again, for fun.

12,269. *The Chairman.*—He has indicated certain spots which we have been able to recognise on the map, on the estate of Belladrum, where he says there is arable and grazing, or either, where crofters have been settled before, and could be settled again, and his proposal is that crofters should be settled there, on fair rents.

12,270. *Mr Burns.*—But let me question him, because the landlords have an interest in this. How much money does he intend to give?—What for?

12,271. For the land that he talks about?—What land? Tell me the land you mean.

12,272. *The Chairman.*—You must specify the land.

12,273. *Mr Burns.*—He has specified the land.

12,274. *The Chairman.*—If you mention a particular place, he may be able to answer you, but he cannot answer at once for all these places, at different altitudes.

12,275. *Mr Burns.*—Take the places then. I want to know how much money he will go the length of for the land he has found. How much money does he suggest he should pay for the land he has found?—All that I said of these places, is it?

12,276. Yes.—I think I should leave that to the Commissioners or valuators that would go and value the land. I was never made a valuator.

12,277–78. The result of your story is this—that you have no suggestion to make as to the value of the land?

12,279. *The Chairman.*—No, he has none.

12,280. *Witness.*—I told you I was not a valuator.

12,281. *The Chairman.*—He has no such suggestion to make; what he has to suggest is that he should get the land, and its value should be assessed by an impartial tribunal.

12,282. *Witness.*—Yes, my lord.

12,283. *Mr Burns.*—He gives no assistance to value the land.

12,284. *The Chairman.*—No.

12,285. *Mr Burns.*—Nor compare it with its present value, which he does not know about.

12,286. *The Chairman.*—No, he does not know that. You are quite entitled to get that out, but I think it has come out.

12,287. *Mr Burns.*—Now do you think you should come down to Dunballoch or to Easter or Wester Lovat?—I did not mention such places. Donald Mackay.

12,288. You don't suggest that crofters should be planted there, do you?—Well, if there be not other places for them, why not, if other men have too much? I think the land was meant for people in the world; I don't think it is for the one or two only.

12,289. Do you suggest that these people should come down and be planted at Dunballoch and Easter and Wester Lovat?—Did I say any word about Easter and Wester Lovat? And, Mr Burns, you have tried that on me before, but you had just as well stop it!

12,290. You will answer me fairly, and I will ask you fairly.—Ask me as to the places I have mentioned; but asking me about places that I never spoke of, that is no law at all.

12,291. I ask you this: Do you propose that these crofters should come down and be settled upon Easter and Wester Lovat, or Dunballoch, or not?—Did I speak about them?

12,292. No, you did not.—Well, why do you ask me such a question?

12,293. Then you did not intend that?—I did not say 'no' or 'yes' about that.

12,294. You did not think of it?—I did not say that I did, or that I did not.

12,295. That is not in your story?—I did not speak about it at all. Surely you are not going to take me into questions that I did not refer to at all.

12,296. But you and I are perfectly square about this. I only want to know if you have been thinking about the notion of bringing down the crofters or bringing them up, to settle around Easter or Wester Lovat, or Dunballoch,—upon this flat land near the sea? You have not thought about it?—Never yet.

12,297. *The Chairman.*—That is an answer. I think this examination should stop.

12,298. *Mr Burns.*—I am at an end.

12,299. *The Chairman.*—That will do, Mr Mackay. As you have given us a very full statement with regard to these lands on the Belladrum estate, and on the Lovat estate, possibly some of the other witnesses who came here to give evidence about these places may rest satisfied with what we have already heard, and in that way we can usefully abbreviate the proceedings.

RODERICK MATHESON, Crofter, Torran-na-h-eirig, Kiltarlity (51)—*examined.* Roderick Matheson.

12,300. *The Chairman.*—I may take you as concurring generally with the evidence of Mackay?—I agree with what he said, and I think he has told the truth.

12,301. And I have no questions to put to you.—Yes.

MURDOCH CAMERON, Torrangorm, Kiltarlity (35)—*examined.* Murdoch Cameron.

12,302. *The Chairman.*—You heard the evidence given by Mackay?—Yes.

12,303. And you agree with it, do you?—Yes.

12,304. Do you wish to make any addition to it?—No.

12,305. Then I will take you as concurring, and I have no questions to put. That will do.

JOHN MACDONALD, Balliemore of Dochgarroch, Dochfour (46)—*examined.* John Macdonald.

12,306. *The Chairman.*—Are you to speak with regard to the Dochfour estate?—Yes.

12,307. Solely as to Dochfour estate?—That is all.

12,308. And that part of the Dochfour estate near

Beauly.

John Macdonald.

Dochgarroch?—Upon the estate of Dochgarroch, right above Dochgarroch Lodge.

12,309. How far is the place you are going to speak of from Abriachan?—A good way; the Caiplich road breaks off from Dunain.

12,310. What is your employment?—I was a gamekeeper and forester on the estate of Dunain at the time Sir John Ramsden had it.

12,311. What are you now?—I am a common labourer now; I follow public works.

12,312. A labourer on the estate?—No, I was gaffering at the new section of the railway.

12,313. Now, what place are you going to speak of?—About Balliemore and other townships in Dunain, and Lochend and Dalreoch.

12,314. What are you going to say about Balliemore?—My father was a tenant there, and my grandfather.

12,315. As crofters?—As crofters.

12,316. And how is the land occupied now?—The land was taken from us. It was a township (three of us), and it was planted. It was planted four times and the plants did not grow on it.

12,317. Is it planted now?—No.

12,318. What is the extent of old arable there, or land that was once ploughed?—We had about 15 Scotch acres.

12,319. Among you, or each?—Each.

12,320. Is there grazing there besides?—Mr Baillie himself has the sheep, but it is let out for sport first. It is a rabbit warren now. It was planted for a cover, but it did not succeed.

12,321. And now it is under game and rabbits?—Yes, and they have their own sheep grazing on it. Of course the houses are standing there yet; the thing only took place twenty years ago or thereabout.

12,322. After Balliemore did you wish to mention any other names?—Immediately below that there is a small croft Battlefield. There used to be one tenant there.

12,323. And a small extent of arable, I suppose?—About 5 acres Scotch.

12,324. Now, after Battlefield is there any other place?—There is another croft immediately above Dochgarroch Lodge; one David Fraser stopped in it.

12,325. What was the name of the place?—Dochgarroch we called it.

12,326. There was a croft there; and is the house there still?—The remains of the house are there still.

12,327. Can you tell me the extent of arable land at this Dochgarroch holding?—There would be about 4 acres to that croft.

12,328. Now, after this is there any other place?—Balnafettoch: it is in the corner of Dunain wood, quite close to the Dochgarroch burn.

12,329. We are talking just now, of the Dochgarroch estate?—Yes. When my grandfather took the croft there it was Maclean that had Dochgarroch.

12,330. Then about Balnafettock: on what estate is that?—There are two.

12,331. Are there two Balnafettocks?—Yes; on Muirton estate and on Dunain estate.

12,332. You refer to the latter?—Yes.

12,333. It does not appear to be on the map, but I take it it is not far from Dunain house?—Not far, but further west. It was once attached to Lagnalian. I have seen a woman who had a croft there.

12,334. Do you know the extent of her holding?—6 acres or more.

12,335. Is there anywhere else?—The township of Dochgarroch. I have seen five crofters there, down at the locks.

12,336. What is the extent of arable at Dochgarroch?—There is a great extension there: I don't know how much, but it is in the hands of the proprietor now. When they cleared it out, they took it into their own hands; I have seen five crofters in it.

12,337. With arable land and grazing?—Yes.

12,338. Did they keep sheep?—No.

12,339. Only horses and cattle?—That is all.

12,340. Anywhere else you wish to mention?—There was again Dunain, where there were five or six if not seven crofters: that was cleared by Mollison.

Beauly.

John Macdonald.

12,341. That is near the Mains of Dunain?—Yes.

12,342. When did Mollison clear them out?—Close upon twenty years ago.

13,343. What extent of arable had they?—Some of those crofts amounted to so many acres, and some not so much: I am not sure.

12,344. Can you give the total extent?—No, I cannot, but I know the crofts perfectly well, and the houses are standing upon some of them yet.

12,345. Would there be a dozen acres arable for each?—Ay; and some more.

12,346. And some less?—And some less. I don't know but that there was one croft of 18 acres.

12,347. Do you know the name of the man that had 18 acres?—Duncan Fraser; he has the farm of Dores now.

12,348. Is there any other place you would like to mention?—Dalreoch, down near by the canal.

12,349. How many crofters were there?—Five in it, and perhaps more.

12,350. Can you give me any idea of the average size of their holdings?—Some of them had pretty extensive crofts.

12,351. What sort of rents did they pay?—I am not exactly sure what rents they paid.

12,352. They are all away?—They were all cleared by Mollison.

12,353. About the same time as the clearances from Dochgarroch?—About the same time. Dochgarroch was cleared a few years before that.

12,354. Were all these clearances by Mollison?—Yes.

12,355. He was rather high-handed, that gentleman?—Very high-handed: I know that to my cost.

12,356. So do I.—I lost a crop which I was entitled to get; and then my grandfather paid £16 of valuation on coming in for the houses, and they have all that.

12,357. How is that land at Dalreoch occupied now?—It is lying waste.

12,358. Is it under game?—Under game, and I believe they have their sheep in it sometimes.

12,359. The sheep are the property of Mr Balfour?—Yes.

12,360. Anywhere else you wish to mention?—The township of Lochend, on the Dunain estate.

12,361. The Dunain estate is Baillie's?—Yes, it belongs to the Baillies of Dochfour. It was formerly held by Baillies who are now extinct.

12,362. What is called the Dunain estate, and the Dochgarroch estate, and the Dochfour estate, are all in the hands of Mr Baillie?—Yes.

12,363. Now about Lochend: how many crofters were there?—There are a few there yet, but there were four or five removed.

12,364. By Mollison?—By Mollison.

12,365. About the same time as the other clearances?—The same time.

12,366. Is that land under game now or under sheep?—Part of it lies in their own hands: in some of the houses they have some of their own servants, who have a cow's grazing, and they take rent from them but they won't allow them to pay rates. Mr Baillie pays all the rates.

12,367. Is there room there for three or four crofters, or more?—There were good crofters there before, three or four well-doing crofters.

12,368. Are there any more places you could mention?—Another place, Lochend hill.

12,369. How many were there?—Two or three. There is one good croft on it called Torranbuie.

12,370. That is 1042 feet high?—I have seen two crofters there.

12,371. Is that all, or have you any other places to mention?—That is all, but there was an eviction at Blackfold, one Donald Ferguson, but he went to law with them in the Court of Session. He stops in Lochend now with a brother. He stays now at Midton, Lochend.

12,372. Is there a tenant still in Blackfold?—Yes,

there were three lotters there, and at the time we were removed from the crofts they removed them, and they overcrowded Blackfold with them. They sub-divided the land there between the three lotters and those that were there before.

12,373. After that sub-division how many was the land divided among altogether?—Three and two, that is five.

12,374. So that five small tenants got the land which had been previously held by two?—Yes.

12,375. Was that in Mollison's time?—In Mollison's time.

12,376. And those that were brought down into Blackfold were taken from where?—From Abriachan wood.

12,377. *Mr Sutherland.*—Generally do you believe that crofters could be settled with advantage on these lands you have referred to?—Certainly they could.

12,378. You think that the conditions are favourable in every way for their thriving?—They were well-doing, and they had their rents paid to date, and some of them had some living there. I had that myself.

12,379. And at present the land is not devoted to agriculture in any way, is it?—No, it is not.

12,380. Lying waste?—Lying waste.

12,381. And you are of opinion that, if opportunities were offered to people they would be very willing to take small holdings in these places?—Certainly. Of course they are low ground crofts, these.

12,382. *Mr Shaw Stewart.*—You said Balliemore was four times planted?—Yes.

12,383. Why did the trees fail?—That I could not say; the ground would not receive them, or they did not grow in it. They had a good crop of the weeds they call 'stinking Willie.'

12,384. That does not speak well for the soil?—It is generally the case; they won't grow in old ground. That ground is noted to be the oldest ground on the Dochgarroch estate, and it was stated so by Mr Fraser-Mackintosh.

12,385. Is it enclosed as a warren now, with a rabbit fence?—No, it is not.

12,386. Just given up to rabbits?—Keeping up the rabbits.

12,387. *Mr Macleod.*—In these places that you have spoken to us about, there is no available pasture?—Yes, they held the whole pasture in common.

12,388. How is that hill pasture being used at the present time?—Those that are remaining there are taking the use of it.

12,389. But there are a number of places where there is none?—In Blackfold the people keep their claim upon the pasture.

12,390. But there are several places you have mentioned where there are no tenants now. Was there pasture in connection with them?—Certainly. Balliemore and Blackfold held the hill pasture in common; they had the same rights to it, and at one time—at the time Maclean had that—the crofters on the low ground could go up with their cattle there.

12,391. That is Balliemore?—Yes.

12,392. But Battlefield?—That is immediately below Balliemore again, between Balliemore and Dochnalurg.

12,393. And the same pasture that the Balliemore people used the Battlefield people used?—Yes. Of course at one time we could go down to Battlefield with our cattle.

12,394. But there is no grazing that you could direct our attention to as land that you think could be advantageously occupied by small tenants in connection with this arable land?—Yes, there is Dochgarroch hill.

12,395. Does that name include the whole of any common grazing that there may be?—Yes, it includes the whole.

12,396. You said that you had been a keeper and forester?—Yes.

12,397. Only on the Dunain estate?—On the Dunain estate, but before then I was working in the woods at Dochfour till I lost the place, and after that I got a situation from Mr Fraser-Mackintosh there; as long as Sir John Ramsden had it he wanted me to stop there, but there was something came between myself and Mollison. Before we got the crop off, my father died and I succeeded, and it was I that cleared the crop. There were no legal steps taken to remove us from the land, but Mr Mollison made copies himself, and he wanted the people to sign them. At that time my father was on his deathbed and I was working on Dochfour, and he said the other two were coming down to sign the papers, and he asked me to get my father to sign his. I said no, if he wanted it signed he could come up to my father's deathbed. I did not sign it at all.

12,398. You heard the previous witness speaking of a holding that had been planted?—Yes.

12,399. And he said that on the lower part of the ground—the arable ground—the plants did not grow, but that they grew on the steeper ground. Is that in accordance with your experience that plants don't grow on old arable ground?—No, they do not; the ground must be very good.

12,400. It is more likely to grow on the harder ground?—The harder ground.

12,401. *Mr Maccallum.*—Can you suggest any reason why the tenants were removed from Balliemore?—Of course at the time sport was rather prevalent, and they were getting high rents for sport.

12,402. For land let for sporting purposes?—Yes, and their intention was to put the land under sport. It was intended to make it a sort of showy place, and to put up a shooting box there. That is what Mr William Baillie suggested. He said he would put my father into that lodge as keeper.

12,403. But the tenants that were there were successful as farmers?—Yes.

12,404. They lived comfortably?—Of course they were just independent crofters, the whole of them.

12,405. They did not fall into arrears, did they?—No, no, they had their rents paid to date.

12,406. *Mr George Malcolm.*—I think the witness spoke of a group of crofters that were formerly about Dochgarroch Locks. I wish to ask him whether that is at present lying waste?—I told that it was in the hands of Mr Baillie himself.

12,407. You said, in reply to one of the Commissioners, that the whole of the lands you spoke of were now waste?—No, I said about Dochgarroch, that it was in the hands of the Baillies.

12,408. May I ask whether that land, where this group of crofts formerly was, is not now part of the home farm of Dochfour?—Certainly it is added to the home farm.

12,409. *The Chairman.*—The whole land, as I understand, of which you have been speaking is under game, or is under game and deer?—Deer! there is no deer.

12,410. I mean game and sheep?—Under game and sheep.

12,411. It is either under ground and winged game, or it is under sheep and ground and winged game?—Yes.

12,412. *Mr Malcolm.*—I beg pardon, my lord. I have just elicited that the group of crofts above Dochgarroch is at the present time part of the home farm of Dochfour.—(*Witness.*)—No, no, the ground above that is.

12,413. *Mr Sutherland.*—Is it cultivated or uncultivated?—It is lying waste yonder, since we took the last crop off it.

12,414. Is it cultivated or uncultivated?—Uncultivated.

12,415. *The Chairman.*—Is this land of which you have been speaking preserved for game?—Certainly, my lord.

12,416. The whole of it?—The whole of it. But then they have their own sheep on it at times.

12,417. Mr Baillie has his own sheep on it?—Yes.

12,418. Now you were asked a question by Mr Malcolm, whether the land at Dochgarroch was not part of the home farm?—It is part of the home farm now, since they put out the crofters. They are working it.

12,419. Is it under rotation?—Under rotation.

Beauly. — John Macdonald.

12,420. Is the whole of the land from which the crofters have been removed under rotation?—Yes, at Dochgarroch, close by Dochgarroch lodge.

12,421. What is the name of the home farm?—Dochfour home farm.

12,422. But, except that land, is all the land of which you have been speaking under ground and winged game, or under that and sheep?—It is under game and sheep; under rabbits and sheep.

12,423. *Mr Burns.*—Dochfour has a home farm?—Yes.

12,424. But, look here, I am going to deal straight with this. I asked—Has Dochfour a home farm, and you said yes. He has sheep and he has cattle, has he not?—Certainly.

12,425. But is this thing preserved more than any other land in the country is protected from poaching?—Of course every land is protected from poaching.

12,426. I say is this home farm of Dochfour more protected from poaching than any other home farm or any other land is?—Of course he prevents people poaching on his land, but is it made a special preserve?

12,427. *The Chairman.*—Is that land any more preserved for game than land is ordinarily preserved by being protected from poachers?

12,428. *Mr Burns.*—It is not a special game preserve: I know the place as well as you do.

12,429. *The Chairman.*—But we do not know it.

12,429*a*. *Mr Burns (to witness).*—Is it a special game preserve, or is it just subject to the ordinary rules of preservation?—To the ordinary rules, as far as I know.

12,430. *The Chairman.*—That is an answer to the question.

12,431. *Mr Burns.*—You said the land was now lying waste. Now tell me what you mean, because you know I owned that estate at one time and I know all about it.

12,432. *The Chairman.*—Well, but we do not.

12,433. *Mr Burns.*—It is Dunain.

12,434. *The Chairman.*—When you say the land was lying waste you mean it is not under cultivation?—That is what I mean.

12,435. *Mr Burns.*—But what do you mean by saying not under cultivation?—It was all let to tenants at one time.

12,436. Now, at this moment?—No, it is not.

12,437. Why not? We have the tenants in the valuation roll?—Unless you put tenants there yourself. Alexander Dallas had the house and wood.

12,438. He had the whole estate?—No, he had not; Dallas bought Dunain house and Dunain wood, and that is all he had.

12,439. He bought Dunain estate?—No, he did not. Don't you know it was Sir John Ramsden that bought Dunain estate?

12,440. Yes, and we sold it. This is what the valuation roll says:—'John Catherine, salmon-fisher, 'J. P. Brodie, Lochend?'—That is the old public house.

12,441. 'Dunain lands, home farm, Dunain, Cona 'Mills, Roderick Hugonin': is he not a tenant?—I did not go to that end of the estate at all.

12,442. 'Alexander Fraser, banker, Inverness': is he not a tenant? 'Captain Alaric Grant'?—I was not dealing with that part of the estate.

12,443. That is the whole of Dunain estate?—No, it is not.

John Peter. JOHN PETER, Factor for Lord Lovat (73)—*examined.*

12,444. *The Chairman.*—I understand you wish to read a short statement?—Yes, I do.

12,445. You are factor on the Lovat estate?—Yes.

12,446. And have been factor for how many years?—For forty-one years.

12,447. Continuously?—Continuously.

12,448. You have prepared a short written statement?—Yes, about the Glen-Strathfarrar forest, because most of the events happened before my time. I have taken my facts from original records, and have taken very great care to state them correctly. I find by a rental of 1806 that Glen-Strathfarrar was held as a sheep farm by Hugh and Robert Fraser at a rent of £572, 7s. 6d. In 1820 it was relet to them at the rent of £600, and in 1825 to George Grieve and Robert Ballantyne at a rent of £500. They held it until 1833, when finding it was not paying them they gave up the north side, and in the following year the south side also. It then came to be let in various divisions. I may mention that that was the period when the people were taken from Glencannich and put on Glen-Strathfarrar; Lord Lovat had placed them there. On being amalgamated with the Struy estate, which was bought by Lord Lovat in 1827, the following parties held it:—

Beauly. — John Peter.

Corrieharaby, Donald Matheson, . .	Rent	£50
Inchlair & Mouliereach, Valentine Macrae,	,,	70
Deanie & Easter Moulie, John & William Chisholm, ...	,,	125
Wester Moulie, Ardchuilc, Ochtero & Browlin, William Mackenzie and William Chisholm, . . .	,,	155
Culigran, Finlay Macrae, . . .	,,	190
Total rent of Glen Strathfarrar,		£590
Carnoch & Artligan, Alexander Macdonald, ...	,,	88
Teachuig & part of Cruilevan, Christopher Macdonell, ...	,,	52
Struy Mains, Lieut. Theodore Macrae, .	,,	63
Little Struy, William Macrae, . .	,,	30
Dunmaglass & Colliegarbh, Theodore Macrae, ...	,,	46
Camissory, Peter Chisholm, . . .	,,	40
Total rental of Struy Estate,		£319
Total of Glen-Strathfarrar and Struy,		£909

The last two are now in Glen-Strathfarrar. From that time it was occupied in various ways by changes of tenancy, and parts put into forest ground, until 1850, when it all became forest, and all the previous occupiers had found tenancies on the Lovat estates lower down. There never were any crofters in Glen-Strathfarrar, with the exception of one small croft at Loch Muillie, where a crofter still remains. Beyond the crofts necessary for the foresters and their families, there is no available ground for a crofting population, that outside the foresters' crofts being absolutely essential for the winter pasture for the deer; and, apart from this, it is far from any centre, and unsuitable for cultivation, most of the ground being very steep and rocky, and at elevations of from 700 to 3000 feet above sea level. That is all I have got to say, but I shall be very pleased to answer any questions that may be put.

12,449. *Mr Macleod.*—You gave us the rentals?—Yes.

12,450. You mentioned that in 1806 the whole of Glen Strathfarrar was let for £572, 7s. 6d.?—Yes.

12,451. And in 1820 for £600?—Yes.

12,452. And in 1825 for £500?—Yes, to new tenants.

12,453. I am not concerned with the names of the tenants at all.—Very good.

12,454. And in 1833 they gave up the north side, and in a year or two the south side also?—Yes.

12,455. Thereafter the glen was let in various ways?—Yes, held by the people of whom I have given you a list, some of them going off by degrees.

12,456. For the sake of comparison, can you tell us what would have been the rental paid by these tenants that you mentioned that got the place after 1833,—the total?—That were taken down into the low country?

12,457. Yes, can you give us the total?—Well, I could hardly tell you; there was one family put in Barnyards here, £400, and another one at Croichiel, I suppose about £120.

12,458. You said that in 1833 Glen-Strathfarrar was given up by George Grieve and Robert Ballantyne, and that it was a year or two after that that the glen was let by Lord Lovat to those people who came from The Chisholm estate?—Yes.

12,459. And I wanted to bring out for the sake of comparison what was the total rental they paid?—Oh, I beg pardon, I had not understood that.

12,460. I may say I took down the figures as you read them out.—Oh, thank you, you will be able to see the total then.

12,461. Outside Glen-Strathfarrar there were places rented at the following sums:—£88, £52, £63, and £30?—That is the Struy ground.

12,462. Well, of course, you cannot take that into the comparison?—No.

12,463. I thus make the total of the rents paid for subjects in the glen proper by seven tenants, £676.—Yes, it appears so.

12,464. What do you think is a fair inference to draw from these figures? You see when it was let in one holding in 1806 the rent was £572, then it rose to £600, then in 1825 it went down to £500, and in 1833 the two tenants that had it gave it up.—My assistant here makes the total you speak of £590.

12,465. It may be. I would prefer if you would mention the rents in the Struy district, outside Glen-Strathfarrar.—*Mr Garrioch, sub-factor.*—The rents for the Glen are as follows:—

Corrieharbey, ...	£ 50
Inchlair & Moulie-reach, ...	70
Deanie & Easter Moulie, ...	125
Wester Moulie, Ardchuilc, Ochtero & Browlin, ...	155
Culligran, ...	190
Total	£590

12,466. That is entirely different from what Mr Peter gave—*Witness.*—It is £46 of a difference.

12,467. In any case, there was an increase of rent from £500 to £590?—So it appears. I have given the figures as I found them.

12,468. What I wanted to know for our information is, what inference do you think it would be fair to draw from that?—Well, I suppose more could be made out of the place, perhaps, in that way than by having it all in one holding, down to a certain extent; but I do not think going very much lower,—I question very much if the same would apply.

12,469. In other words, you think that if Glen-Strathfarrar were to be occupied at all by tenants, it would be in moderate-sized grazing farms, with rents running as you had here from £40 to £50 up to £190 or £200?—Yes.

12,470. If it were to be occupied at all that would be the only possible way?—We would more easily find tenants to occupy it then.

12,471. You think it would let more readily that way than in the larger holdings?—Yes, there would be fewer to select from if it were in one glen.

12,472. You no doubt heard a statement made yesterday by Mr Grant, the factor on The Chisholm estate, that if there were to be any small holdings in this district, it would be a better method to settle small tenants on the carse land down here rather than in those glens and straths. Do you agree with that opinion?—Well, I am not very sanguine of the success of small holdings if they are very small ones; judging from my long experience, I think we usually make more by having them of a moderate size than very small holdings.

12,473. Quite so. It is more profitable to the proprietor to have them of a moderate size?—Yes.

12,474. What would you describe as a moderate sized holding?—For a regular arable holding, nothing less than two horses and up to two or three pairs of horses.

12,475. And with regard to cattle?—We do not count upon cattle so much, it is low country management,—cattle we buy and sell almost every month.

12,476. The size of these holdings is judged more by the number of horses that are kept?—The number of pairs of horses kept to labour the place.

12,477. That is, with reference to the carse land, that you would approve of holdings of that size, able to keep from a pair of horses up to three pairs?—I think more than that you find there are few men who have the means to do it.

12,478. But you are in favour of a size of holdings like that?—Oh, yes.

12,479. You have stated what you think in the upper part of the country would be the most suitable if there were to be tenants, and now the carse land. Then, do you think that the success of a tenant who was settled, say on a pair horse holding on the carse land, would be greater than that of a tenant who was settled as a small grazing farmer, say at £100 or £120 of rent in the upper ground? Which would you say would be the more successful farmer, the more likely to make money?—I think the low country farmer.

12,480. That is your view?—Yes, I think so.

12,481. Then you said that you had compiled those figures from the estate records?—From the rent ledgers.

12,482. And I suppose you would be willing to give us reasonable access to the originals?—Most assuredly.

12,483. Then, with regard to the land in the lower part of the estate here, I presume there have been considerable differences made as to boundaries?—Very great, indeed almost completely changed. When the grandfather of the present Lord Lovat succeeded to the property he had it all surveyed and laid out and put into squares of different sizes according to the means of the people, particularly in regard to crofter tenants, so that they might each have their own ground laid out to them. He made out regulations so that when any ground was trenched he put dykes round it, and he then made roads for them, and assisted them in draining the ground, and in that way they did a great deal in improving the property.

12,484. What date was that?—It began in 1839, and was in force for a good part of my time up to very nearly the present time. Now nearly all the ground that there is on the estate has been improved. His lordship thought of putting it still further up the hills, but he found that a complete failure. The crops are so often destroyed by frost and wet weather that in many places I have not got a shilling of rent for years. The cause is, going up too high, to too great an elevation.

12,485. I have no doubt you would be able to give us access to the older plans of the estate?—Oh yes.

12,486. So that we could see the difference that has been made with those improvements?—Yes.

12,487. But your feeling is that those improvements, which you say have been carried on from 1839 almost to the present day, the area that it was possible to apply them to has been almost if not wholly exhausted?—Not wholly, because there are little bits that the crofters have not taken in as was arranged for.

12,488. But it is inside their holdings?—Yes.

12,489. And you think that the fact that they have not taken in those small pieces is an evidence in favour of your view that the improvement has gone as far as it is possible for it to go profitably?—It is, and there are two or three ways. Formerly the families remained much longer at home, and assisted their parents in improving the ground in the winter season. Now most of them go away to towns in various capacities, so that, comparatively speaking, there are very few of the families that remain so long as they used to do. Railways having opened up the country, they see a way of doing better by going away. And I think it is a very good thing.

12,490. But it is not good for the estate?—No.

12,491. You do not get so much land improved?—No.

12,492. Might I ask now the method you adopted of getting the people to improve the land?—The footing was that they got the land for 1s. an acre on a nineteen years' lease. We gave them leases, and they took in land, and they got the benefit of the improvements—perhaps in a few years they would have taken in several acres, by which they might get a considerable income. I have known cases where a small crofter paying £5 of rent might get in £50, all for potatoes, by the prices going at that time. That was mainly how they succeeded so well, and then there was the security of tenure. By the time they came within two

Beauly. John Peter.

or three years of the end of their lease, they were always most anxious to apply for a renewal. His lordship has never turned away a single tenant, even going back to 1846, at the time of the destitution.

12,493. You gave us an instance where he actually accommodated tenants from another estate?—Yes.

12,494. What rule did he adopt when arranging a second lease?—Well, of course, then it was looked upon as if they had repaid themselves by the end of their nineteen years, and we put a value upon the holding, just what we thought it was worth.

12,495. Whoever got it?—Yes, only of course his lordship always gave the preference to the sitting tenant. We frequently took a lower rent than we thought just the actual value of the holding; when any tenant died, we always got a higher offer for the place than the amount we ourselves put on it.

12,496. It was taken as a guiding principle that the tenant had recouped himself during the nineteen years for his improvements?—Yes.

12,497. Then you gave him a preference to the extent that you lease out in his favour rather than that of another?—Oh yes.

12,498. You thought that that was a perfectly fair arrangement?—Well, if at any time they wished to go away, there was a certain scale fixed in their leases by which they were repaid for any improvements executed up to that time.

12,499. And you found no difficulty in getting people to improve under these conditions?—No.

12,500. There was always a demand?—Always; and very few changes took place, because we much preferred always the people who are there.

12,501. You heard some evidence to-day as to a number of holdings that had been occupied at one time, particularly in the Kiltarlity district?—Yes.

12,502. That are now being devoted to other purposes. Did you agree with the view that was expressed?—Do you mean by the first witness?

12,503. Yes.—The most of these, I think, I accounted for in cross-examining him—two of them at least that I referred to were taken into the large plantation and fenced all round. There is occasionally deer there, and it is all fenced round.

12,504. It was added to a large plantation?—Yes, called Boblainy, and increased by the last Lord Lovat, who thought that would make a very nice plantation, so he added to it and shut it in. That prevented the deer getting out upon the arable ground. Then about the others—these are let just in the ordinary course. Part of them was planted, and the rest given to adjoining tenants at certain rents in addition to what they got before. The rents are very moderate still.

12,505. What I wanted to be at was this, whether the reason why you did not let these holdings again was that there was no demand for them?—No, I think Lord Lovat had cut them up for planting more ground. Most proprietors were then anxious to plant a good deal, as it would ultimately become valuable, and part of it was not looked upon as valuable to farm out. A good part of it was planted, and what was not planted was added to the nearest tenant.

12,506. You think it is quite probable that there may have been a number of applications for these places at the time?—There might have been, but I do not think so.

12,507. You said that the land was let out on nineteen years' leases at 1s. an acre?—Yes.

12,508. That was the rule?—That was the rule.

12,509. Not more than 1s. an acre?—Well, not more than 1s. 6d. at any rate. I think the most of it was at 1s. an acre. There might be a slight difference, according to the quality of the ground.

12,510. Although you thought that the tenant was recouped for his improvements in nineteen years, you would not consider that the proprietor would be recouped in that time for his improvements?—Well, we made no calculations in these things; but his lordship made all the roads through the various districts, and also constructed all the leading drains. It was a standing rule that unless you gave tenants roads and assisted them in the matter of drains, there was no chance of them making any other improvements.

Beauly. John Peter.

12,511. You found the tenants always anxious to co-operate?—Just so. That is the whole thing. They came down, in fact, almost every Saturday to propose some improvement, and see how much his lordship would contribute towards it.

12,512. So that you think it would be fair to say of the small tenants generally in this district, that they made a good use of their opportunities so far as they got them?—I think so, and I think it was an excellent arrangement, and prevented them having any further claims.

12,513. *Mr Maccallum.*—When was Strathfarrar made a deer forest?—It began in 1833, but it was not completed until 1850. They moved out as circumstances arose and other places were found below.

12,514. They were removed gradually?—Yes.

12,515. Who was the first sporting tenant of Glen-Strathfarrar?—I suppose his lordship himself perhaps was the first, and then he used to let it out in divisions.

12,516. Do you remember to whom it was let first of all?—It was let every year to various people. That is forty years ago.

12,517. But is it now wholly a deer forest?—It is.

12,518. And it is let now to Mr Winans?—No, it was let three years ago to a Mr Mason, the upper part, and the lower part to a Mr Barry.

12,519. Do you think that is the best use to which Glen-Strathfarrar could be put?—I do, assuredly.

12,520. You do not think it is fit for sheep grazing?—It is a poor business, sheep farming; it would be very hard indeed to get tenants who would take it.

12,521. But would sheep thrive there?—They won't go up to the high ground as much as the deer do, but they would thrive very well on the low ground.

12,522. There were sheep, I suppose, on Glen-Strathfarrar before?—Yes, the first sheep were black-faced hardy West Highland sheep. The next people who came in (Ballantyne), brought in cheviots, but they found they could not keep them over winter; they had to take them down to the low ground in winter.

12,523. Had not the black-faced sheep to be sent away for the winter?—No, they lasted out the season unless there would be a storm.

12,524. Was it simply and solely because you could get no rent for it as a sheep farm that you let it out for deer?—My impression is that, as to the people who went there in those small divisions I told you of—I am rather under the impression, though I was not here to know at the time—that they were not finding it a paying business. Lord Lovat said to me they were very glad to get down.

12,525. But that was perhaps because you offered them better lands?—Well, yes, in a better position; but they were all away before I came here in 1851.

12,526. But you had small pastoral farms there, and they were able to pay rent?—Oh, yes. How they paid them I am not able to say.

12,527. And you think that small pastoral farms will succeed better than large pastoral farms?—Oh yes, I do, only you must have a certain amount, for this reason, that, if you have very small ones, the labour of looking after them would be too great compared with any return they might yield.

12,528. Don't you think, now, that it might be possible to re-introduce small pastoral farms into Glen-Strathfarrar?—I don't think the owner of it would find it a profit to him to do so; I think he would find it most difficult to arrange for. You would want buildings, and everything. I don't think it would be beneficial even to the crofting class; I don't think they would benefit by them; they would be so very, very far away from the markets. Also you would need new buildings all over, and I am satisfied the income would be very small compared with what is derived from it.

12,529. But I suggested small pastoral farms, not crofts.—Well, that is the only objection I see to it; if you make them too small the expense of attending to them and looking after the sheep, with the income from it, would not pay. That is the only advantage

in a large one. If a sheep farm is fair-sized, there is full work for one or two men, as the case may be.

12,530. But there is no special reason, is there, why small pastoral farms should not succeed there as well as anywhere else?—But I do not think pastoral farms succeed—not with us, at all events. My experience has been that small sheep grazings did not pay very well.

12,531. But your experience is more with large ones?—We have both kinds. Up in Strathglass they have grazings of 700 or 800 acres.

12,532. But you don't deny that the pasturage is good?—The pasturage is good; it is the expense of working it.

12,533. The pasturage is good: then why would not sheep thrive there as well as anywhere else?—There is no reason, except in a severe winter,—what are you going to do with them then?

12,534. But you tell us that the stock there used to winter, when it was good black-faced sheep?—That is all I know about it.

12,535. That is not the only place that is subject to storms; they would have to provide for an exceptional year like that?—Sometimes the very deer are perfectly starved out, and come down to the low ground when they can get no food above.

12,536. Would you not like to see it under pastoral farms again, if it were practicable?—I should not like to advise that it should be gone into, from the money question, and I am very doubtful whether you would get people who would take it. We find it most difficult to let grazings.

12,537. But, generally speaking, for small holdings is there not a very keen competition?—Well, my experience is that, as a rule, people succeed best who are not dependent on a small bit of pasture ground. The sheep stock is never so good as it is in the regular large farms, with proper people regularly trained for it.

12,538. But there is nothing peculiar in the district that makes it impossible to set up sheep farms there?—There is nothing impossible that I can see, though I do not think it would be a very wise thing to do.

12,539. Is there not the danger that deer forests might become unprofitable also, even to the landlord?—Well, they must take the risk of not getting the forest let, and so on.

12,540. Do you think there is a probability that they might encounter a difficulty in letting deer forests by-and-bye?—I cannot say; we have always got along as yet.

12,541. I notice in the evidence given before the Napier Commission that Mr Malcolm in reply to a question says:—'There are not many more people 'pecuniarily able to have deer forests.' [Q. 24,427]. Do you agree that that is so? And then he says [Q. 24,432] 'The demand for forests has really slack-'ened of late considerably.'—Well, I do not think there has been very much of that; Lord Lovat has no more ground that he could put into deer forests.

12,542. Do you think that the demand for deer forests has slackened?—I cannot very well tell you. Some seasons it is extremely good, other times less so. Last year there was a very great demand.

12,543. But don't you think it would be a better way, if it were possible, to put the land under small holdings? that the income would probably be more secure even for the proprietor?—What do you call small holdings?

12,544. Such holdings as were in Strathfarrar just before the deer forests were formed?—Well, I am very doubtful. I do not think it would do for sheep to be put in place of game; but there is very little prospect of that: we are very glad we have so little to do with sheep grazings.

12,545. Then, with regard to the treatment of crofters on this estate, I think you said that the grazing was completely taken away from the crofters at one time?—I did; Lord Lovat's view being entirely that tillage would best remunerate them, in place of men going up the hill after a few sheep and doing nothing else.

12,546. Might I ask what was done with the pasturage that the crofters had?—It was planted.

12,547. And do you think it was for the advantage of the crofters to lose their grazings?—It was thought they would benefit much more by reason of cultivating the ground and devoting their whole energies to that. The most of them used to be in some trade or other also.

12,548. You said you did not like very small holdings, but would it not be far better if they got the arable and the grazing together? the holdings would be larger?—I don't think so. I said when they had arable and grazing both, they devoted their time to looking after a few sheep which would hardly make any return at all, in place of devoting their time to the arable ground and getting a good return from that.

12,549. Could they not have a shepherd for the sheep?—Who could pay for one?

12,550. Could they not have a club farm?—My experience of that on the west coast has been most unsatisfactory. There has never been peace for forty years; they are always coming appealing to me.

12,551. You say that in the club farms with which you have had to deal, there was always a dispute. Where are these farms?—In Morar.

12,552. They quarrel among themselves? don't they think their club farm is a great benefit to themselves, after all?—They don't say so.

12,553. Do they themselves think it is a benefit?—I don't think so.

12,554. Would they rather be deprived of it the same way?—Another portion of the small crofting population let the winter grazing. The cows and everything graze upon it in summer, and they let the wintering to some people outside as a sheep grazing, and divide the proceeds.

12,555. But they are very glad to have a common grazing?—These people in North Morar could not do without it, because the little arable ground they have is mostly in potatoes, and the cows are put off that, and put on the hill.

12,556. But, in the face of it, does it not seem an extraordinary way of benefiting the crofters, to take from them their grazings?—No, if you put them in a better position, and give them a certain size of croft to improve, and plenty of work.

12,557. But I look altogether just now to the deprivation of the grazing. Is it not a curious way of benefiting them to deprive them of the grazings?—It just makes them arable farmers, according to the size of their farms.

12,558. Does it not really look curious that you say you tried to improve the crofters by taking away the grazings?—With this view: we took away the ground, and put it to a useful purpose.

12,559. But they did not get the benefit of that?—They got the benefit afterwards by devoting their whole energies to arable farming.

12,560. Did you give them the benefit of the land that you took away from them?—I don't think that any of them had any land except occasionally a little bit of outrun. There was no regular outrun here as there is on the west coast.

12,561. Does it not look like this, that you tried to improve them by lessening their opportunities of making a livelihood?—No, because we thought they wasted their opportunities of making a livelihood by reason of having a professed bit of grazing which was of no value to them. It was only giving them an opportunity for idling away their time.

12,562. But you go on the supposition that they would waste their time upon it. Let us suppose that they did not waste their time, and did make good use of the land?—I would give the crofters as much as is good for them, but I would rather give them cultivated ground if it was possible, without any grazing at all. That is in this country, not in the west coast where it is quite different.

12,563. *The Chairman.*—Don't they need cows' milk for their families?—They have it in their crofts. A croft always carries two cows or so.

12,564. *Mr Maccallum.*—Then, when you limited them to the arable portion, did they turn out industri-

Beauly. John Peter

ous?—Most industrious—exceedingly so, and they became much stronger men. They are well fed, they get plenty of work, and are a new race. Lord Lovat remarked that to me when he came first to the property, they were a diminutive race, and had very spare eating; they lived upon little. After they got plenty of work from his plantation and otherwise, they became much stronger men, and in every way improved.

12,565. Seeing that they made such a very good use of the arable land, why should they not make an equally good use of the grazing land?—I have repeated that several times over; they devoted themselves to looking after a few sheep,—perhaps a score of sheep; that is no work at all for a man.

12,566. You suppose they would do that; but why should they not get a shepherd?—It would never pay for a shepherd to look after twenty sheep.

12,567. But several of them together. You said leases were given: were the leases binding on the proprietor for the 19 years?—They were not binding on the proprietor, but the actual practice was that there would not be one tenant removed. It was very very seldom that one tenant was removed; it was only because he would be smuggling or not doing what was right. His lordship always made a practice of coming down upon smuggling in that way.

12,568. You thought it necessary always to keep them dependent on the good-will of the proprietor?—It was nothing more than that.

12,569. It was very much therefore only the name of a lease?—It was quite secure to them; they never looked upon it as otherwise than secure.

12,570. But still they were in the power of the proprietor?—Well, that was the way.

12,571. *The Chairman.*—The Crofters Commission held these to be yearly leases?—They did.

12,572. *Mr Sutherland.*—You said the improvements you referred to began in the year 1839 or thereabouts?—Yes.

12,573. That was some little time before you came to the management of the estate?—Ten or eleven years.

12,574. But you are sufficiently acquainted with the working of the system?—Thoroughly; it was going on when I came here.

12,575. And I think you indicated, in a general way, that the security of tenure given thereby resulted in a great deal of good?—A great deal of good.

12,576. It resulted in good to the tenants, and I presume you are not prepared to deny that it resulted in good to the landlord?—I admit at once it was good for both.

12,577. And, in fact, it afforded to the country an example of what security of tenure can do in the way of improving estates?—Yes.

12,578. And you are quite prepared to bear your testimony at this time of day to the industry and success of small crofters under such security?—Yes, and having plenty of work to give them in the district otherwise.

12,579. Might I ask you the general state of the land that was given to the people at that time?—Moor.

12,580. Only moor?—Only moor. There might be some little patches.

12,581. But the general character of it was moor?—Yes.

12,582. And they have brought that moor into the state of cultivation we can see for ourselves at the present moment?—Yes.

12,583. Is some of it within sight of this hall?—Along the braeside here.

12,584. Might I ask where these people came from?—People just located on the property; and when there was a great movement at the time of the destitution in 1846, Lord Lovat did not send away a single man; he said he would find plenty of work improving it.

12,585. Was it a fact that those who were turned out from other estates came here?—No, I think his lordship kept very much by those he had already upon the property. Of course sometimes the holdings would alter a little—sons would go away, and sometimes the family died out.

Beauly. John Peter.

12,586. Then, as to the nature of the security that was given, you said there were some conditions upon which they could be broken.—I suppose that would be all specified in the lease?—All specified in the lease. After notice given, they were paid for any improvements they had effected, at a certain rate per acre.

12,587. As a matter of fact, was such compensation ever paid to a tenant who was turned away?—Oh, yes. The turning away I have not been talking about, but several examples of that occurred in my time. It was stipulated that if Lord Lovat turned them away, or even if they went away of their own accord, we have always paid them.

12,588. No doubt all the conditions of the tenure would be laid down in the lease and incorporated therein?—Yes.

12,589. And was smuggling one of them?—I don't think it was put into the lease, but it was an understood thing. There were tickets put out.

12,590. But was smuggling as a matter of fact prevalent?—It was; very much so at one time.

12,591. You, of course, are aware that the prevention of smuggling is an Imperial matter?—Yes, now the law will take it up.

12,592. Did not the law use to take it up?—Well, it could not, and the law was defied.

12,593. Did the landlord come to the assistance of the executive of the day?—He did, because men that devoted their whole time to smuggling were of no use on crofts.

12,594. The same thing would apply, no doubt, to people who sell drink at the present day?—Well, they might, but it was one of the conditions that his lordship made before they entered.

12,595. I am not questioning the moral effect, but it was not specified?—No.

12,596. It was not in the regulations as such?—No.

12,597. Then you made the statement that there were never crofters in Glen-Strathfarrar. Might I ask you the basis of that statement?—Simply the books, which I can show you, and the statement that I read to you.

12,598. Nothing beyond what you have stated?—Nothing.

12,599. You do not know the relations that existed between Lord Lovat and the Clan Fraser previous to that?—No, I don't.

12,600. Your statement is based upon the fact that you find there was a sheep farm there in 1806?—Yes, and that the tenants remained till 1825, and were followed by others.

12,601. And that there were tenants who remained there till 1825, did you say?—Who held it as one farm till 1825, and longer than that—till 1833.

12,602. But the most remote basis of your statement is 1806?—That is as far back as I can go; I cannot find any documents to go farther back.

12,603. It amounts to this then, that for 'never' can be substituted 'in 1806'?—No, I cannot find anything farther back.

12,604. But, in the face of well-known social conditions in the Highlands, would you go the length of saying that, because you find no estate documents to prove that there were any, there were therefore no crofters in Strathfarrar before 1806?—Well, we have the fact that that was the whole rent paid for it.

12,605. But you are not going to deny that people lived there?—I cannot say what these people might have done.

12,606. What was done with Glen-Strathfarrar previous to 1806?—There is nothing to show. That is a good many years before my birth.

12,607. But there might have been no Glen-Strathfarrar, so far as the estate is concerned, previous to 1806?—The glen has been there, but how it has been occupied I can say nothing.

12,608. But don't you think it is just rather straining that evidence to say that there were no crofters in Glen-Strathfarrar, and never were?—I did not say that; I only say as far back as 1806 there are none that I know of.

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12,609. General Simon Fraser you have heard of, I have no doubt?—Yes.

12,610. Did he belong to the Lovat family?—Well, not the present family; they took their descent from farther back. The present family are not descended from General Fraser.

12,611. Was he a cadet of the Lovat family?—Yes, he was. He succeeded the Lord Simon who was beheaded.

12,612. You have heard of the raising of the Fraser Highlanders, have you not?—Yes.

12,613. Did any of them come from Glen-Strathfarrar?—I have not the slightest idea.

12,614. But you are not in a position to say that they did not?—No, I cannot say one way or the other. There were a good many soldiers located here by General Fraser.

12,615. Then, as to the statement that Lord Lovat had no more land to be turned into deer forest, what does that imply?—I only imply such as could be possibly cultivated to any advantage up to a certain height.

12,616. Land evidently can be divided into two categories—land that can be made into a deer forest, and land that cannot. What is the limit of the land that cannot be made into a deer forest? The crofting area, I understand, cannot; it is covered by Act of Parliament. Does it imply that the two categories are the area under crofters, and the area under other farms?—I mean, of course, that the other farms and the crofters have all the ground below, and the ground at a higher elevation than this could not be cultivated to advantage. I was speaking about the Kiltarlity district and Dochfour; that land they could not make anything out of, by reason of its elevation.

12,617. Could not that land be made into a deer forest?—It is too small for that.

12,617*a*. Could it therefore not be made into small holdings?—We have it now in small holdings.

12,618. And what is the size of the holdings?—About 20 acres or so; that is about the average.

12,619. At what rental?—Very little—perhaps 10s. an acre.

12,620. But is that not covered by the Crofters Act?—Yes.

12,621. Then you cannot add it to the deer forest?—No, we do not want to.

12,622. But you could not although you wanted?—We should never think of it.

12,623. But did I understand you to mean that there was no more land in the Lovat estate that could be made into forest?—I beg your pardon; no more land that could be cultivated, brought out from the moor into arable land, with advantage. The expense of improving it would be more than would be justified by the return, the return would be so small.

12,624. *The Chairman.*—I think you mean all the land has been made into forest on the Lovat estate which, in your judgment, can be made into forest?—Quite.

12,625. And the other land which is now not forest is apparently composed of crofter land under the Act of Parliament, and farm land?—And plantations.

12,626. But all that land you would describe as land that cannot be properly made into deer forest, in your judgment?—Yes.

12,627. *Mr Sutherland.*—Why?—Simply because it is too low.

12,628. It is too good?—Yes, too good. Most of Lord Lovat's ground is at an elevation of 1000 feet.

12,629. It is at too low an elevation to be made into deer forests?—Anything that remains.

12,630. But you are aware, are you not, that the better the land is, the better it is suited for a deer forest?—That is not Lord Lovat's view.

12,631. I am glad to see you have a limit to the land that should be put into deer forests, and you draw the line much below what Lord Napier's Commission was inclined to put it at, viz., 800 feet.—Well, I was looking at the maps lately and found the general elevations of Lord Lovat's forests as I stated, but I have drawn no line.

12,632. But the general feature of the Lovat estate has been that in times past some security of tenure has been given, even if a limited one?—Yes. Beauly. — John Peter.

12,633. And, even under that limited security, the industry of the Highland people has improved the land to the benefit of themselves and the proprietor?—Yes, and they had such reliance on the proprietor that they had not the slightest fear of being removed if they did what was right.

12,634. *Mr Shaw Stewart.*—With regard to Glen-Strathfarrar, I understand you think that the only way to put that glen to agricultural purposes would be to divide it into moderate sized farms; but you also think that such farms—grazing farms—would not pay now-a-days?—I don't think they would.

12,635. Is that because that kind of farm at the present time is generally considered rather unprofitable? They are; it is hardly possible to let them.

12,636. You compared high-lying farms with low-country farms. A low country farmer, I suppose, expects to make something by buying and selling cattle?—Yes.

12,637. While the up country farmer would be almost entirely dependent on his sheep?—He would.

12,638. That is the reason why you consider the low country farms more profitable than the up country farms?—Yes, and they are nearer the markets.

12,639. *The Chairman.*—At this late hour I do not propose to detain you, more especially as you have been so fully examined by some of my colleagues.

12,640. *Mr Malcolm.*—I should like to ask the witness some questions as to the comparative remunerativeness of letting this strath as a deer forest and as sheep farms. I wish to ask him what is the present rent paid for Glen-Strathfarrar as a deer forest,—is it £2850?—Yes, it is.

12,641. And you brought out in your statement that when last let as sheep farms the rent was something like £600?—Yes.

12,642. Do you suppose that if this glen was again let under sheep you would get more than £625 for it?—No, I do not think we would get so much.

12,643. So that, from the point of view of rent or returns from the glen, there would be this very striking difference that, whereas you are getting now £2850 of rent, you would only get £600, or thereby, from it as a sheep farm, and there would be a loss of rent of £2250. Is that so?—That is so.

12,644. *Mr Alexander Mackenzie.*—I would like to ask the witness whether, when he said this land could not be profitably used for sheep farming purposes, he meant what Mr Malcolm has indicated,—that it could not produce so much rent for the proprietor; or whether he meant in addition to convey that, given at a fair rent, the people could not live and thrive there?—Well, it depends upon what sort of rents you put upon them.

12,645. Well then, supposing it were let as a sheep farm, would there be no rent for the grouse shooting over it?—That would not be very much.

12,646. How much would it be for Glen-Strathfarrar?—There are no grouse there: you would have to breed the grouse, and there are many things you would have to do.

12,647. Because you spoil it by making it a deer forest. But suppose you had not turned it into a deer forest, and it had been allowed to remain as it was, supporting sheep and grouse, and occasionally deer, what rent would you expect to get for it as a grouse moor, in addition to the sheep farming rent?—I can hardly tell you, because I am not a sportsman, and am not very well aware of things of that sort.

12,648. But you will admit you would get something for it?—Oh, we would get something.

12,649. Therefore it is not the case that the loss would amount to the sum Mr Malcolm states?—It might be a little different, but it would not be very much. Suppose the grouse rent was £200, it would still leave a difference of £2000.

12,650. Would you not get more than £200 for a stretch of country like that as a grouse moor, provided

Beauly. John Peter.

it was in good order? Would you not get more than £1000 for a stretch of ground of that size?—Do you mean for shooting?

12,651. Is your experience not this, that a grouse moor of that extent, of an ordinary character, would fetch a rent at least equal to £1000 under present conditions,—I mean land of an exactly similar class, and of similar extent which is not a deer forest? Would not that quantity of land fetch ordinarily £1000 to £1200 as a grouse moor alone?—I cannot tell you. I think not.

12,652. Now a statement was made here yesterday by Mr Grant: he said, what we all know, that the rental of the parish of Kilmorack was £18,000,—the gross rental—and that if you abolished the deer forests £10,000 of that would be at once wiped out. Is that correct?—I think it is quite correct. I had my attention drawn to that, and I think it is quite equal to that.

12,653. Is it a fact that you would not get a penny at all, one sixpence, for the whole grouse shooting of the parish of Kilmorack if you were to let it as a grouse moor in addition to its being a sheep farm, and a black cattle-producing area as well? Would you not get a penny for it at all as a grouse moor?

12,654. *The Chairman.*—Would large tracts of Kilmorack not let for grouse shooting?—Not for some years.

12,655. And, so letting, would bring in considerable rents?

12,656. *Mr Alexander Mackenzie.*—After a sufficient time for the moor to mature and get into a natural state?—Still, I think it would be nothing compared with the other way of letting it.

12,657. *The Chairman.*—But were not you satisfied of this, that, given land in the parish of Kilmorack suitable for grouse shootings, and these made into grouse shootings, a substantial rent would come therefrom?—That would also be a very uncertain rent, because, if you don't let, you can make nothing of it.

12,658. But if they do let, don't they let at a good rent?—Well, we have a grouse moor up in Strath-Errick where the rent for 12,000 acres is £600, and this includes mixed low ground shooting and a few stags.

12,659. *Mr Alexander Mackenzie.*—What would you get for that as a deer forest?—We never think of that.

12,660. What is the grazing rent of it?—It is let as a farm for £450.

12,661. And you get £600 for it as a grouse moor. So that, according to that illustration, my lord, we should, at least, double the rent. Now, there is one question more. As a man of great experience, and a gentleman I have always found most fair in transactions of this kind, would you tell me whether you believe that the country will allow the deer forests in existence to continue much longer?—I certainly do, because I do not see how it is possible to get out of it.

12,662. You believe that this system will be permitted by the legislature to continue?—Within reasonable bounds.

12,663. *The Chairman.*—I must say to Mr Peter he is not bound to answer that question unless he likes.

12,664. *Mr Alexander Mackenzie.*—It has a serious bearing on this question.

12,665. *The Chairman.*—That may be, but it is not a question he is bound to answer.

12,666. *Mr Alexander Mackenzie.*—I want to know if he is going to answer that question?—Repeat it again.

12,667. Whether you believe, with all your experience and knowledge, that the legislature of this country will permit the present system of deer foresting to continue?—I give no opinion upon that at all. I may mention that the ground in Glen-Strathfarrar is too high for grouse.

12,668. *The Chairman.*—Does that consist with your knowledge?—Well, as I mentioned, I am not a sportsman. Lord Lovat and his sons always took the entire charge of the sporting.

12,669. *Mr Burns.*—You cannot have sheep and deer on the same ground, with the same advantage to the deer?—There is no doubt about that, certainly not. Beauly. John Peter.

12,670. Because the sheep and the dogs and the men bother the deer?—Quite so.

12,671. *The Chairman.*—The rearing of deer suffers severely from having sheep and their accessories upon the ground?—Very severely.

12,672. *Mr Burns.*—You may have grouse with sheep, but not with deer, because grouse fly up and spoil your stalk?—Yes, but even with grouse among sheep, you must arrange with the shepherds.

12,673. *Mr Macleod.*—I must refer to what was presumably a statement of fact. You were asked whether Glen-Strathfarrar was let presently at £2850?—Yes.

12,674. And you said that that was so?—Yes, the two portions together, what we call Braulen and Struy.

12,675. Then it was put to you whether you would get more than the rent that you had previously been getting out of it, the sheep rent, which was put at £600?—Yes.

12,676. You agreed that you would not get more than £600?—Yes.

12,677. As a matter of fact, the rent you were getting before, according to the figures you supplied us with, was £909 for the two places?—Yes, but that takes in Struy as well as Glen-Strathfarrar, and part of these is still let at a rent of £310 separate from the forest, and to make this quite clear I give the present rentals as follows:—

Sporting rental of Braulen and Struy, .		£2,850
Present rent of Struy Estate not within forest, as per Valuation Roll,	£260	
Present rent of Culligran part of Glen-Strathfarrar not within forest, as per Valuation Roll, ...	50	
Present rent of Struy and Glen-Strathfarrar not included in forest rent .		310
Gross rent of Glen-Strathfarrar and Struy Estates, ...		£3,160

12,678. But Struy proper is included in the deer forest at £2850?—Partly.

12,679. Well, for a fair comparison, you must correct your statement to the extent that you would probably get the £900 rather than the £600?—Part of Struy is still occupied by tenants, a certain portion of Strathglass, not in the deer ground.

12,680. There is very little of it?—£160 or so, and Captain Chisholm's, perhaps £100 of difference.

12,681. I must confess I was astonished at your willingness to agree with Mr Malcolm's statement, when you appeared to have known the figures so little. It is rather important, you know, in your case, that one who has been so long connected with estate work and office work as you, should have committed himself to these figures without being absolutely certain.—Well, I think it might be £100 or so of difference, £700 or £750 in place of £600.

12,682. Well, according to the figures you gave yourself, you were getting £909 before it was converted into a deer forest.

12,683. *Mr Sutherland.*—As a matter of fact, the two areas were not the same?—Somewhat more than £600 let in the divisions.

12,684. *Mr Macleod.*—You corrected me to the extent of saying that Glen-Strathfarrar proper was let in these moderate sized grazings at £590, but the total of Glen-Strathfarrar and Struy let at £909?—Including the two.

12,685. That is the same subject that is now a deer forest, letting at £2850?—No, it is not that, because there is the Struy farm to take off.

12,686. How much does that amount to?—£130.

12,687. *Mr Sutherland.*—The question is, was it the same area that was compared in both cases?—No.

12,688. *Mr Macleod.*—It is not a matter of any importance whatever, Mr Peter, except so far as your

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own statement is concerned. If you are quite willing to let it go that you have committed yourself to a statement where you did not know the figures, of course it is not a matter that we need trouble about?—I should like to make it quite accurate.

12,689. It is not the same area?—No, not the same.

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JOHN BROWN GRANT, Factor, Chisholm Estates (recalled)—*examined.*

12,690. *The Chairman.*—I would like to get from you these applications for more land?—Yes, my lord.

12,691. Have you got them here?—No.

12,692. Will you send them in to Mr Mackenzie, the Secretary?—Yes. I may mention I have only got one; the first one went direct to Mrs Chisholm, and I don't think I got it back. The second one went through me, and I have got it. The third one was the letter which I have lodged already.

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JAMES SMITH, Factor for Strathconan (48)—*examined.*

12,693. *The Chairman.*—You wish to read a statement, I understand?—Yes.

12,693*a*. Kindly read it?—I am 48 years of age. I have been factor for Strathconan for ten years, and my brother and father held the same office before me. My father took charge of the estate shortly after it was purchased, in 1839, by James Balfour, Esq., of Whittinghame. This estate, which extends to 73,600 acres, is of a mountainous character, some of the hills rising to over 3000 feet above sea level. The strath is an unusually narrow one throughout its entire length of about 15 miles, and, for a large part of the year, is very adversely affected by climate. It is very subject to snow storms, and I have, myself, been unable to leave my residence in the strath for five weeks at a time, from this cause. There is a heavy rainfall in Strathconan, and the glen is also liable to visitations of frost, usually late in spring and early in autumn, which interfere considerably both with sowing and reaping of crops there. The acreage above mentioned is thus divided:—Sheep farms, 42,000 acres; deer forest, 27,500 acres; crofts, 2,400 acres; woods, 1,300 acres; water and waste, 400 acres; total, 73,600 acres. On the whole estate the arable land is apportioned as follows:—In deer forest, 50 acres; sheep farms, 395 acres; crofts, 105 acres; total, 550 acres. Most of this is under cultivation at present. When Mr James Balfour purchased Strathconan, the population upon it numbered 568. The people were then in extreme poverty, as estate records show. They were not able to pay even school fees, and a large proportion of this population were unable to read or write. The poverty among the population I know to have been the case, even at a later date, within my own personal recollection. It was for this cause, viz., the congestion and poorness of the people, and there being no prospect of its being otherwise relieved that, in 1842, a number of small tenants who then occupied the farm of Corriewick, extending to 5500 acres, voluntarily gave it up. It was then let to a Mr Brown, but several of the former tenants of this farm remained on the estate in various methods of employment. A few left the estate, but there were no forcible removals involved in this change of tenancy. This farm of Corriewick is still let as a sheep farm. Another movement of Strathconan tenantry was connected with the farm of Blarnabee, which extends to 4000 acres. There the small tenants who occupied it in 1847 importuned the proprietor to take the farm off their hands, and purchase their stock. This he not only did, but allowed them the occupation of their houses and arable land for two years after this proposal of theirs was accepted, in order that they might have time to make other plans for themselves. To carry out this arrangement, the proprietor had to take this farm into his own hands, and he held it as a sheep farm until 1850, when it became part of the deer forest. Another sheep farm, generally known as the Home Farm, and which extends to about 10,000 acres, whereof about 154 are arable, was also voluntarily given up by the former tenants of it to the landlord. The principal tenants of this farm went to other holdings on the same estate. There were no evictions or forcible removals in this case, nor in the other cases I have mentioned. Altogether, as above stated, 42,000 acres of this estate are still devoted to sheep farming, and this, along with the land in the occupation of the crofters on the estate, is, generally speaking, the best land on the estate. The deer forest was formed at intervals from 1841 to 1877. The land of which it is formed is much higher in altitude, and, generally speaking, inferior in quality to the other land of the estate. Not a single individual was turned off this land in the process of formation of the deer forest. Ever since Mr Balfour acquired this estate, there has been a large annual expenditure on improvements, such as new buildings, roads, drains, planting, &c. In an estate record before me, I find that from 1851 to 1890, over £50,000 has been thus expended; but this was on improvements alone, and does not include many other items of expenditure which are incidental to the personal occupation of an estate of this kind. The total annual expenditure at present is at the rate of over £3000, and this is more likely to increase than diminish for some years to come. There is indeed one contingency under which this expenditure would not only decrease, but very probably disappear altogether,—I mean in the event of the re-occupation of the land by crofters. Not only would it be very likely that such a step would put a stop to the improvements and consequent means of employment which the present proprietor of Strathconan is now carrying on, but it would prejudice the position of the small tenantry who now occupy holdings in Strathconan, and who, I feel sure, would dislike very much to be disturbed in such a way. I am distinctly of opinion that an extension of crofting could not be carried on in Strathconan, or the land there advantageously occupied otherwise than it is at present.

(Signed) JAMES A. SMITH.

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12,694. *Mr Shaw Stewart.*—You speak of £50,000 having been spent on estate improvements. Do you think that could have been spent on the estate without the rent that was derived from the deer forest?—No, certainly not.

12,695. Has the landlord made permanent improvements on the farms?—Yes.

12,696. And has he given any help to the crofters?—Yes, he gives the crofters the material—lime, slate and wood, and they contribute labour.

12,697. *Mr Sutherland.*—You have not been very long in charge of this estate?—I have been connected with it more or less all my life, but I have only been in charge of it for ten years. It now belongs to Mr Richard Combe.

12,698. That is the name of the present proprietor?—Yes.

12,699. Do I take your statement to refer to his management, or the late proprietor's management?—The management of the late proprietor, but Mr Combe is carrying it on in the same way, and laying out even larger sums of money.

12,700. But for the distribution of the land Mr Combe is in no wise responsible as yet?—No.

12,701. Except the fact that he has got it now—he is the man in possession?—He is the man in possession.

12,702. You said that the estate records showed the poverty of the people before these events took place. In what way?—Well, from documents in my possession,—from appeals that were made to Mr Balfour to grant schools without fees and such like, and from the whole history of the case.

12,703. But don't you know that the old law of Scotland was, that there were no school fees?—But this was put forward by this minister, at any rate, to show the extreme poverty of the people,—they could not pay them in kind, and the reports of all the other people are to the same effect.

12,704. Do you mean to found a charge of general

Beauly. James Smith.

poverty against the people on the fact that they wished to have a school built?—No, but he mentions the fact as an illustration.

12,705. If they wished a school built it was a testimony, was it not, to their desire for knowledge and education?—Yes, but the fact was mentioned that they were poor.

12,706. Is it not a serious allegation to make against a people that they were sunk in poverty, because they wished a school built?—The fact was mentioned that they were poor, but he only added that as one of the reasons.

12,707. But you know that poverty is a comparative thing always?—Yes.

12,708. How did it compare with other parts of Scotland at that time?—I don't know, but like all congested parts, such as Strathconan was at that time.

12,709. What was the population of Strathconan at that time?—568.

12,710. And do you say that is a congested population for all these thousands of acres you have told us of?—Yes.

12,711. How many acres is it to each individual?—The extent of arable is so exceedingly small.

12,712. But could they not profitably occupy the other land?—No, they could not occupy the hills; it is a very narrow glen.

12,713. But it has all those acres. Then you said they were unable to read or write. You mean in English, no doubt?—It does not mention that; it does not say whether it was in English or in Gaelic.

12,714. Is there any statement that they could not read Gaelic?—No.

12,715. And then I gathered from your statement that all those surrenders of land to which you referred were voluntary. You talked several times of voluntary surrenders of land on the part of these people?—Yes, I understand that was the case; they could not carry on their holdings to advantage, they got into debt, and had to ask the landlord if he would take their stock off their hands.

12,716. But you mentioned 'voluntary' several times. Did you refer to all the clearances?—No, I do not know about some of the previous clearances. It is from hearsay just that I was speaking about them.

12,717. Well, I am not disposed to go farther into the matter, seeing the proprietorship is comparatively a recent one.

12,718. *Mr Macleod.*—I would like to know this exactly. You have submitted yourself for examination, and you have made several grave statements, which you say are founded on estate documents and other documents in your possession?—Yes, and I said also on the report of the people generally—the old people on the property.

12,719. But would you be prepared to show those estate documents upon which you found your statement?—Well, I daresay I could show them.

12,720. What do they consist of, as a matter of fact?—Of a letter in one case.

12,721. Is it not a fact, Mr Smith—coming to the point at once—is it not a fact that you have no ground whatever for the statement that you have made here just now, beyond the fact that you have a letter which was addressed by a minister in Strathconan to the then proprietor, asking him to come forward to put up a school in a particular place for the people, and he gave as one of his reasons for making that request that the people were poor, and not very well able to do it themselves? Is not that really the whole ground that you have got to go upon?—That is one fact; but I know from the evidence of the people, the old people in the strath all round, that it was the case.

12,722. I don't know whether you are also aware that that letter has already done duty on several occasions?—I was not aware of that, until it was pointed out to me.

12,723. It is printed here, I may tell you,—in the Minutes of Evidence of the Colonisation Committee?—I was not aware of that till lately.

12,724. And, as a matter of fact, what the minister said was not that they were not able to pay fees, but that they could only pay them in kind; that they could not pay them in coin of the realm. In sending this letter to the proprietor, the minister enclosed a copy of replies that he had made to certain queries put to him by the General Assembly of that time; and one of these answers was as follows:—'The people' he says 'are 'so extremely poor that a teacher could not calculate 'upon any fees in money, and but upon very little as 'equivalent for fees.'—He there says they are extremely poor.

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12,725. All that I say is this. You know, when you come forward and say you have got documents which your statement is founded upon, you ought in fairness to state exactly what the documents are. Is this all the documents you have got?—That is all the documents I have got about that particular point.

12,726. Have you got any other documents?—I have got other documents relating to other things which I have mentioned in this paper, such as improvements and that sort of thing.

12,728. Of course it would be rather impossible for these improvements to have done any benefit to the small tenants, seeing they were cleared out of the place?—What I mentioned was to show the necessity for having them changed.

12,729. *Mr Sutherland.*—To justify the clearances?—That is the reason.

12,730. The poverty and ignorance were the reasons?—And the congestion; the numbers.

12,731. *Mr Macleod.*—But the only ground you have for making that statement is the fact that a minister, who was making a particular application, made a certain statement, very probably in order to strengthen his appeal?—But I have already stated that I have taken evidence in getting up the case—perhaps it may have been informal—from the old people, who have all distinctly told me the same.

12,732. *Mr Sutherland.*—What did they tell you?—About the poverty in these old days.

12,733. *Mr Macleod.* — You heard a gentleman speaking here last evening?—I did.

12,734. Who had no reason to come forward and mislead us in any way, either on the one side or the other?—You mean Mr Campbell?

12,735. Mr Campbell; he came forward here, and he gave evidence as to the condition of these people?—He never was a crofter himself in the strath.

12,736. But, surely, you do not deny the fact that he was there?—Certainly he was there.

12,737. And that he saw what you have never seen, although you are so positive about it?—I don't say that I have seen farther back than my own knowledge goes, but my father has seen a great deal more than he saw.

12,738. But you heard Mr Campbell's statement?—Yes.

12,739. And you heard what he had to say about himself; he left the strath there?—Yes, he left the strath.

12,740. He did not go away voluntarily?—But it was such as he hanging on to the crofters and their relations that made the population so large.

12,741. Was there any particular objection to the population being large?—Certainly, in a case of that kind.

12,742. Why?—Because they cannot possibly exist, if crofters are allowed to multiply and live upon one croft,—they reduce each holding to about a quarter of an acre.

12,743. That is not the case in this instance. Here was a man and his mother, who was a widow, who had a holding that kept a considerable number of cattle and sheep, and paid a rent of £50,—you would not in these circumstances go and say that Mr Campbell was hanging on, as you put it?—I think he stated that they paid £20 for 12 sheep.

12,744. No, no; 150 sheep?—150?

12,745. That was his statement; and he did not leave in poverty, and he did not go away voluntarily. Now I want you to tell us exactly whether this letter

alone, or this letter and the queries, are all that you have got to go upon?—That is all I have got; but perhaps on a future occasion, if my father could get an opportunity to attend and give his views about it,—he was present all along, and knows perhaps more about Strathconan than anyone else.

12,746. Of course, as a matter of fact, it is not at all german to what is before you.

12,747. *Mr Shaw Stewart.*—How long has your father been on the property of Strathconan?—Almost ever since it was bought by Mr Balfour's grandfather.

12,748. And, therefore, this is not merely what might be called hearsay evidence,—you have heard directly from your father descriptions of what he saw with his own eyes on the property?—Oh, certainly; I was a boy at school then.

12,749. *Mr Munro.*—Did you say that the tenants came forward to ask the proprietor to take the stock off their hands before they were removed?—Yes, in Blarnabee.

12,750. Yes, but did they sign any application in writing?—I don't know how the thing was done, or how they made the application. I know that they applied to have the farm taken off their hands.

12,751. In what way?—By valuation.

12,752. I mean, whether by writing, or by word of mouth?—I think it would be mostly by word of mouth.

12,753. But have you any evidence that they sent in any letter at all making that request?—No.

12,754. You have no document to show that they made any such request?—No.

12,755. *The Chairman.*—A question has been sent up, which I think I ought to put. 'Does it not 'appear from a document [Q. 6566] submitted by Mr 'Gerald Balfour to the Select Committee on Colonisa-'tion, in 1890, that the population of Strathconan in '1829 was 1100, reduced in 1834 to 870, and in 1839 to 568, as stated by Mr Smith?'—I am aware that he population was 1100 at that date.

12,756. And was reduced as there stated?—Yes, I think I gave the figures.

[Adjourned.]

THIRTEENTH SITTING.

CANNICH, STRATHGLASS, INVERNESS-SHIRE, JUNE 21, 1893.

Present:—

David Brand, Esq., Advocate, Sheriff of Ayr, and Chairman of the Crofters Commission, *Chairman.*
Michael Hugh Shaw Stewart, Esq., M.P.
James Noel Muller Forsyth, Esq.
George Gordon, Esq.
Rev. Malcolm Maccallum.
John Macleod, Esq.
Henry Munro, Esq.
William Mackenzie, Esq., *Secretary.*

Cannich.

Roderick Maclennan.

Roderick Maclennan, Fasnakyle Bridge, Strathglass (about 50). (Examined partly in English and partly in Gaelic.)

12,757. *The Chairman.*—Are you a crofter?—I am a watcher with Mr Winans; but I cannot speak English, my lord.

12,758. You spoke to me the other day on the road in English with perfect ease: I had a conversation with you lasting several minutes, and I heard Mr Donald Macrae also speaking to you in English.—I cannot say much in English.

12,759. Your statement surprises me; you spoke to me in English some days ago?—Mr Mackenzie here was speaking for me.

12,760. You are a watcher in the employment of Mr Winans?—Yes.

12,761. On what part of the estate?—Fasnakyle.

12,762. How long have you been a watcher?—About 12 years.

12,763. Twelve years back?—Yes.

12,764. What wages do you get?—I am getting 3s. a day.

12,765. You wish to give the rest of your evidence in Gaelic, perhaps?—Yes.

12,766. Had you a conversation with Mr Robertson, Comar, on a day towards the end of April last?—Yes.

12,767. If you have the least difficulty with any word I use you will get it in Gaelic?—I don't understand English well, but if there is any sentence I do not understand I will ask that it be repeated in Gaelic.

12,768. When did that conversation take place?—About the latter end of April, the time of planting the potatoes.

12,769. Were you busy with your potatoes that day?—I was on the road when he met me.

12,770. You met each other on the road?—Yes.

12,771. Was there any one else present?—No, not one.

12,772. Did a conversation take place between you?—(*In Gaelic*) He told me, first of all, that Mr Winans had let the whole of the shootings to other shooting tenants.

12,773. The whole of what shootings?—The shootings that Mr Winans himself had—Fasnakyle and other places.

12,774. Proceed with what passed between you?—He then asked me, What are you going to do now? He referred to the watchers, not merely to myself, but to the whole body of watchers. He said that every man of us would have to go to beggary now, there was nothing else for it.

12,775. Did any thing more pass? He said, What right had we to go and ask for a part of his land, or for his land.

12,776. What did he refer to by that?—The petition that was sent to Mrs Chisholm.

12,777. Did anything more pass between you?—He told me he would put me out of the house, put me on the road.

12,778. Did he use the words "out of the house?" He said he would "put me on the road." [*The Secretary*—That is a Gaelic idiom, meaning that he (the witness) would be turned out of the house.]

12,779. Anything more?—He asked to see some fields, and I met him coming back again, and he then said, "Would it not be as well for you to ask for the parks at Fasnakyle as to ask for more land?" The parks at Fasnakyle, I explain, are in connection with the shooting lodge.

12 780. And what did you say?—I said to him that his lease was out, and that he himself for two years was telling us that this was the time for us to get land, as he himself would never take another lease of it; that is, of Comar.

12,781. Anything more, or was that all?—He told us we were brutes of people without any good; we made no good and were of no use. I said that we had done a good deal of good to him; many a day I had given him for nothing during the last ten years.

12,782. Was that the whole?—Yes, that was the whole.

12,783. Was any reference made between you to the Royal Commission during that conversation, or was it solely to the petition to Mrs Chisholm?—There was no word about the Commission: it had all reference to the petition to Mrs Chisholm.

12,784. Was this conversation in Gaelic or in English?—In Gaelic.

12,785. The whole of it in Gaelic?—Yes.

Cannich. Roderick Maclennan.

12,786. Now, had you any conversation to that effect or to a similar effect with Mr Robertson at any other time?—No.

12,787. That was the sole occasion?—Not at any other time.

12,788. And were you present at any similar conversation he had with any one else?—No; but at the fank last year he stated that this was the time for us to look for land.

12,789. Where is the fank?—at Comar; it was the clipping time last year.

12,790. What month was that; was it this time last year?—Yes, about this time.

12,791. Have you any question, Mr Robertson?

12,792. *Mr Robertson.*—No.

12,793. *Mr Donald Macrae.*—I should like to put a question, my lord.

12,794. *The Chairman.*—Kindly put it through me.

12,795. *Mr Donald Macrae.*—I will confine my questions entirely to the matter in hand. Would your lordship kindly ask the witness whether he had heard or was aware that Mr Robertson had evicted any others in the past.

12,796. *The Chairman.*—No I will not put that question. We are solely limiting this inquiry to-day to the matter of contradiction between Mr Robertson and Mr Maclennan.

12,797. *Mr Donald Macrae.*—What I had in view was that, assuming Mr Robertson had evicted cottars in the past, my point was that the threat in this case would have a terrorising effect.

12,798. *The Chairman.*—No, I do not allow that question. Any other question?

12,799. *Mr Donald Macrae.*—No. I had three cases of eviction in view.

12,800. *Mr Burns.*—Mr Robertson wants to deny that.

Angus Cameron.

ANGUS CAMERON, Invercannich (76)—*examined.*

12,801. *The Chairman.*—Where do you live?—East by here about a mile.

12,802. Cannich?—Yes.

12,803. What is your employment?—Nothing at all.

12,804. How were you engaged when you were younger?—As a shepherd, and many a thing.

12,805. Did anything pass between you and Mr Robertson?—No, not I; he is as good a friend to me as I have got west there.

12,806. Well, what is it you wanted to tell us?—About a garden there that Mr Mackenzie, Balmore, broke down some eight years since.

12,807. I cannot go into that matter?—Can you not?

12,808. No.—Well, I will send it on to the Court of Session then.

12,809. Certainly, if there is anything in it. Is there anything further you wish to say?—I have nothing to say against him; I might say too much.

12,810. You came to give evidence, I think, at Beauly?—Yes.

12,811. Something was said at Beauly about you getting a little money to help you to go there?—I got 3s. from Miss Campbell, Comar, west there.

12,812. Is she a niece of Mr Robertson?—Yes.

12,813. Was that to help you to get to Beauly?—Yes, to go to Beauly.

12,814. And give your evidence?—Ay.

12,815. Was Mr Robertson present at the time?—No, he was not at home.

12,816. Well, I will ask you this other question: was that a gift or a loan?—My own money; I wrought for it, for £1.

12,817. It was payment of a wage?—Just.

12,818. You were saying something about £1?—Yes, I was going to ask £1 for my trouble: I was taking up tups for him to Frianaich.

12,819. You did some work for him for which you think you have a claim of £1?—Yes.

12,820. Quite so: that is a matter between you and him.

12,821. *Mr Donald Macrae.*—Who kept him from going before the Royal Commission? Cannich.

12,822. *The Chairman.*—Were you prevented from going before the Royal Commission?—No. Angus Cameron.

12,823. You could have gone if you chose?—Yes, but there was a woman living with me, and she wished me to stop at home.

12,824. Who was the woman?—is she any relation of yours?—Yes, to be sure.

12,825. What is her relationship?—She is a married woman.

12,826. Who is she married to?—To me!

12,827. Your wife dissuaded you from going?—Ay, yes.

12,828. Quite so: that will do.

[ADJOURNED.]

FOURTEENTH SITTING.

DRUMNADROCHIT, GLEN-URQUHART, INVERNESS-SHIRE, JULY 4, 1893.

Drumnadrochit.

Present:—

DAVID BRAND, Esq., Advocate, Sheriff of Ayr, and Chairman of the Crofters Commission, *Chairman.*
MICHAEL HUGH SHAW STEWART, Esq., M.P.
ANGUS SUTHERLAND, Esq., M.P.
JAMES NOEL MULLER FORSYTH, Esq.
GEORGE GORDON, Esq.
Rev. MALCOLM MACCALLUM.
JOHN MACLEOD, Esq.
HENRY MUNRO, Esq.
WILLIAM MACKENZIE, Esq., *Secretary.*

Hugh Macdougal

HUGH MACDOUGALL, Blacksmith and Crofter, Millton (41)—*examined.*

12,829. *The Chairman.*—Are you a blacksmith and crofter at Milton?—Yes.

12,830. And do you belong to this quarter?—Yes.

12,831. What rent do you pay?—I pay £4 for the croft.

12,832. Do you pay any other rent?—I pay a feu-duty of £1.

12,833. What is that for?—For the dwelling-house.

12,834. For the site of the house?—Yes.

12,835. Then do you pay any further rent than these?—No.

12,836. How long have you been residing there?—Since I was born; not in the village of Milton, but in the neighbourhood.

12,837. Was your father a crofter on this estate?—Yes.

12,838. Where was his croft?—The name is Bulburn.

12,839. Are you to give evidence orally, or have you a written statement?—I have a short written statement.

12,840. Is it prepared by yourself?—Yes.

12,841. Is it in your own handwriting?—Yes.

12,842. And is it signed by you?—Yes.

12,843. Just read it.—Gentlemen,—In my opinion there is a considerable amount of land in Glen-Urquhart, suitable for new holdings and for the enlargement of existing holdings, that comes within the scope of your remit; and there is also among the people of the glen a strong desire for such land. The deer forest of Balmacaan:—The following lands in this forest may be mentioned for new holdings:—(1) Shewglie district, where there were formerly about twenty families,

Drumnarochit. Hugh Macdougall.

and where there is only one now; (2) Between Shewglie and Lochletter, at the west end of Loch Meiklie, in the forest there are several acres of old arable land; and (3) at Druim-a'-chruinneachd, above Shewglie, there are about 10 acres old arable land in the forest. On the north-east side of Suidh-Ghuirmean there were a number of families; the ruins of some of the houses are still standing, and much of the old arable land is under heather.

12,844. How much land is there there, according to your view?—I would rather not say a figure.

12,845. Is there room for more than one crofter there?—Yes, by a stretch of pasture along with it. (4) At the river side, opposite Buntait, there is old arable land in forest.

12,846. Can you give us the extent of that?—It is grown up with wood now.

12,847. Are there houses there?—No. (5) In Lochletter district, opposite Strathnacro, there are about 10 acres of old arable land; (6) opposite Mill of Torr there are about 12 acres of old arable land in forest, and the ruins of old houses at a place called Fasach-a'-Ghuill; (7) above Lochletter, at a place called Archie, there are 10 acres old arable in forest.

12,848. Are these 10 acres under timber or in deer forest?—It is deer forest, the whole of these arable lands I mentioned. At all these places new holdings could be made and improvable land reclaimed and added to the old arable, and plenty hill grazing adjoining.

12,849. In the forest?—In the forest. (8) Above Balmacaan there were ten tenants and thirteen cottars till removed about twenty-eight years ago; the tenants were comfortable. Most of their arable land was added to the home farm of Balmacaan.

12,850. Can you give us any particulars of that farm? What was the extent of it?—I cannot give the acreage of it, only the crofters. There are two or three of the crofters' lands a deer forest in that place.

12,851. You say this land you mentioned last was added to the farm of Balmacaan?—Yes, the most of it, but not all.

12,852. What was done with the rest of it?—The rest of it is a deer forest, or closed up for tame deer, part of it, and for rearing pheasants.

12,853. Can you give us any information as to the area of that farm?—I beg pardon: I did not understand the question.

12,854. Can you tell us the acreage of that farm?—No; but I think the rent of that farm that has been included in the deer forest was between £8 and £9.

12,855. Can you give us the rent or value of the land that was added to the farm?—No, I am sorry I cannot.

12,856. I am not surprised; it is merely if you happened to know?—No, I do not.

12,857. Just continue your statement.—Most of their arable land was added to the home farm, but the arable land of Lurgin and the croft of John Macmillan are in the forest or under deer.

12,858. When was that done, was it twenty-eight years ago?—It was not created into a deer forest at the time they were removed, but a few years after that; (9) at a place called Uchd Raeder, coming near to the boundary of Invermoriston; and (10) another place called Rhue, down opposite Loch Ness, there is old arable land in forest, where tenants were——

12,859. Tenants?—Tenants.

12,860. How many?—There would be two, because there are two crofts.

12,861. Two altogether, or two in each?—Two altogether; two crofts. That is on this side of Loch Ness.

12,862. Near the forest of Invermoriston?—Not far from Invermoriston boundaries. Besides the above arable land, the forest carried the following stock:—Shewglie, 2000 sheep; Lochletter, 700 sheep; Dalshangie and Drumclune, 600 sheep; Allanmore, 200 sheep; Glencoiltie, 1300 sheep; Divach, 1600 sheep; Achadh Divach, 250 sheep; Bunloit, 1000 sheep; Rusgaich, 1000 sheep—total, 8650 sheep; and the creation of the forest threw thirteen shepherds out of employment.

Drumnarochit. Hugh Macdougall.

12,863. Can you give us the date of the formation of the forest?—It was not all converted into a forest at the same time.

12,864. You don't remember, I suppose?—Yes, I remember parts of it.

12,865. But you don't remember when there was no forest?—No, but I remember when parts were not in forest.

12,866. Were all these different localities you mentioned added from time to time to what had been a smaller forest before?—Yes, exactly.

12,867. These, as I understand, had been sheep farms?—The whole forest was a sheep farm; a number of sheep farms.

12,868. Now, can you give us the acreage of these different places?—No, I cannot do that.

12,869. Do you happen to know the total acreage of the forest?—No, I have not got that, I forgot to look it up.

12,870. Have you anything more in your paper?—No, I am through.

12,871. What kind of sheep are these you have been describing?—Black-faced sheep, most of them; I suppose the whole are.

12,872. Are these figures your own estimate?—No, I have them on pretty good authority, and if you wish it I will give the authority.

12,873. Well, you have these figures on authority on which you can rely?—Yes; I rely myself on them.

12,874. And you place these figures before us with confidence?—Yes.

12,875. I suppose there are no crofters in the forest?—None whatever.

12,876. Are sheep allowed to graze in the forest?—None whatever.

12,877. Are sheep allowed to graze in the forest at present?—Sometimes; since a few years back, I think some are allowed in.

12,878. Whose sheep are these?—The farmers' and tenants' close by the forest at a certain time of the year.

12,879. They are allowed in by the proprietor?—That is the way I understand it.

12,880. A privilege of sheep grazing?—just a privilege, but only for a short time in the year.

12,881. Is the forest fenced at any point?—I think it is fenced all round about.

12,882. You mentioned some old townships where there had been one or more tenants—some few tenants. Can you tell us the nature of these establishments?—No, there are some of them so far back; only the arable land and the buildings.

12,883. Is that the only evidence you had in the matter?—Well, there is a place called Archie, and I knew the family of the man that had that place.

12,884. Have you any recollection of the removal there?—Yes, Balmacaan district; and I remember Drumclune in pasture, when it was added to the forest; that is not very long ago.

12,885. When was that?—Between 20 and 30 years ago.

12,886. Who held the Drumclune grazing before?—The present farmer.

12,887. What is his name?—Duncan Macmillan.

12,888. It was part of his farm?—Yes, it was the pasture added to the farm; it is just adjoining the farm.

12,889. Is the forest let or is it in the hands of the proprietors?—It is let to Mr Bradley Martin of New York.

12,890. Held by him on lease, I suppose?—Well, I cannot say about the terms, but he has been here since a number of years now.

12,891. You gave us some estimates of the extent of some of these patches of old arable,—10 acres, 12 acres, and so on. Is that an estimate?—Well, it is just my own estimation; I put it down at that.

12,892. You are as near as you can?—Yes, as I

Drumnadrochit.

Hugh Macdougall.

think myself, and having the evidence of other men as well to strengthen me.

12,893. In giving your evidence just now are you giving it as representative evidence?—as representing the views and information of other witnesses in the district?—Well, I represent, I believe, the views of a lot of them; but, at the same time, I was not appointed here to represent them.

12,894. You were not formally appointed, but you believe that in what you have said you have expressed a very general state of information and belief in the matter?—Without a doubt.

12,895. *Mr Shaw Stewart.*—I did not quite catch whether you gave us the date of Balmacaan being made a forest?—Do you mean the crofting district?

12,896. The land you have been speaking of,—when was it turned into a forest?—If you mean the crofting district above Balmacaan, about 28 years ago.

12,897. You said that thirteen shepherds were displaced when it was turned into a forest. Have you any idea of the number of men employed on the forest at present?—Four or five gamekeepers that are directly concerned about the forest; in the shooting season there are more.

12,898. Could you give me any idea of the number of gillies employed in the shooting season?—No, I cannot give you the figures, but they are more for the covers and for the low land than for the forest; for the rearing of pheasants, and so on.

12,899. What kind of grazing is it you have been telling us of?—Of the forest?

12,900. Yes, I am not speaking of the arable land, but the grazing.—The grazing is good and bad; like, I suppose, the general run.

12,901. What was it used as before when it was under sheep,—summer grazing?—It was used as summer grazing.

12,902. And winter too?—Certainly.

12,903. You have given us the figures of the numbers of sheep that were carried. Were they in connection with any low-lying farms?—Some of them had only a few acres of arable land; others had, well, a good run of arable land, say 40 or 50 or 60 acres.

12,904. These grazings which had only a few acres of arable land, were they in connection with any other low-lying farms at any distance?—None whatever. There is Glencoiltie,—that is going right through the forest, and the man that had that had only a few acres of arable land.

12,905. Have you any idea of the amount of money spent in the district on the forest? I do not mean only in wages, but in buying provisions,—hay, and eggs and chickens, and so on?—No, I could not give you any figures, but I may say that, as far as I know, the most of that is bought from the home farm of Balmacaan.

12,906. *Mr Forsyth.*—You have mentioned certain extents of arable land which you consider available for occupation as new holdings, mostly, I think, on the Balmacaan forest, are they not?—Yes.

12,907. Or at the verge of the forest?—Exactly.

12,908. For how many people altogether do you think there is room there?—Oh, yes, for hundreds.

12,909. Hundreds of crofters?—I might say a hundred families all round.

12,910. Because you have only mentioned very small extents of arable land, have you not?—But it could be made into arable land, anyhow.

12,911. What you mean to say is, that there is improvable land capable of sustaining hundreds of families?—Yes, with the pasture along.

12,912. Do you think that they could rely upon this arable as profitable land?—Well, more on the grazing than on the arable.

12,913. The number is very large, and I should like to get some more definite statement from you as to the amount of improvable land, because 'hundreds of families,' you know, is rather a wide term. How much improvable land do you think there is on the edges of the forest generally?—Well, I never made up my mind about how much could be made into arable land, but I know, from a little experience, that there is any amount of land that could be reclaimed.

12,914. You could not define it at all?—I would rather not define it.

12,915. *The Chairman.*—I am not sure but that Mr Forsyth suggested to you the answer 'hundreds of families,' but I do not know if that is your own opinion.

12,916. *Mr Forsyth.*—It struck me that it was high, because it occurred to me that the witness had made it perhaps without due consideration.—Well, perhaps the word was used without thinking at all. I did not say 'hundreds'; I only said a hundred.

12,917. This is a large statement, you know. The figures are laid down for nearly 10,000 sheep. Well, dividing that into holdings with 200 or 300 sheep, it would make good grazing; so that, as far as grazing is concerned, a lot of families could be supported.

12,918. Of course you would not bind yourself as to any exact statement of the number of families?—No, I would not.

12,919. But you think a great many?—Yes, a great many.

12,920. *The Chairman.*—I would interpose a question here. You mentioned 8650 sheep. Now, suppose crofters were settled on the land you have mentioned; how many sheep would you propose to allocate to each?—To each crofter?

12,921. Yes.—Nothing less than 100; anything above that.

12,922. 100, would you say?—To 200 or 300.

12,923. *Mr Sutherland.*—About this deer forest and the townships you mentioned to us,—are they townships that were recently added to the forest, or are they all the townships that are contained in the forest?—Yes, they are all in the forest.

12,924. But what I want to know is, if there was a forest of Balmacaan before those townships were added; was there one before?—Oh, there was no forest in Balmacaan till a certain period.

12,925. Have you any idea when the first forest was?—I cannot say; I would rather not.

12,926. Is it within 100 years?—Yes.

12,927. Is it within 80 years?—Yes, and I believe it is within 60 years, and within 50 years, but I would rather not say.

12,928. Well, prior to 80 years ago there was no deer forest at all?—No.

12,929. Did what is now deer forest carry 8650 sheep? Was it all under sheep at that time?—Yes, all under sheep and cattle as well; horses and cattle attached to the farms.

12,930. And these 8650 sheep were displaced, and deer were put in their place?—But not at one time.

12,931. But that is the result up to the present time?—Exactly.

12,932. And you are of opinion,—I think you have stated the opinion to us,—that there is land there that is suitable for occupation by crofters, or other small tenants?—Yes, without doubt, and to enlarge present holdings that come close by the forest.

12,933. And you think they could be occupied with profit to all parties concerned?—Yes, that is my firm opinion.

12,934. You stated there was a certain amount of land that was under cultivation before, and other land that was susceptible of improvement?—Yes, attached to that.

12,935. You have no doubt as to the suitability of it for improvement?—No, in my mind.

12,936. Then, as to the proportion of it that is improvable, could you compare it with any other area that has been improved?—Oh, in my view, it is far superior to many a croft that has been reclaimed in the glen.

12,937. Taking this district in which we are sitting now, and looking round it, do you think it is capable of the same proportion of it being improved as this district?—It is not so level as this district where we are at present; it is a low lying district here.

12,938. Is it higher?—Yes, it is higher, and steeper, the most of it.

12,939. Could you give us any idea of the general altitude of that?—No, I would rather say not.

12,940. *The Chairman.*—You mean you would rather not say?—I would rather not say.

12,941. *Mr Sutherland.*—But you can compare it with the land here about?—It is not so high as plenty of the land that is cultivated at present.

12,942. What is the altitude, do you know, of the cultivated land here?—I cannot give you a figure.

12,943. Do you know a place called Allt-Dalmore?—Yes.

12,944. On the north side of Glen-Urquhart?—Yes, coming close to Kiltarlity district.

12,945. Have you any knowledge of the crops that have been raised in Dalmore?—Well, it has been lying waste for a number of years.

12,946. Why? Did the crops fail?—Well, I should think not; there is a great demand for that place if they would only get it.

12,947. Do you know the altitude of it?—No, I have been there, but I could not say.

12,948. Is it upwards of 800 feet?—I would rather not say anything about the figures.

12,949. But you would not be surprised to learn that it is 850 feet?—Well, I would not think it would be that.

12,950. That is what it is on the map. Well then, do you know of any other place that is of equal altitude with Dalmore in this neighbourhood?—Yes, just opposite us, and in Lord Lovat's place over there.

12,951. Do they raise good crops there?—Well, on some occasions the frosty weather might perhaps kill it, but, generally speaking, it is a pretty fair crop. Some crofters that were taken from Balmacaan are up on the heights there, and they seem to thrive pretty well.

12,952. And it is as high as Dalmore?—Well, in my view it is.

12,953. You believe that a large proportion of the land in the place you have indicated could be improved in the same way as this land was?—Yes, that is my opinion.

12,954. Have you any idea what this land was before the people were put on it?—The low lying land?

12,955. No, the high land up to the top of the hills.—No, most of it was cultivated before I ever came to think much about it.

12,956. But you have no reason to suppose that it was better than the other?—No, not so good.

12,957. And is the deer forest, in your opinion, a favourable subject to improve as compared with this?—Certainly, that is my impression.

12,958. *Mr Gordon.*—At what season of the year are the sheep allowed into the forest?—After the shooting season is over. I think it was down between winter and spring. It has only been in practice these two years back, as far as I know, or even one year back.

12,959. When are they turned out?—I would not say any date, because I have no sheep myself, and I was not so much interested in it.

12,960. Are they in the forest up till the month of April or May?—Certainly not.

12,961. Are they in the forest during the winter?—They are for a month or two, between spring and winter, there.

12,962. And you consider that a benefit?—Yes, I suppose they consider it a benefit.

12,963. Were any of these grazings that you have mentioned occupied by small tenants before?—You mean the deer forest grazing?

12,964. Yes.—Yes, the foremost part of Bunloit, as we call Bunloit deer forest; the crofters there, some dozen or less than a dozen, had it less than 25 years ago.

12,965. You have given that quantity as 1000 sheep?—Yes.

12,966. Was it a club farm, or did each hold individually?—Each had his own sheep, but it was in one piece they had the forest.

12,967. They had a forest: who had a forest?—That portion of the forest, the Bunloit crofters.

12,968. The Bunloit crofters had a portion of the forest which kept 1000 sheep?—Yes. Drumnadrochit.

12,969. Have you a croft yourself?—Yes, a small croft. Hugh Macdougall.

12,970. What is the extent of your own croft?—Between 7 and 8 acres.

12,971. Have you any knowledge of sheep grazings?—No, I have no sheep; it is all arable land I have.

12,972. Had you ever any knowledge of sheep grazings?—Not very much.

12,973. Then you are not able to speak from your own knowledge as to what ground would keep sheep and what would not?—No, I could not say for myself.

12,974. Then a good deal of what you have stated is from information from others?—Yes, from men who have been in the forest, and I offered to give my authority if asked.

12,975. Could you give us any idea of the number of sheep and cattle which you would suppose suitable for the croft that you have in mind?—Well, for the cattle, if the crofters had just 2 or 3 cows and a horse or two, and a good run of grazing for sheep; the sheep part is the main thing.

12,976. But you think they would require to have arable land for 3 or 4 cows and a horse?—Yes, to keep up a family.

12,977. Now, have you any idea of the cost of the stocking that you have mentioned,—3 cows and a horse and a 100 sheep or so?—No, I have no idea.

12,978. You cannot tell that from your own knowledge?—No.

12,979. Have you any idea of the cost of the buildings for a place of that kind?—Well, I know what my own building cost me.

12,980. Could you tell it from that?—Perhaps the crofters might do with a smaller building than I did.

12,981. What did your own cost you?—Over £200, any way.

12,982. What have you for that,—a dwelling house?—Dwelling house.

12,983. A smithy?—The smithy is extra besides.

12,984. But you require a byre, and a barn and a stable?—Well, I may say, if I am allowed to say it, I have seen poor men get a piece of land, 20 acres or thereabouts, and they managed to build houses there without any help, that I am aware of, in my days in some of the worst parts of the glen.

12,985. And, taking the buildings and the stock together, what would you estimate the cost of a small holding at?—I would rather say nothing as to the cost.

12,986. But it would take a good deal of money to provide 100 of these buildings and stocking?—Yes, but there is hardly any family but who, directly or indirectly, would get help from friends, or somehow, and that would manage that for them.

12,987. You have no idea how the money would be raised?—No.

12,988. You said something about a farm called Dalmore?—Yes.

12,989. Which side of the glen is it on?—The north side.

12,990. Facing south?—Facing south.

12,991. Do you find in this country there is any difference in the land facing the south or the north?—Oh yes, it is much hardier facing the south.

12,992. Does most of the forest face the south?—Yes, most of it faces the south.

12,993. Where? does the forest not extend up to the watershed between this and Invermoriston?—Yes, exactly.

12,994. Are not you looking south when you are looking from this side?—Yes, but when I go away from this to Corrimony I only see a bit of the forest.

12,995. If you go west from this to Corrimony, with the forest on your left hand, is that not the south?—Yes, the forest faces the north, but I say there is only a mite of the forest.

12,996. But the crops would not be so early or so sure as in the land facing to south.—They would not be so early.

12,997. Nor so sure?—I would not say that. I see

Drumnadrochit.

Hugh Macdougall.

very good crops on land near Corrimony facing the north.

12,998. Is there not a good deal of this land broken land with lochs and flat mossy ground?—There are lochs, certainly.

12,999. And flat mossy ground?—I suppose there is plenty of that.

13,000. It looks it on the map at any rate. But you think the arable land you have mentioned, or the ground that was formerly arable, is on the lower part?—Yes, most of it is down even as low as the river.

13,001. Extending up westward?—Coming down to the river that goes up Loch Meiklie there, just on the brink of the river, some of it.

13,002. *Mr Maccallum.*—Is this deer forest of Balmacaan fenced?—Yes, it is all fenced.

13,003. And is the fence sufficient, so that the deer do not destroy the crofters' crops, or do they suffer anything in that way?—I am not aware that they come out very often; I have seen them down even beside my own place in the fields, but not very often. Unless it is broken down they do not come through.

13,004. So there is no complaint of that kind?—I do not think there is.

13,005. Then you mentioned a township of Balmacaan that was added partly to the deer forest, and partly to the home farm of Balmacaan?—Yes.

13,006. Where were these people sent to?—Well, the crofters, those that had land, I think the most of them got land, such as it was.

13,007. Were these holdings they got as good as those they left?—They got land, but they got no holdings.

13,008. They got land without any holding?—There was no building on the land, I mean.

13,009. Was the land itself as good as the land that they had to give up?—Not in my estimation.

13,010. Was it land that had been under cultivation before, or had they to improve it themselves?—Part of it, and some of it land that was never under cultivation.

13,011. Did they improve the land they got?—Some of them did, and some of them died in the poorhouse.

13,012. And how about the houses; were houses prepared for them on these lands?—They built houses.

13,013. Without any help?—I suppose they got the trees in the wood; they had no slated houses then.

13,014. And you think that is the only help they got—wood?—That is as far as I know.

13,015. Are the ruins of the houses to be seen yet?—Some of them.

13,016. Are there people in this district who have no land and are willing to get it?—Yes, a great many, who are anxious to get land.

13,017. And about their holdings; do they complain of the smallness of the holdings?—I beg pardon.

13,018. Are there many crofters, first of all?—Yes, in fact they are nearly all crofters in this parish.

13,019. And is there a general complaint as to the smallness of their holdings?—Yes, there is a general complaint especially for grazing attached. There are some of them up the braes that have been speaking to me these two days back.

13,020. And you think if the grazing of the forest were made available, there would be a demand for it?—A general demand, a run for it, I think myself, for grazing.

13,021. Have you any idea of the extent of the forest?—No.

13,022. Is it very large?—Well, the length of it is from Balmacaan farm there up to the estate of Corrimony; that will be from 8 to 10 miles in length.

13,023. You gave us some idea of the stock that was on the land added to the forest,—something like 8000?—Yes.

13,024. And is all that good pasture?—Well, I would not say that the whole is good pasture, but, taking it as a whole, it is good pasture.

13,025. But I mean the land that was used recently as a farm under sheep; is that land good?—I do not understand your question.

13,026. I take it, first of all, that there is a forest that has been for a long time used as a forest only, and then grazings have been added more recently.—Yes.

Drumnadrochit.

Hugh Macdou

13,027. Now, were all these grazings good land—good pasture?—Yes, as far as I know.

13,028. And these grazings would carry a stock of upwards of 8000?—Yes.

13,029. And, if this land were made available for addition to the crofters' holdings at present, you think it would be a great advantage to the crofters?—I think so.

13,030. Have the crofters just now sheep?—Well, the crofters in Bunloit, as far as I know, have only 12 sheep each; I mean those that had 1000 between six or seven of them; I think it is a dozen of sheep that they are allowed in the meantime, and the east portion of Bunloit has no sheep, as far as I know.

13,031. Are these their chief grievances,—that their holdings are small, and they have no pasture for sheep?—That is just the chief grievance.

13,032. *Mr Munro.*—I think you told us that if the Balmacaan deer forest were made available there would be a ready run upon it for grazing purposes?—That is my impression.

13,033. Would you yourself be prepared to take a portion of the forest?—Yes, for grazing.

13,034. Have you formed in your own mind now any definite plan as to the division of the forest, supposing it was laid open to-morrow,—how it would work out on the scheme of division?—Well, I think the only way it would work out in the way of grazing would be club farms.

13,035. I will put the question to you in this form:—Supposing that you yourself had the option of taking a portion of the land of Balmacaan deer forest, would you require to make a selection of any particular part of it, or would you take it just as it would come?—Well, if we got to select it, there is no doubt——

13,036. What I want to be at is this, that it is quite possible a certain portion of it might readily be taken up by crofters, and the rest left in the proprietor's hands; am I correct in that assumption?—Well, it is my impression that it would be all let.

13,037. You have no doubt in your own mind?—That is my view of it.

13,038. But you have not formed any definite scheme?—No, in fact I did not expect myself to go in for a bit of it, even if it was offered to me.

13,039. Is there sufficient arable land to work out in connection with the grazing of the forest?—No, there is not enough arable land.

13,040. Then, how would crofters or small tenants take the whole of that forest if there was no arable land to work along with it?—Well, in Bunloit they would take just what they had before, and perhaps more, without any arable land attached to it.

13,041. Tenants from Bunloit would come here and take portions of the grazing land in the deer forest if open to them?—Exactly.

13,042. You cultivate a croft yourself, I think?—Yes, a small bit.

13,043. Can you tell us what altitude your croft is?—Not many feet; it is just in the village of Milton there, close to the level; it is steep, but not many hundred feet above the level.

13,044. Do you know what the population of Glen-Urquhart was before the deer forest was formed?—No, I heard it, but I have not got it in memory, and I took no note of it.

13,045. You could not say whether the population was less or greater now?—I say it is much less now; even the last ten years.

13,046. What has the effect of the deer forest been upon the prosperity of the district here?—Well, in the first place, the population has decreased, and, even in my own line, my work is not what it used to be; and even the big farms that are not in the forest, they are beginning to let it out into grazing more than they used to do; so that it effects myself in my own little sphere.

13,047. But is the position of the people here as com-

fortable as it was before the formation of the forest?—Not in general, but the crofters in some places are not worse than they were then.

13,048. *Mr Macleod.*—I think you said that the length of this Balmacaan deer forest,—which I understand is, in your opinion, the only available land on the Seafield estate in this district,—was 8 to 10 miles?—Yes.

13,049. Now, would you state the average breadth?—Well, I would rather not say a figure as to the breadth.

13,050. But you know in miles?—Yes,—4, 5, or 6 miles.

13,051. So that it is between 8 and 10 miles long by 5 or 6 broad?—I would say between 5 and 6 in breadth.

13,052. Now, can you give me any idea of the rent of this forest?—You mean the rent that the present shooting tenant pays?

13,053. Certainly.—I think it is £1700 I see in the valuation roll.

13,054. Did you take sufficient interest in these things at the time before this last addition was made to the forest, to be able to tell us whether there was a large increment of land when the forest was made up to its present size?—No, I could not say; I took no interest in that at that time.

13,055. As I understand it, those tenants who were removed from Balmacaan got holdings of a more or less valuable kind in the glen itself.—Yes.

13,056. In other words, they were put in upon the other small tenants?—Certainly. Other tenants added to the places they got in Bunloit up there; they got lots that the other crofters had before they went there.

13,057. So that, so far as the Bunloit tenants are concerned, they suffered probably in two ways;—they lost their grazing, and they had a number of tenants put in upon them?—Yes, but they only lost their grazing; there was no arable land where their lots were.

13,058. They were put on the pasture land?—Yes, on the pasture land, but I may say that there was only one of the Balmacaan men in Bunloit.

13,059. Where were the others sent?—Five of them got places on the west side of the loch near the old castle of Urquhart; one of them has, I understand, never paid a rent for his croft, and died in the poorhouse, but the other one is there yet.

13,060. But, speaking generally, the small tenants who were removed were put in upon the other small tenants on the lower part of the glen?—Yes, except those that were put in on the hills between this and Abriachan, they only got the barren hill-grazing there, so that it was not so bad for the crofters that had that place.

13,061. You spoke of the amount of old arable land in the forest, but I take it that those tenants who were at one time in the forest ground made their living chiefly by their grazing?—Well, that is what I would think, but I do not remember of seeing some of them.

13,062. You do not know of your own knowledge?—No.

13,063. Then you gave an estimate of the carry of sheep stock.—Yes.

13,064. Now you said nothing of cattle and horses.—No, I did not mention cattle or horses.

13,065. In the sheep stock that you stated, did you state the equivalent of those cattle and horses, or should you have included that in the estimate?—Well, I suppose they would be there occasionally, not in the winter time, but in the summer, the horses especially.

13,066. But, in addition to the number of sheep you mentioned, there would be, of course, a number of cattle and horses?—Yes, without a doubt.

13,067. Then, with regard to the present townships or holdings that could be benefited by an extension of their pasture into the Balmacaan forest, would you be good enough to give us the names of them?—Would you please repeat that question?

13,068. With regard to the townships or holdings that might be benefited by an extension of their grazings from the Balmacaan forest,—would you give us the names of those?—Yes, I will give you the names; is it the individual names or the community? Drumnadrochit.

13,069. Well, the community. — The Bunloit crofters, from east to west; it would be a great benefit to them. Hugh Macdougall.

13,070. How many are there?—Something about a score, or more than a score.

13,071. Any other townships?—Well, down in the lower flat here the most of the tenants have a slice of arable land, but not sufficient to keep one cow, and they are exceedingly anxious to get pasture land.

13,072. Has it a general name?—Lewiston is one of them, and my own village where I stop—Milton—is another.

13,073. And does this deer forest lie near them?—Well, it lies near enough, especially the covers they have for game between Loch Ness and Lewiston; plenty good pasture there.

13,074. Is it under wood?—Yes, it is under wood.

13,075. And would not it destroy the wood to pasture there?—Oh no, it would never destroy trees 40 feet high; it is not a plantation.

13,076. No, it is not a plantation; it is grown wood?—Grown wood, birches and ash and elder trees. I think there are delegates from Lewiston here, and there are others up the country between this and Strathnacro. There is a great demand there for pasture; the tenants there come down to the river side, and there is only the river between them and the deer forest, and the pasture there is as bad as could be got in the glen.

13,077. That is one tenant?—One tenant.

13,078. And are there any others?—Yes, two or three up there, Macmillan, and a miller, and some others.

13,079. Do you call that Strathnacro too?—Mill of Torr is one of them.

13,080. Any other?—Mill of Torr and Strathnacro are the two names, but I would say there will be three or four that would like to enlarge the pasture.

13,081. Are there any others?—Well, I could not say.

13,082. You mentioned about the farm of Drumclune, that the pasture was taken off it to be added to the forest?—I mentioned that the hill portion of Drumclune was under sheep in my day, and it is now under deer? I did not say whether it was taken from them or not.

13,083. What I want to be at is this: does the tenant of Drumclune desire an extension of grazing?—I do not know.

13,084. The pasture would naturally pertain to that farm?—Yes, it comes close to his house, and Allanmore is next.

13,085. It has no pasture?—Not an inch; the deer forest comes down to the very arable land.

13,086. Any other?—Well, I do not think there is any other.

13,087. Then, speaking generally, it appears to be your view that this forest of Balmacaan should be divided amongst the present tenants of the glen without necessitating any new settlements?—I mean that by enlarging the present holdings, and converting new holdings as well, it could be used—the whole of them.

13,088. You would propose, however, to make some new settlements?—Certainly; I know there is a demand in that way.

13,089. As well?—Yes.

13,090. And you think it could be done?—Yes, I think so.

13,091. Then, with regard to what could be done in that way—the areas without arable land you mentioned, I think you will admit, were small?—Yes, they are small.

13,092. Did you express the view that they could be added to?—Plenty could be added to them.

13,093. You think that?—Yes, I think that.

13,094. Have you any practical knowledge there?—I know the places well.

13,095. Have you taken in land yourself?—I have seen land taken in, by my own strength, some of it.

13,096. Do you think there are people in the glen that would be prepared to do the same?—I know there

Drumnadrochit.

Hugh Macdougall.

are people in the glen that would rejoice to get it for that purpose.

13,097. Supposing they got a holding with a small quantity of arable and a considerable quantity of improvable land, do you think they would be prepared to take it in?—That is my opinion.

13,098. Do you think they would be able to take such holdings without assistance?—Yes; in fact I have seen it done in the glen.

13,099. You think a class of men in the district, who desire to get these holdings, would be able to get assistance to put them on their feet?—Yes, I believe they could get such assistance from friends, without applying for money outside.

13,100. Have you anything to add?—No, I do not think so.

13,101. *Mr William Mackay*, Solicitor, Inverness, Agent for the Countess-Dowager of Seafield.—I want to ask the witness first whether he was ever at Druim-a'-chruineachd?—Yes.

13,102. Did you measure the acreage of it?—No, I never measured an acre in my life.

13,103. You mentioned 10; would you be surprised that, according to the Survey, it is only 3 acres 3 roods 11 poles?—Yes, I quite believe that; that is quite correct enough as far as that is concerned, but it is all under heather now, and only men who have seen it there could say what it has been.

13,104.—When was it last under cultivation?—I won't say when.

13,105. *The Chairman.*—You would rather not say?—No, I would not say.

13,106. *Mr William Mackay.*—It was not in your time?—No, not since I was born.

13,107. Was it within the last 100 years?—I won't say when it was.

13,108. Well, this Survey is dated 1808, and in 1808 the acreage was 3 acres 3 roods 11 poles. Has anything been added to it since?—I would think not.

13,109. *Mr Sutherland.*—Is that a public survey?

13,110. *Mr William Mackay.*—No, it is the estate Survey: I shall refer to the Survey afterwards.

13,111. *The Chairman.*—Is that an authenticated document?

13,112. *Mr William Mackay.*—Yes, it is signed by Peter Brown, who was a very well-known authority about a century ago. He was the first of a family of surveyors, and he surveyed the estate then. (*To Witness.*) Then you also stated that there was considerable arable land in the district of Shewglie; can you give the amount—the extent?—No, I cannot give the amount as far as my own experience goes.

13,113. I am told that it is 7 acres; do you think that is about correct?—I would not say whether it is or not.

13,114-5. And do you know that that arable land is now in the occupancy of the gamekeeper?—I know the gamekeeper has it.

13,116. And this arable land within the forest that you referred to.—I think I referred to another place besides that.

13,117. To Druim-a'-chruineachd, but we have touched that.—To Suidh-Ghuirmein, did I not?

13,118. But we are coming to that. But, on Shewglie, the arable land you referred to is now in the possession of the gamekeeper.—Yes.

13,119. And, of course, you do not know what the extent is?—No, I don't.

13,120. Then you mentioned that at the east of Suidh-Ghuirmein there is old arable land. Were you ever there?—Yes, I was there.

13,121. At this spot?—Yes, I was at the shooting there.

13,122. When was that?—Close upon 20 years ago.

13,123. You would then be about 20 years of age?—More than that.

13,124. Did you measure the extent?—No, certainly not.

13,125. And do you know what it is really?—No, I don't know, but I only gave what I had from men that ought to know better than myself, and I offered to give the authority.

13,126. These men never measured the place?—No, but they have been there hundreds of times.

13,127. When was this place, Suidh-Ghuirmein, under cultivation?—I have no idea.

13,128. Was it within the last 200 years?—I have no idea whatever.

13,129. Are there any ruins at all about the place showing that it was ever under cultivation?—I think there are, as far as my own memory carries me.

13,130. Is not the arable land all under old timber?—There is timber, and heather, and brackens, and all.

13,131. The fact is, it may have been 10,000 years ago, as far as you know, since it was cultivated.

13,132. *The Chairman.*—10,000 years ago?

13,133. *Mr William Mackay.*—Yes, my lord, so far as his knowledge is concerned. (*To Witness.*) Well, the next place is opposite Mill of Torr. You put it down at 10 acres arable. Were you ever down there?—Yes, I have gone through it, but not to measure it.

13,134. Do not you think it is nearer an acre than 10 acres?—Certainly not, there are trees and all; there is no man passing along the road would imagine that.

13,135. It is all under old birch wood.—No, not all, some of it can be seen from the road.

13,136. Was that under tillage within the last 40 or 50 years?—Yes.

13,137. Do you remember when there was anybody there?—No, but I have been told by men, not many days ago, that they have been working there.

13,138. That is on the low land?—Yes, at Mill of Torr.

13,139. Well, there is only an acre of land there.—Well, I would like to get an acre of land of that size in my own place.

13,140. There are 10 acres of arable land, you say, within Lochletter; is that where the gamekeeper is, at Archie?—No, the gamekeeper is at Lochletter; you see it.

13,141. Up in the wood?—Up in the wood.

13,142. And that is under birch wood now?—No, it is not; there are acres of that that can be seen miles distant without any wood in it; that is, Archie.

13,143. You may be right or you may be wrong, but you do not know the extent?—I do not know if I mentioned the extent.

13,144. *The Chairman.*—He does not put in his own estimates as precise measurements.

13,145. *Mr William Mackay.*—Well, but he gave them as measurements. (*Witness.*) Well, I think it is the best croft of the whole.

13,146. About this Balmacaan township; you say that there were ten tenants, the rent roll gives eight; don't you think it is correct?—I quite believe that is correct as far as the names are concerned, but there were sub-tenants.

13,147. Which sub-tenants were there?—There are some of the tenants that had given off from their crofts there to their brothers or to their sons, or something like that.

13,148. But all these were put in after 1857; there were no sub-tenants in 1857?

13,149. *The Chairman.*—But I have information that there were 20 families.

13,150. *Mr William Mackay.*—Including cottars?

13,151. *The Chairman.*—He gives the number including cottars and tenants; the cottars would be tenants

13,152. *Mr William Mackay.*—No, they were not, my lord. (*To Witness.*) These were not removed to make way for the deer forest?—No, I did not say they were.

13,153. And the arable land was added to the home farm of Balmacaan?—Not altogether; if it was it is not now.

13,154. But originally?—Yes, for a few years.

13,155. And a portion of it is now part of the deer farm, except a deer park?—Except Lurgin and Macmillan's, and another.

13,156. *The Chairman.*—Was not that land added to the forest practically in 1867?

13,157. *Mr William Mackay.*—No, there is no part of that added to the forest. There is a deer park, my lord, I may explain, which was enclosed for deer and a high fence made within the last 15 years.

13,158. *The Chairman.*—But I mean in 1867, was not that added to the forest?

13,159. *Mr William Mackay.*—No, it was added to the home farm. (*To Witness.*) And the pasture they had at the back was planted, was it not?—Yes, part of it was planted, or perhaps the most of it.

13,160. The whole of it?—But some pasture lying near, I do not think it has been planted.

13,161. But there is no part of that pasture in the deer forest?—No, but it is under game all the same.

13,162. That is another thing; our fields down here are under game.

13,163. *Mr Sutherland.*—Exclusively?

13,164. *Mr William Mackay.*—No, not exclusively.

13,165. *The Chairman.*—I think he said most of the arable land to which he referred had been added to the home farm.

13,166. *Mr William Mackay.*—I understood he said it was added to the forest. (*Witness.*) It is added to the home farm I said, my lord.

13,167. You referred to Uchd Raeder and Rhue; is that not the same farm of Rusgich, to which you afterwards referred?—Yes, but Uchd Raeder is a place wre a croft was.

13,167*a*. But do you remember when Uchd Raeder and Rhue were under sheep?—No, I do not.

13,168. Well, I remember it; were these two not included in the Rusgich?—Yes, exactly.

13,169. And included in the land which you say was capable of maintaining 1000 sheep?—Yes, exactly.

13,170. Now, you say that there were two tenants there, one at Uchd Raeder and the other at Rhue. Were you ever at Uchd Raeder?—No, I was never there.

13,171. Well, it is very difficult to get at; was there ever any tenant there?—There was a shepherd there, and there is a croft there.

13,172. *The Chairman.*—Still?

13,173. *Mr William Mackay.*—It is arable land there; it is an old sheiling. And if there is to be any division there I will claim that; it was my grandfather's farm. Uchd Raeder and Rhue were the same as Rusgich?—The word 'Rhue' means a croft.

13,174. But they were both included in that one farm of Rusgich?—Yes, in that portion of the deer forest.

13,175. *Mr Sutherland.*—One moment please, I wish to understand this. Rhue was not one of the farms mentioned by the witness?

13,176. *Mr William Mackay.*—He had given it as occupied by one tenant.

13,177. *Mr Sutherland.*—Is it included in the land that bears 1000 sheep? (*Witness.*) Yes, I mentioned it as a bit of arable land in that portion.

13,178. *Mr William Mackay.*—Do you know that Rusgich has for, at any rate, more than a 100 years, been let to one tenant, including Rhue and Uchd Raeder?—Yes, I know that.

13,179. At a rent. I see the rent my grandfather paid for it was £115. Do you think that would be about the rent?—The rent to-day?

13,180. Yes.—I have no idea.

13,181. Now, with reference to the numbers of sheep which you gave; do you remember when the grazings of Shewglie were afforested?—No.

13,182. Nor Lochletter nor Dulshangie?—Dulshangie and Drumclune became one portion of the hill.

13,183. You know that the pastures of Shewglie and Lochletter were let as one?—Perhaps at one time; but at other times——

13,184. But I mean when they were converted into a deer forest?—Well, I was not aware of that.

13,185. Well, that is the case. Now, you give the amount, at least the number of sheep on both at 2700. What would you say would be a fair rent for the sheep?—I am not a judge to say what a fair rent for the sheep would be.

13,186. When did you begin crofting yourself?—Since my infancy, more or less. Drumnadrochit.

13,187. When did you get your own croft?—About two years ago. Hugh Macdougall.

13,188. *The Chairman.*—It is represented to us that the figures stated by this witness are precisely what were given to the Crofters Commission in 1883.

13,189. *Mr William Mackay.*—Yes, but these were given in by letter, and there was no opportunity for cross-examination; if there had been I think it would have been contradicted. Reference will be made to it.

13,190. *The Chairman.*—I am referring to it now.

13,191. *Mr William Mackay.*—Your lordship will find that it was a simple letter sent to the Commissioners; the writer did not appear before them personally. (*To Witness.*) What do you think would be a fair rent for a sheep in Glen-Urquhart?—I would say something for the low lying district, but I have no experience of the forest.

13,192. What would you say for the low lying districts?—2s. 6d.

13,193. I should like to get a good many sheep at that rate.—According to the pasture it would be.

13,194. Don't you think 2s. 6d. would be a fair thing for Shewglie where there is this splendid pasture, you say, that would be easily converted into arable land; would 2s. 6d. be reasonable there?—No, I don't think it would.

13,195. What would you say?—I think it would be too much.

13,196. What would you say?—I won't say any figure.

13,197. Well, what do you think would be a fair rent for 2700 sheep?—I won't say any figure or any sum.

13,198. At 2s. 6d., you know, it would come to about £400. Well, do you know that the rent of that grazing that was put under that forest of Shewglie was £245, 17s.?

13,199. *The Chairman.*—Do you know about that?—No.

13,200. I don't suppose you do; I never would have thought of asking you the question.

13,201. *Mr William Mackay.*—Take Bunloit then; you say that the grazings taken off Bunloit maintained 1000 sheep?—Yes.

13,202. Do you know that the rental of that grazing was £22, 6s. 5d.?—No.

13,203. *The Chairman.*—Do you know anything about these rentals?—No, I have no experience about the rents.

13,204. *Mr William Mackay.*—Now, you mentioned that the effect of the deer forest was to decrease the population; is there any township that was included in the deer forest where people lived?—Not in my days.

13,205. Was there in any day?—Oh, it is visible enough that there were townships or crofts in some parts of it.

13,206. But these are the crofts that you have been referring to at Shewglie, but up there these were removed long before the days of deer forest?

13,207. *The Chairman.*—Is that a question?—It is meant to be put as a question, but it is put as an assertion.

13,208. *Mr William Mackay.*—My question, my lord, is:—Does he know that any townships where people lived are included in the deer forest?

13,209. *The Chairman.*—You hear the question?—No, except part of Balmacaan.

13,210. *Mr William Mackay.*—Is there any part of Balmacaan where the people lived included in the deer forest?—It is under game if it is not in the deer forest.

13,211. *The Chairman.*—Either in the forest or under game?—Yes.

13,212. *Mr William Mackay.*—That is connected with the home farm?—Yes it is connected with the home farm, but it is not in use for agricultural purposes.

13,213. *The Chairman.*—What is it used for?—For rearing pheasants, for one thing.

Drumnadrochit.

Hugh Macdougall.

13,214. A nursery for pheasants?—And a nursery for tame deer.

13,215. *Mr William Mackay.*—Now, I won't be long, my lord; I have only got one or two questions about Dalmore. I may mention, my lord, that I also appear for Mr Campbell of Kilmartin, the proprietor of Dalmore. (*To Witness.*) You said there was a great demand for Dalmore if it would only be let?—As far as I am aware of.

13,216. You know that I have been factor on that estate for the last 18 years?—Yes.

13,217. Do you know that I advertised the place repeatedly to let?—I was not aware of it.

13,218. And that I could get no tenant?—Does that mean for any money?

13,219. Well, if you want it for nothing, possibly you might have it.—I mean, for money.

13,220. *The Chairman.*—Do you know about that advertisement?—No, I never heard of it.

13,221. Then you can give Mr Mackay no information about it?—No.

13,222. *Mr William Mackay.*—Do you know it was a pretty large farm, with rent of over £100?—Perhaps it was.

13,223. Do you know the tenants who were there?—Yes, I knew the last one and the one before.

13,224. Do you know they all failed in it?—Yes, but tenants have failed in other places in the glen.

13,225. Do you know that Dalmore is the place that was recently reclaimed by Dr Cameron, the late proprietor?—It is not very recently since Dr Cameron was the proprietor.

13,226. I mean within the last forty years?—Well, yes, it might be within the last forty years.

13,227. And would you be surprised to learn that it cost £40 an acre to reclaim and drain?—Yes, I would be very much surprised that it cost that at that time.

13,228. And would you be surprised to learn that I was not offered ten shillings an acre for it? You know that it is now under sheep, let to a tenant?—Yes, to an absentee tenant.

13,229. *The Chairman.*—Is the desire for more land by crofters in this quarter mainly a desire for new holdings, or a desire for the extension of grazing?—I think it is more for an extension of grazing.

13,230. Do you think the requirements of the district would be met to a considerable extent if they got such an extension?—I think so.

13,231. Now, do the lands of any of the crofters to whom you referred resident in this district march with the deer forest?— Yes, except that the river is between the forest and some of the crofts.

13,232. But do some of the crofts march directly with the forest?—Yes, at Bunloit.

13,233. With a fence running between?—Yes.

13,234. Have these crofters sheep at present?—Yes, they have got 12 each.

13,235. Is that all?—Yes, that is all.

13,236. Have they horses?—Yes, they have got a pair of horses, and a few cattle.

13,237. Do you mean a pair each?—Most of them have a pair each.

13,238. What average stock of cattle have they?—Well, I cannot say for certain, but they will have between 3 and 4 cows.

13,239. And their followers?—And their followers.

13,240. Something like that?—Something like that.

13,241. Now, you were asked a question as to your knowledge of grazings. Your father, as I understand, was a crofter?—Well, my father was a blacksmith but he had a small croft too.

13,242. Had he sheep?—He had a matter of half a dozen of sheep most of his days.

13,243. Had you anything to do with the herding of sheep when you were a boy?—Yes.

13,244. How many years were you engaged at that?—Well, I was never engaged; some part of the day, before school or after school, I used to look after them.

13,245. But you have never had anything to do practically with the management of sheep?—No.

13,246. With regard to Balmacaan, there was a clearance there, of the whole township?—Yes, but not at the same time.

Drumnadrochit.

Hugh Macdoug

13,247. But from first to last?—The whole of them were removed; the last man was the foxhunter, and he was allowed to die there, but his heirs got no land; I think they were the only people that got no land.

13,248. Where did these people go?—Some of them went across the sea.

13,249. But I mean of those who remained in the district?—Well, I can give you the names of the whole of the crofters.

13,250. But they got land in the vicinity?—Yes, on the Seafield estate, such as it was.

13,251. When they got that land had they to build new houses for themselves?—The whole of them.

13,252. Did they get any assistance from the proprietor?—Nothing, as far as I know, except the trees in the wood. They got the trees for nothing as far as I know.

13,253. Would you say, from your knowledge of the district, that those crofters here who wish settlements are better able to build new houses in the future than they were when they were removed from Balmacaan?—I should think so.

13,254. Would the crofters in this locality be willing to adopt the club farm system if they got an extension of grazings?—I think so.

13,255. Do you know if that system is understood here?—I think the Bunloit people understand it.

13,256. Are there any club farms here?—No, I do not think so.

13,257. But do you know if they have been considering the matter?—Well, I cannot say they have been considering the question in that shape.

13,258. You think they would be willing to adopt it as the mode of managing their grazing?—I think so.

13,259. Now do you know whether, in recent years, any applications have been made to the estate for additional land?—I think some of the crofters in Bunloit petitioned her ladyship a few years ago for some pasture or something; and some Lewiston tenants petitioned her ladyship for some arable land in the neighbourhood here.

13,260. What was the result of these applications?—Well, I cannot say very well for myself, but they have not got it.

13,261. You have said to us more than once that you were ready to state your authority for some information you have given us. Perhaps, looking to the course which your examination has taken, you would tell us your authority?—My authority is one of the men that had a portion of the deer forest; he is an invalid in bed now, or he would have been here.

13,262. What is his name?—James Mackintosh.

13,263. Is he a farmer?—He is a crofter, or nearly a pauper.

13,264. What rent does he pay?—£4 or £5. He has been removed from Balmacaan, and has been in that place since then.

13,265. You have given evidence to-day with his authority?—Most of it; the figures.

13,266. And he himself is so unwell as to be unable to come here?—He cannot come to the door without two crutches.

13,267. Has he been unwell for some time?—For the last six months.

13,268. *Mr Maccallum.*—You say, as to the arable land that the Balmacaan township had, that it was added to the home farm?—I say the most of it was added to the home farm.

13,269. Is that arable land now cultivated as part of the home farm?—Yes; I do not know if it is regularly cultivated, but it is cultivated.

13,270. And part of the arable land was made into a deer park?—I might say, perhaps about the best part.

13,271. And do you state that the pasture was added to the forest?—Yes, the hill grazing; but only one of them had a hill grazing.

13,272. *Mr Sutherland.*—About these first townships.

you mentioned or that you were asked questions about —Druim-a'-chruineachd?—'Cruineachd' means 'wheat.'

13,273. I was just going to ask you that questions The testimony, as far as the name goes, is that wheat grew there.—Well, that is the way I understand it.

13,274. We will take that for what it is worth. Well, about Suidh Ghuirmean, it was stated that it was not cultivated for the last 200 years. Did you not hear that?—I am not aware that any one said so.

13,275. Mr Mackay stated that.

13,276. *Mr William Mackay.*—No, I did not. My 200 years was an interrogation.

13,277. *Mr Sutherland.*—Oh, I beg your pardon. Are there marks of cultivation at Suidh Ghuirmean?—It is easy enough seeing that it is arable land.

13,278. And is not the tendency of the marks of cultivation to get obliterated by the marks of time?—Yes, that is easily enough understood.

13,279. So that, if it has not been cultivated for 200 years, much more of it must have been cultivated formerly than is visible now?—Yes.

13,280. With regard to the reclamation of Dalmore, you have heard it stated that it was reclaimed at £40 an acre?—Yes, I heard that.

13,281. Is it, in your opinion, more difficult to reclaim than any land in this neighbourhood?—No.

13,282. Have you any idea of the number of acres that have been reclaimed in this neighbourhood by the people?—I have not any idea of the number, but I know acres and acres that have been reclaimed.

13,283. And at £40 per acre they must, in your opinion, must they not, have shown a great deal of capital by this reclaimed land?—The tenants never paid £40 per acre so far as I know.

13,284. But it is of £40 value. Now, if £40 per acre were applied to the waste value of Balmacaan, would not the value be put up immensely?—Yes.

13,285. Higher than any deer forest can show?—Yes.

13,286. And I have no doubt that actuated you in the statement that you wished to see the valuation put up?—Certainly.

13,287. And if that could be done it would add £40 per acre to the value of the land. Is that your opinion?—Well, I would not express any opinion.

ALEXANDER MACDONALD, Wester Bunloit (56) —*examined.*

13,288 *The Chairman.*—Are you a crofter?—I am representing a widow, a crofter there.

13,289. You live with a widow?—Yes.

13,290. Are you a son-in-law?—I am a brother.

13,291. The widow's brother?—The husband's brother.

13,292. What is the name of the croft?—Bunloit.

13,293. What rent is paid for it?—£9.

13,294. And what extent of ground has the widow?—I think, as far as I can tell, about 10 acres.

13,295. Altogether?—Arable land.

13,296. And some outrun?—Some bits of pastures along with it.

13,297. Was there a re-valuation of this croft?—Yes, at the time of the reduction some time ago; it was valued, I think, the time the deer forest was made.

13,298. Can you give us the date of that?—It would be about 1852; it was about 32 years ago or so.

13,299. What was the rent before that?—Before the deer forest was made?

13,300. Yes, before the deer forest was made.—It was £15, 10s.

13,301. And reduced to £9?—It was reduced first to £12, 10s., I think, and the last reduction was £3, as far as I remember.

13,302. *Mr William Mackay.*—Perhaps your lordship would allow me to correct that; it was £12, 10s. until 1887, and since 1887 it is £9.

13,303. *Mr Macleod.*—The witness refers to the rent of the holdings before the pasture was taken from them.

13,304. *The Chairman.*—I want to get from you the rent prior to the rent of £12, 10s. (*Witness*)—£15, 10s.

13,305. The figures he gives are practically the same as your own, Mr Mackay. (*To Witness.*) How long have you been resident there?—I have been a long time there. I was born there, and I have been away a while, and I came back again, maybe 15 or 16 years since.

13,306. Is there land available for extension of grazings near you?—It is indeed.

13,307. Is that part of the forest?—Yes.

13,308. What kind of land is it, heathy pasture or rough pasture?—It is pasture; rough pasture—hill pasture.

13,309. How far is the fence of the forest from the widow's croft?—Well, there are eight crofters there, and it is about 500 yards from the farthest-out crofter there to the deer forest fence.

13,310. Has the widow a stock of sheep?—No, she could not have any sheep, until they got a few sheep to try and make it pay the rent.

13,311. And is she desirous of obtaining grazing land as an extension of her holding if she could get it?—Yes, my lord.

13,312. Is there land there suitable for cultivation besides the land occupied by the crofters?—Well, in the forest, do you mean?

13,313. Either in the forest or in the neighbourhood?—I don't recollect anything being in the neighbourhood but the small bits that they were speaking about already in the forest; but the people of Bunloit had nothing to do with these bits before. There was nothing of the kind in what they had formerly.

13,314. I will put it in this way to you.—Is there not old arable there to which you invite our attention?—No, I don't recollect any arable land being there.

13,315. There are eight crofters at present?—There are eight crofters.

13,316. Do you remember when there were any more or any fewer?—No, I don't remember in that part of the place.

13,317. *Mr Maccallum.*—Have you any complaint as to the deer encroaching upon you through the fences?—Yes, they do make raids sometimes upon the crofts and eat the crop there.

13,318. *Mr Macleod.*—Do you remember when the people of Bunloit had this hill pasture that was added to the forest?—Very well.

13,319. Can you corroborate the statement of the previous witness as to the amount of sheep? A thousand black-faced sheep, he said; that is for the whole of Bunloit, you know?—Well, to make a fair statement, as far as I can judge of that hill it would be just about 700 or 800 to give them fair play on the place; but I believe there would be sometimes about 1000 sheep on that place.

13,320. You think that, for the winter stock at any rate, 700 or 800 would be a sufficient carry?—Just about that.

13,321. Can you tell me at that time had your father a place there?—Yes, my father had it at the time the place was taken from them.

13,322. As I understand it, your father had this place that you are now living in with the widow; then your brother got it, he died, and the widow was there, and you are living with her?—Yes.

13,323. What was the stock of sheep that he had; I take it that they were held individually?—It was a common pasture between eight crofters, who had the hill between them. I suppose they would have, as a fair share, 100 sheep.

13,324. They each had their own individual sheep?—Yes.

13,325. They did not have it in common sheep?—No.

13,326. They had their own long mark?—Yes.

13,327. And they had about 100 sheep each?—Yes, there were about 800 in the place altogether.

13,328. And when the sheep were taken away the rent was reduced from £15, 10s. to £12, 10s.; in other

Drumnadrochit.

Alexander Macdonald.

words, the sheep land was calculated as having been worth £3 a year?—Exactly.

13,329. You had the 100 sheep for £3 a year?—Yes.

13,330. How much a head would that be?—I could not say indeed just now; it could be easily made out.

13,331. It is about 9d. a head, is not it?—Yes.

13,332. Now, supposing that circumstances were to arise that this pasture was available at a fair rent, would you propose to have the individual flocks of sheep there, or would you propose to put it under a common stock, with a few shepherds for them?—I think it would be better to put them into a common stock.

13,333. It would be worked most profitably that way?—I think so.

13,334. You have some knowledge of sheep, I presume?—Yes, I have been among sheep.

13,335. You made no application to the Crofters Commission, I understand?—No, because we have been having leases, and we could not apply.

13,336. Are you under lease?—Yes, under lease.

13,337. Is it a 19 years' lease?—I believe it is.*

13,338. You do not know though?—Well, as far as I can judge, it is, but Major Grant can tell.

13,339. But it is a lease?

13,340. (*Mr Mackay.*—It is a lease, may I state, for 19 years from Whitsunday 1887, after the date of the passing of the Crofters Act.)

13,341. So that you were a tenant from year to year, or the widow was, at the passing of the Crofters Act.—No, we were in the lease then, I think.

13,342. *The Chairman.*—I may say, Mr Mackay, in my experience there are not many cases of leases in the crofting districts after the passing of the Act.

13,343. *Mr Mackay.*—No, but I may say that I know every one of them here by land mark.

13,344. *The Chairman.*—When do you say you think the lease was entered into?—(*Witness.*)—The last lease?

13,345. The lease we are talking of.—I could not say how far it was back, but there was a lease, as far as I remember, before the last Crofters Act.

13,346. Succeeded by another lease?—Yes.

13,347. (*Mr Mackay.*—Some of them were under lease, a very few, but the great bulk of them had no lease whatever at that time.)

13,348. *Mr Macleod.*—You take it that the widow was under lease at the time the Crofters Act was passed?—Yes.

13,349. Are all the tenants in Bunloit, the whole of Bunloit, all under lease?—I think they are.

13,350. At the present time?—Yes.

13,351. Do you know whether it was within the knowledge of those tenants, who were tenants from year to year at the passing of the Crofters Act, that they would have power under that Act if they had remained tenants from year to year, to apply for a portion of that deer forest as an addition to their grazing? do you think that was within their knowledge?—I do not think they would know it.

13,352. Well, it is a fact. Now, have you made any calculation in your mind as to the question of rent supposing there was an extension of grazing? Would you be prepared to accept a rent fixed by an impartial stranger as to what the grazing value was?—Surely.

13,353. And would you be prepared to respect any conditions that might be laid down as to working the place in the way that would do the least possible injury to the sporting interests?—I don't think there would be any difficulty.

13,354. *The Chairman.*—Is the widow able to come here?—Yes, she could come here.

13,355. Has this croft been under lease all the time you have been there, so far as you know?—Well, I do not remember; there would be one lease after another, as far as I can remember.

13,356. *Mr Shaw Stewart.*—Were there not some crofters placed in the Bunloit district about 30 years ago?—New crofters?

Drumnadrochit.

Alexander Macdonald.

13,357. Yes.—Not in the district that I represent.

13,358. How far are you from them?—About a mile perhaps, or less.

13,359. I was going to ask you something about them; can you tell me whether they have been successful?—Well, I imagine they make a very hard living of it yet.

13,360. Why is that?—Because their croft is so very small and they have to work it themselves, the whole of them, and build houses there.

13,361. But that is rather an important point I wanted to ask you about. Do you know if any of them are here to-day?—Yes, I think they are.

13,362. *Mr Donald Macrae.*—They are all here, my lord.

13,363. Have you had any experience of the working of a club farm?—No; I had this experience on this Bunloit farm, but every one wrought his own sheep on it. It was a club farm, but parcelled out between them.

13,364. But each wrought his own sheep?—Yes, sometimes they had a shepherd for it, and at other times not.

13,365. How do the crofters that you represent make their living principally?—Sometimes they make a living, some of them; they try to make it by the croft, perhaps the bit that they have they put stock on it, and some of them have to go away to work otherwise to make ends meet.

13,366. But do you seriously consider that the only thing required to make a living easy out of the present croft is an extension of the grazing? I mean if they had an extension of grazing they would be able to maintain themselves and pay a rent?—I think so, more comfortable than they are; that is my opinion.

13,367. *The Chairman.*—Mr Mackay, have you any questions?

13,368. *Mr William Mackay.*—Just one. I think he stated that Bunloit was, in his day, a club farm, so far as the arable land was concerned?—Not the arable land at all, but the hill pasture.

13,369. But the stock belonged to each crofter; he had his own separate stock at that time?—Yes.

13,370. And it was only a club farm in this respect, that you had one common grazing?—Yes.

13,371. Then, you read the newspapers up in Bunloit?—Sometimes.

13,372. And you are not so awfully ignorant as my friend, Mr Macleod, would have us think?—I do not know.

13,373. You knew that this Crofters Commission was appointed?—Yes, I knew that.

13,374. Did you know that some crofters actually did apply to the Commission in Glen-Urquhart—I heard that there were some of them who were going to apply.

13,375. So that it was not through ignorance that you did not apply to the Commission?——

13,376. *Mr Macleod.*—I beg your pardon, Mr Mackay; there was no suggestion of ignorance, and I repudiate the suggestion.

13,377. *Mr Mackay.*—I am very glad to hear you say so.

13,378. *Mr Macleod.*—You don't require to say so.

13,379. *Mr Mackay.*—Because I am very jealous of the good name of the Bunloit people.

13,380. *Mr Sutherland.*—I wish to know the extent of the grazing; what is the boundary of your grazing?—Is it the pasture?

13,381. Yes.—The present pasture?

13,382. Yes.—Maybe about 800 acres.

13,383. How far does it go up the hill?—Just to the deer forest; I stated already the nearest point to the deer forest is about 500 yards.

13,384. The deer forest comes to within 500 yards of your houses?—Of the first arable land.

13,385. What is the name of that arable land?—Inchtelloch.

* Since the date of the public sitting, Macdonald wrote stating that the lease is one for 19 years from 1882. The lease preceding it expired in 1877. See also Question 13,468.

13,386. And how far did it extend back within your memory before?—A good way.

13,387. Did it reach the cover?—No, it was not in that direction, it was N.W.

13,388. You could point out the boundaries to us, I have no doubt, when we go there?—I believe I could.

13,389. *Mr Mackay.*—Would your lordship just allow me one question with reference to Mr Sutherland's examination? The deer forest, he says, is 500 yards from Inchtelloch. (*To Witness.*) May I ask how far it is from your place?—Just about the same distance from the pasture.

13,390. But from the house?—I did not measure, but I would say it is about maybe 1000 yards, or something like that.

13,391. Is it not more; is it not a mile?—I could not give it exactly.

13,392. *The Chairman.*—How long would you take to walk from your house to the fence?—Well about a half a mile, my lord.

13,393. *Mr Mackay.*—Your lordship will see it; I think it is about 1½ miles. (*Witness.*)—I beg leave to contradict that.

13,394. *The Chairman.*—We will settle that by walking it ourselves.

JOHN MACDOUGALL, Crofter, Bunloit, Seafield Estate, Glen-Urquhart (49). John Macdougall.
(Examined in Gaelic through an Interpreter.)

13,395. *The Chairman.*—What rent do you pay?—£7, 10s. at present.

13,396. Are you a crofter?—Yes.

13,397. What extent of arable land have you?—I don't know: I think there are 13 acres in all.

13,398. And some grazing?—Yes, a share of the pasture with the others.

13,399. Do you know the extent of it? Is it about 800 acres?—I am not sure: I heard it stated at 800 acres.

13,400. Do you feel any need for an extension of grazing?—Yes, I desire it.

13,401. And you would be willing to pay a fair rent for it?—Yes, very willing.

13,402. You heard the evidence given by Alexander Macdonald?—Yes.

13,403. And do you concur in that evidence?—Yes, so far as I know.

13,404. Have you any addition to make to it, or any suggestion of your own to offer?—One of my neighbours and I were wishing to get a part of the forest.

3,405. For grazing?—Yes.

13,406. Who is that neighbour?—Donald Mackintosh; he died a year ago, but his widow is still in the place.

13,407. Are you under lease?—Yes.

13,408. When was your lease entered into?—It is a 19 years' lease, with seven or eight years to run, so far as I know. It commenced in 1882.

13,409. Do you remember if that lease had been preceded by another lease?—Yes. The former lease expired in 1877.

13,410. Could you show us the present lease?—I did not bring it here, but I have it at home; I will show it to you afterwards.

13,411. You will kindly send it to the Secretary. Now, have you got a copy of the lease preceding the present lease?—I think so.

13,412. Kindly look for it, and if you can get it, send in both.

13,413. *Mr Donald Macrae.*—Do you remember when your father had sheep in the deer forest?—My father was in the landlord's service, and he is in the landlord's service still.

13,414. Had you sheep in the deer forest yourself?—My brother's sheep were there; he was the tenant before me in the holding.

13,415. Was your grandfather a tenant there?—Yes.

13,416. Was your great-grandfather a tenant there?—I don't know.

13,417. Had they from time immemorial that portion of the deer forest as a sheep grazing?—I am not aware of their being without it till 1860; they had it down to 1860. Drumnadrochit. John Macdougall.

13,418. Had they this land in common with the other tenants, and had they a common shepherd all that time?—Yes, I remember myself when they had a shepherd; sometimes they had a shepherd, and sometimes they had not one.

13,419. Were they very sorry when they were deprived of it?—[*The Chairman.*—No, no.] Have you any idea what rent they were paying?—I know what is in my own rent book.

13,420. *The Chairman.*—What is in your own book?—£12, 1s., when they had the land that is now in the forest.

13,421. And how many sheep had your brother in the forest?—The sheep were according to the rent paid; five sheep were allowed for every £1 of rent.

13,422. What was the rent at the time when there were five sheep to the £ sterling?—I don't know what was the rent of the other tenants, but I know what is the rent stated in my own rent book.

13,423. What is the rent stated in your own book?—£12, 1s.

13,424. Can you tell me whether any, and if so, what difference was made upon the rent when these grazing lands were taken away?—The rent was reduced from £12, 1s. to £10, 10s.

13,425. *Mr Donald Macrae.*—Did you ever, since you were deprived of this land, complain to the estate? Did you ever want it back?—Yes, the one I have already referred to applied to the estate.

13,426. To whom did you apply?—That tenant and I sent a letter to Lady Seafield.

13,427. What was the result of the letter?—We got word that her ladyship regretted that we could not get the land at that time.

13,428. Do you remember when the township called Lots was made into a township?—Yes.

13,429. How many years ago?—I cannot tell.

13,430. Where does it lie—between Lower and Wester Bunloit?—It is near Tenacnarry, in the neighbourhood of Easter Bunloit.

13,431. Was it at the time that the Balmacaan tenants were evicted that this place was marked out for new holdings?—I think it was a little after that, but I am not quite sure.

13,432. *The Chairman.*—I don't think he is speaking with any certainty, Mr Macrae.

13,433. *Mr William Mackay.*—Do you know that your place was re-valued in 1887?—Yes.

13,434. What was your rent fixed at?—£7, 10s.

13,435. And that is the rent you are now paying?—That is the rent I am now paying.

13,436. *The Chairman.*—I got that from him already.

13,437. *Mr Sutherland.*—With regard to that valuation, I should like to ask if you were represented at the valuation?—I am not aware that there was anyone acting for me, but I was quite pleased with the valuation I got, as far as the arable land was concerned.

JOHN MACKINTOSH, Crofter, Easter Bunloit, Glen-urquhart (54). John Mackintosh.
(Examined in Gaelic through an Interpreter.)

13,438. *The Chairman.*—Are you a crofter?—Yes.

13,439. What rent do you pay?—Till five years ago I was paying £18; I now pay £12.

13,440. When was the reduction made?—Five years ago.

13,441. Are you satisfied with the rent as it at present stands?—Middling.

13,442. Are you under lease?—Yes.

13,443. How many years has that lease to run?—So far as I know, there are eleven years of the lease past.

13,444. Is it a 19 years' lease?—Yes.

13,445. Do you know the exact date of the lease?—Yes, I have it here (producing lease).

Drumnadrochit.

John Mackintosh.

13,446. I see it is partly in print and partly in writing, and was executed on 26th July 1882, the duration being for 19 years from Whitsunday 1882. The rent is stated here at £18, and it was reduced five years afterwards, you said already, to £12.

13,447. *Mr Mackay.*—Perhaps your lordship may find that docquet upon the lease, very probably.

13,448. *The Chairman.*—No.

13,449. *Mr Mackay.*—It is on the principal lease, then.

13,450. *The Chairman.*—There are regulations and conditions endorsed, which, I suppose, are imported into the lease, but I don't see a docquet. (*To Witness.*)—What is the extent of your arable?—I am not quite sure, but I think there are 16 or 17 acres.

13,451. And is there an outrun for the township?—A little. There are five of us, and I have a right to send my stock to a little hillside pasture.

13,452. What stock have you got?—Three or four cows, two little beast stirks, and two horses,—sometimes less, sometimes more.

13,453. Have you some sheep?—Two or three pets on the clover.

13,454. Are you in want of extended grazings?—Yes.

13,455. Are you anxious to obtain grazings from the forest, if such grazings can be properly obtained?—Yes.

13,456. Does your croft land march with the forest? No.

13,457. What is there between your croft and the forest, or your township and the forest?—A mile, and possibly more, between my place and the forest.

13,458. How is that mile or so occupied?—It is a new township that was formed out of our pasture; that new township lies between our place and the forest.

13,459. What is the name of that new township?—We call it Lots.

13,460. That township was formed out of grazings that you previously occupied?—Yes, about thirty-five years ago: that is the time we were deprived of it.

13,461. How many holdings are on that township?—Eight.

13,462. How many holdings are on your township of Easter Bunloit?—Five.

13,463. Was there any difference made on your rents when that land was made into a township?—Yes, our rent was increased £2 when we were deprived of the pasture.

13,464. Increased or decreased?—Increased.

13,465. Are all the five tenants of Bunloit under lease?—Yes.

13,466. Are they all, so far as you know, 19 years leases?—Yes.

13,467. Were they all executed or granted at the same time, or about the same time?—I think so, but I am not sure.

13,468. *Mr Mackay.*—Perhaps your lordship will allow me—I have found out about it. The townships of Bunloit and Lenie, the whole of that side, were granted leases in 1882, and the other portions in 1887. For the whole of this district you are dealing with, the leases were granted in 1882, and expire in 1901.

13,469. *The Chairman.*—There was a re-valuation of the whole of these, I fancy, in 1887?

13,470. *Mr Mackay.*—In 1887 I took charge of the lands, and to all those who had not leases in 1887 I granted leases.

13,471. *The Chairman.*—It goes without saying that all these tenants were under lease at the passing of the Act?

13,472. *Mr Mackay.*—The Bunloit tenants were.

13,473. *The Chairman.*—In 1882?

13,474. *Mr Mackay.*—Yes, all the Bunloit tenants were under lease at 1882.

13,475. *The Chairman.*—And were under lease at the passing of the Act?

13,476. *Mr Mackay.*—Yes, but all the other tenants—the great majority of the tenants—of Glen-Urquhart were not under lease at the passing of the Act.

13,477, *The Chairman.*—All got leases in 1887?

13,478. *Mr Mackay.*—Yes.

13, 479. *The Chairman.*—Perhaps you would kindly let us know, Mr Mackay, since you have opened that matter, how many of the Glen-Urquhart tenants were put under lease in 1887?

Drumnadrochit.

John Mackintosh.

13,480. *Mr Mackay.*—I will give your lordship a statement. I will send you a statement giving all the tenants under lease, the dates of the leases, and their currency.*

13,481. *The Chairman.*—And the rent?

13,482. *Mr Mackay.*—And the rent.

13,483. *The Chairman (to Witness).*—Well, I don't ask you about Lots, as there are tenants from Lots who are coming here to-day.

13,484. *Mr Gordon.*—I should like to ask you one question. You entered into this new lease in 1882?—Yes.

13,485. In 1887 there was a re-valuation?—The whole estate got a reduction five years ago, and we got a reduction then.

13,486. Was that reduction made at the request of the tenants, or was it a spontaneous act on the part of Lady Seafield?—So far as I know it was Lady Seafield herself.

13,487. *Mr Mackay.*—You mentioned that the extent of your holding, the arable land, is about 16 acres?—16 or 17.

13,488. I find it is 18 acres 26 roods, do you think that is correct?—[*The Chairman.*—They are never quite accurate].

13,489. In addition to that you have got 10 acres 3 roods of arable land separate, have you not?—It is a son of mine who has it.

13,490. You work them both together as one farm?—There are two crofts, but we work them together, and he pays a rent in addition to the rent mentioned.

13,491. *The Chairman.*—What is your son's name?—Hugh Mackintosh.

13,492. Does he live on that piece of ground, or does he live with you?—He lives with me, he is a young man.

13,493. What rent is paid for it?—They paid £10 down to the valuation, now it is reduced to £6, 10s.

13,494. Is that rent paid by him, or paid by you?—I pay it.

13,495. How far is it distant from your house?—It adjoins the house, the two holdings adjoin each other.

13,496. Is that piece of land held under lease?—Yes, as far as I know.

13,497. I mean under lease for a number of years?—Nineteen years, I think.

13,498. *Mr Donald Macrae.*—Do you know the farm of Clonbeg?—Yes.

13,499. What is the name of the last tenant?—I think Mitchell was the last tenant.

13,500. How long is it since that farm was added to the Home Farm?—A few years. I could not say how many years.

13,501. *The Chairman.*—He is not speaking with much confidence on this subject.

13,502. *Mr Macrae.*—How many acres were taken from you when this township called Lots was made?—Do you ask of our township altogethcr?

13,503. Yes, the whole township?—Nine score of acres were taken off our township and made into Lots.

13,504. Was it the best portion of the pasture, or was it the average?

13,505. *The Chairman.*—We will see it.

13,506. *Mr Macrae.*—It is converted into arable, my lord. *Witness.*—Yes, the best.

13,507. *Mr Macrae.*—Was more than that taken from you for some other purpose?—Yes, a little was taken off on the other side.

13,508. What was done with it?—A few acres of arable land and a few acres of pasture were taken off us on the other side.

* The Statement submitted by Mr Mackay shows that of 141 tenancies in Glenurquhart, 2 are held on yearly tenure, while the remaining 139 are held under leases (mostly for 19 years) granted as follows:—3 in 1876, 1 in 1878, 1 in 1881, 17 in 1882, 6 in 1883, 13 in 1884, 30 in 1885, 66 in 1886, 1 in 1891, and 1 in 1893. Of these 141 tenants, 9 pay rents exceeding £30, while the remaining 132 pay rents under that amount.

Drumnadrochit.

John Mackintosh.

13,509. How many acres arable?—I think there were three or four acres of arable land.

13,510. And how much pasture?—About three or four.

13,511. What was done with that land?—It was added to the holding of Lenie. The tenant of Lenie was a crofter, and this land which was adjoining it was added to his holding.

13,512. What was your rent before these lands were taken away?—I cannot be very sure of that, but as far as I know it was £16; it might be more, and it might be less.

13,513. Do you mean that it might be a few shillings more or less? How much was the rent raised when these lands were taken away?—[*The Chairman.*—He said already £2.]—My father was paying £16; £2 was the increase.

13,514. Did the tenants of your township complain to the estate of having been deprived of the lands, and of their impoverished condition in consequence?—Yes.

13,515. *The Chairman.*—What was the date of that?—They complained some five years ago.

13,516. But what was the date of the land being taken away?—As far as I know it was thirty-five years ago.

13,517. *Mr Macrae.*—Do you know a place called Lonmore in your neighbourhood where the cattle graze?—Yes.

13,518. Were they in a measure deprived of their grazings in Lonmore?

13,519. *The Chairman.*—What do you mean by 'in a measure'?

13,520. *Mr Macrae.*—By allowing other tenants to graze their cattle there as well. *Witness.*—Others got the right to graze there. There are 23 holdings having a right to Lonmore now.

13,521. *The Chairman.*—And how many were there before?—So far as I know there were only five at first.

13,522. *Mr Macrae.*—Did your township complain to the estate particularly, and was the ground-officer sent up to mark it out for yourselves exclusively?—Yes.

13,523. And did the ground-officer mark the boundaries for you, and tell you to fence it, and did you fence it, and what was the cost?

13,524. *The Chairman.*—This is going into a matter that is not quite relevant.

13,525. *Mr Macrae.*—After putting up the fence, my lord, it was pulled down. *Witness.*—It was taken from us; everyone has it, and no one has it.

13,526. I have the document here, my lord.

13,527. *The Chairman.*—I do not think we need pursue this any further, because it is not quite relevant to our present inquiry.

13,528. *Mr Macrae.*—It shows the disposition of the estate.

13,529. *Mr Mackay.*—Is the Lonmore a peat moss for crofters or others?—Yes.

13,530. And for the people of the Strath of Urquhart, the cottars?—Everyone that chooses to go.

13,531. *Mr Macrae.*—There is one question arising out of that of Mr Mackay's that I should like to ask.

13,532. *The Chairman.*—What is your question?

13,533. *Mr Macrae.*—Would your lordship ask this man whether, while it is a fact admitted, that this Lonmore was allowed to all tenants for cutting peats, still the township had the exclusive rights of grazing before they were deprived of it?

13,534. *The Chairman.*—Was Lonmore the grazing of your township before it was made a grazing for other people?—That is what I heard, and as far as I know, I think the plan gives it to us.

13,535. *Mr Mackay.*—Do you know that Lonmore was the grazing of every person who cut peats there?—[*The Chairman.*—He said so.]

13,536. It was exclusively kept by the proprietor for all who cut peats?

13,537. *The Chairman.*—He has as good as said that. The two points which each of you make are quite consistent with each other; it might be a peat cutting for all, and it might also be a place which had previously been the exclusive grazing of those crofters but which other crofters were allowed to share.

Drumnadrochit.

13,538. *Mr Sutherland.*—And were you paying rent all the while for pasture that was being depreciated by peat cutting?—We were not told as to what our boundaries were, but we were paying rent for everything we possessed.

John Mackintosh.

13,539. And was this inside your boundaries?—Yes, so far as I know, and as far as I heard.

Donald Fraser.

DONALD FRASER, CROFTER, LENIE, GLEN-URQUHART (49)—*examined.*

13,540. I should like to say one or two words to contradict what the last witness said to you.

13,541. *The Chairman.*—Stop a little; I don't know who you are?—One of the crofters who got the liberty of peat cutting at Lonmore, through the kindness of Lady Seafield.

13,542. What is your name?—Donald Fraser.

13,543. Are you a crofter at Lenie?—Yes.

13,544. What rent do you pay?—£12.

13,545. And what do you wish to say with regard to the last witness's evidence?—I may tell you that through the kindness of her ladyship the Lonmore was given to all people for cutting peats, and the grass of the place was given gratis to the people of Bunloit, Lots, and Lenie without paying a halfpenny for it, and we were ever in my remembrance the same way, as Major Grant and Mr Mackay can tell you. There are four Bunloit crofters who always turn up in a row with every new factor that comes to the glen, claiming the things, as the factor Major Grant can prove, and we have sometimes to write to Lady Seafield about these four. But we never paid nor did anyone pay a halfpenny for that place, which is very useful for the crofters of Bunloit. These four crofters have the same share as we.

13,546. Were the crofters of Lenie put in upon the crofters of Bunloit?—All the days of my remembrance it was the same way as now. It was granted by Lady Seafield without paying a halfpenny on either side, and Major Grant and Mr Mackay will say the same.

13,547. *Mr Mackay.*—That is quite the case,—this was always a place reserved for peat cutting and for grazing.

13,548. *Mr Sutherland.*—And was it within the lands out of which these people were evicted?

13,549. *Mr Mackay.*—Not at all.

13,550. *Mr Macrae.*—One or two questions——

13,551. *The Chairman.*—I think we have heard enough on this point. This man has tendered his statement, and I cannot allow any more questions. *Witness.*—There is not a single word of truth,—I mean of lies, in my statement. It is not in one time only that these men were in a row claiming the things to themselves, but they are not paying a halfpenny for it in my remembrance.

Duncan Macmillan.

DUNCAN MACMILLAN, Crofter, Easter Bunloit (72). (Examined in Gaelic through an Interpreter.)

13,552. *The Chairman.*—Are you a crofter?—Yes.

13,553. What rent do you pay?—£12 at present.

13,554. Was that rent reduced five years ago?—Yes.

13,555. From what?—£15, 10s.

13,556. Are you under lease?—Yes.

13,557. Do you wish an extension of grazing if it can be got?—Yes, I am for that.

13,558. You have heard the evidence that has been given from this township already?—Yes.

13,559. And you concur in that evidence?—Yes.

13,560. Can you tell us the rent before the pasture was taken away that we have heard so much about?—The same rent,—£15, 10s. We got no reduction when we lost the land. In every lease we got it was explained to us that we would get the use of Lonmore. My father and grandfather occupied the croft before me, and in their time, and up to 1882, this township

Drumnadrochit. Duncan Macmillan.

had the exclusive right of grazing on Lonmore, although other crofters had a right to cut peats on it. After 1882, up till now, any one who chooses may cut peats and graze cattle as well on Lonmore.

13,561. But was Lonmore in the lease?—I think not.

13,562. *Mr Mackay.*—Everyone had it?—We got permission to get the good of it.

13,563. *The Chairman.*—Have you got your lease with you?—No.

Donald Fraser.

DONALD FRASER, Crofter, Lots, Bunloit (68).
(Examined in Gaelic through an Interpreter.)

13,564. *The Chairman.*—Are you a crofter?—Yes.

13,565. What rent do you pay?—30s.

13,566. Was there a re-valuation some years ago?—No, we have reclaimed land in Lots.

13,567. Have you a lease?—No.

13,568. When did you enter on your holding in Lots?—Twenty-five years ago.

13,569. Is your holding upon grazing land formerly in the occupation of the Easter Bunloit tenants?—Yes.

13,570. Tell me what extent of arable you have?—10 acres and 10 acres pasture, and that is too little.

13,571. Was that arable brought in by yourself?—Yes.

13,572. The whole of it?—I reclaimed about 10 acres.

13,573. And did you build the house you have got?—Yes, I built the house myself.

13,574. What stock have you got?—Three cows and stirks.

13,575. Any horses?—And one horse.

13,576. Any sheep?—No.

13,577. You are in want of pasture?—Yes.

13,578. Are you desirous of obtaining additional grazing if it can be got?—Yes, if it can be got.

13,579. And you would be willing to pay a fair rent for it, I suppose?—Yes.

13,580. Does your township march with the forest?—Yes.*

13,581. And is the land of the forest marching with the township suitable for grazing purposes?—Land adjoining our land is suitable.

13,582. *Mr Shaw Stewart.*—What do you sow on this land of yours?—2 or 2½ quarters of oats.

13,583. And what do you reap?—Not much, it does not save me from buying.

13,584. Do you get work in the neighbourhood at times?—No.

13,585. Could you get it if you wanted?—No.

13,586. Do none of the Lots crofters get work?—No.

13,587. I suppose you speak for others; do they all want more grazing?—Yes, we are in the same position.

13,588. Have they a knowledge of the management of sheep?—Yes.

13,589. Are they in arrear of the present rent?—We are not clear of arrears.

13,590. If they got an extension of grazing, how would they propose to stock it?—We would like to try it anyhow.

13,591. You are prepared to go into sheep farming in debt?—We would try.

13,592. *The Chairman.*—What rent did you pay on the year of entry? Was your rent always 30s.?—Yes.

13,593. That is 1s. 6d. an acre?—Yes.

13,594. *Mr Maccallum.*—You stated that you were settled there twenty-five years ago. Where were you before that?—In Bunloit.

13,595. And had you land in Bunloit?—Yes.

13,596. How did the change take place?—The place was measured, and was given to one tenant,—the place in Bunloit.

13,597. It was given to one man?—Two crofts were joined.

13,598. How many crofters were there in the Lots township altogether?—Eight. Drumnadrochit.

13,599. Where did the rest of them come from?—They came from the neighbourhood, most of them. Donald Fraser.

13,600. How did occasion arise for their leaving the place that they had? Might I ask if any of them came from Balmacaan township?—Yes, one came from Balmacaan.

13,601. And do you know anything about the others? Were their lands added to the forest or to sheep farms?—The land formerly occupied by some of these tenants was added to other farms.

13,602. And the land that you got in Lots was just pasture, and is there land in the forest quite equal to the land that you reclaimed there?—In some places far superior to Lots.

13,603. *The Chairman.*—Did all the tenants in Lots, except this one from Balmacaan, come from Bunloit?—No.

13,604. *Mr Macleod.*—When you went into Lots, did you get any assistance in taking your holding there?—No, I was at the whole expense of it myself, trenching, and spade and pick work.

13,605. Did you put up a house?—Yes, I built a house, byre, and barns.

13,606. Did you get any assistance?—No. I got timber from the proprietor.

13,607. And you manage to live at the present time without doing any outside work,—labouring outside your croft?—I am an old man, and cannot do much anywhere.

13,608. *The Chairman.*—Can you tell us to what extent you are in arrear?—I am not very much in arrear.

13,609. But are you one year, or two years, or more?—I believe I am two years or so behind.

13,610. *Mr Mackay.*—You said that some lotters were removed from land down in the deer forest?—Yes.

13,611. Will you mention their names?—I cannot say anything about that.

13,612. You cannot name any person who was moved from the forest?—No, except John Chisholm, Balmacaan.

13,613. *Mr Sutherland.*—Do you know the name of the man you referred to already who came out of it?—Do you ask if it is the one who came from Balmacaan?

13,614. Yes.—He is not living now; his son in-law has the place.

13,615. What was his name?—John Chisholm.

13,616. What is the son's name?—Chisholm's son-in-law, William Mackenzie.

13,617. *The Chairman.*—As to this tenant that came from Balmacaan, was the land he vacated added to the forest, or added to the farm?—It was added to the forest.

13,618. *Mr Mackay.*—Was it not added to the home farm?—I am not sure.

13,619. *The Chairman.*—Was this the way, that the arable land was added to the farm and the pasture land to the forest?—I believe it was.

James Cameron.

JAMES CAMERON, Crofter, Lots, Bunloit (77).
(Examined in Gaelic through an Interpreter.)

13,620. *The Chairman.*—Are you a crofter?—Yes.

13,621. What rent do you pay?—£2.

13,622. You came there twenty-five years ago?—Twenty-five or twenty-six years ago.

13,623. Where had you been before?—I had not land before then, I resided at Strone, but I had no land.

13,624. What stock have you at present?—I always had 2 cows.

13,625. And a horse?—Yes, I have a horse.

13,626. And have you any sheep?—7 sheep.

13,627. Are you anxious to get additional grazing if it can be got?—Yes, if we can get it. The eight

* Fraser has since written explaining that he meant the grazing of Clunemore.

Drumnadrochit.

James Cameron.

crofters of Lots are all of the same mind about getting more grazing.

13,628. Is there such a grazing in the forest near your holding?—Yes, the forests just immediately behind our township—about a mile from my croft.

13,629. It marches with your township?—The hill ground of Divach lies between us and the forest.

13,630. Is that the hill ground of a farm?—Yes.

13,631. What is the name of the farm-tenant?—Grey.

13,632. How far are you from the forest?—I don't know; we are not any distance. Clunemore is between us and the forest.

13,633. Is that a farm?—Yes. We would like pasture to extend behind our own township; we are confined.

13,634. Who occupies the land immediately behind your township?—Clunemore.

13,635. Maclean is the tenant, you said?—One Grey is the tenant.

13,636. Do you know what rent he pays?—No.

13,637. Does he live there?—Yes.

13,638. Do you know the extent of the farm? Is it a large farm, or a small farm?—A considerable size, he has a pair or two of horses.

13,639. And how many sheep?—He does not keep sheep.

13,640. What does he keep?—He takes in sheep to winter. [*Mr Mackay.*—There are 69½ acres arable, and 586 acres of pasture, and the rent is £57.] We only wish to get the pasture immediately behind our own pasture.

13,641. That is up to the present forest?—Yes.

13,642. *Mr Gordon.*—We did not catch where this witness's croft is.

13,643. *The Chairman.*—He is in Lots, and what he now says is that he desires an extension of his grazing by taking that portion of the grazing farm of Clunemore immediately behind his holding, and leading up to the forest fence. That is for outrun purposes.

13,644. *Mr Gordon.*—Does the pasture of Clunemore not come in between you and the forest?—[*The Chairman.*—Yes, he said so.]

13,645. Does the pasture of this farm of Divach not come in also between you and the forest?—There is a burn or a march between them; the two farms, Divach and Clunemore, come between us and the forest.

13,646. What I want to make plain is this, that the crofts of all the other witnesses who have spoken from Bunloit were cut off from the forest by the pasture of these two farms?—[*Mr Mackay.*—Except the last witness; he said that his land marched with the forest; as a matter of fact, the grazings of two farms come between him and the forest].

13,647. The one being Clunemore, and the other Divach?—[*Mr Mackay.*—Yes].

13,648. *The Chairman.*—Do you know the river called Coire-na-Ruighe?—That is up to the forest.

13,649. Do you wish grazings going across that river to the fence of the forest?—Yes, if we can get it.

13,650. *Mr Mackay.*—Have you got any additional pasture?—Yes, I got an additional grazing, and I now pay £2 instead of 30s.

William Mackay.

WILLIAM MACKAY, Solicitor, Inverness (45)—*examined.*

13,651. *The Chairman.*—You are law-agent for the Seafield estate?—Yes, my firm, Innes & Mackay, are agents.

13,651*a*. And you have a statement to submit to us?—Yes.

13,652. Kindly read it.—I am a native of Glen-Urquhart, where I spent the first 18 years of my life. I have still a house and a few acres of land there. I have since 1875 acted as law-agent for the Seafield family in connection with the estates of Urquhart and Abriachan, and have also, for the same period, been factor on the estate of Kilmartin (formerly Lakefield) in Glen-Urquhart. I have always taken a deep interest in the inhabitants of Urquhart and Glenmoriston, and have for many years spent much of my leisure time in searching into the history of the parish, and the social condition of the people in the past. In connection with these researches, I have been permitted to examine our public records, as well as very valuable ancient documents, preserved in the private charter chests of the Countess of Seafield, Mrs Chisholm of Chisholm, and other families connected with the district. Perhaps you will allow me to begin the statement which you have permitted me to make on behalf of the Countess-Dowager of Seafield, by referring to the history of land-ownership and agriculture in the parish, and to certain circumstances and events which long influenced, and may even not yet have ceased to influence, the lot of the inhabitants.

Drumnadrochit.

William Mackay.

Urquhart is first mentioned in Adamnan's Life of St Columba—written about the year 680. We are informed in that work that Columba preached the gospel in Urquhart about the year 565. At that time it was probably included in the domains of the Pictish King, whose palace was situated somewhere near the River Ness. In the year 1130 and again in 1160, the inhabitants of the province of Moray, in which Urquhart and Glenmoriston were included, rose in rebellion against the Scottish king. After the latter struggle the king removed the principal families of the province to other parts, and gave their possessions to loyal followers of his own. Urquhart was granted to Conachar, who is said to have been a member of the royal house of Ulster. Another rebellion occurred in 1228, after which Urquhart was conferred by the Crown on Thomas Durward. He was succeeded by his son, Sir Alan Durward, who enjoyed the estate until his death without male issue in 1275, when it reverted to the Crown, and was placed in the hands of the Cummings of Badenoch, who retained it until the time of the War of Independence. Before Sir Alan's time, the Church acquired several lands in the parish, the principal of them being the estate of Achmonie. The earliest title extant, referring to lands in Urquhart, is an agreement and conveyance, dated 1233, between Sir Alan and the Chancellor of Moray, in reference to Achmonie and a croft and toft near the Parish Church—that is near where we are now sitting. The church itself and its possessions are mentioned as early as 1215. From Sir Alan Durward's death in 1275, until the year 1509, the castle of Urquhart was a royal fortress, and the whole lands attached to it—namely, those now forming the Parish of Urquhart and Glenmoriston, with the exception of Achmonie and the other church holdings—were for about one half of that period retained by the Crown as its own property. In 1313 they were conferred by Robert the Bruce on his nephew, Thomas Randolph, Earl of Moray. On the death of Randolph's son, John, in 1346, without issue, the lands reverted to King David, who in 1359 granted them to the Earl of Sutherland. On the Earl's death in 1370, they were conferred by Robert the Second on his son David, Earl of Stratherne. Stratherne was succeeded by his brother the Wolf of Badenoch. On the Wolf's death, in 1394, without lawful issue, there was a great scramble for the lands between his natural son Alexander, afterwards Earl of Mar, the Regent Albany, and Donald, Lord of the Isles. Donald succeeded in getting possession, and he retained it until his defeat by Mar at the battle of Harlaw in 1411. Mar then seized Urquhart and Glenmoriston, but his right was disputed by Albany. In the end an agreement was entered into between them, from which we learn that the lands were then waste and unlet. Mar bound himself to let them to the best advantage with all speed, and, after they were so let, he was to get one half of the rents, while the other half was to go to the Duke of Albany. This arrangement was brought to an end by Albany's death on the scaffold, in 1425, and the whole rents were enjoyed by Mar until his death in 1435. On that event the lands reverted to James the First, but the death of that king by assassination a few months later enabled Alexander of the Isles to occupy them, and he and his successors retained them until 1476, as tenants of the

Drumnadrochit.

William Mackay.

Crown, at a rent of £100 per annum, which was the yearly value of the whole lands of Urquhart and Glenmoriston, according to the old valuation, known as the Old Extent. In 1476 the lands were placed under the charge of the Earl of Huntly, who was required to provide the Crown with the old rent of £100. Questions of management were left to himself, and he let them to Hugh Rose of Kilravock. Kilravock's entry was, however, actively resisted by a family of Macleans, who had for many years been chamberlains of the parish under the Lords of the Isles. The struggle was carried on for years, and at last, in 1482, Kilravock renounced his undesirable and unprofitable lease. His successor was John Grant of Freuchie, Laird of Grant, who, after a protracted war with the Macleans and their supporters, brought them under control. He also did good service for the Crown in other parts of the Highlands. He received his reward in 1509, when the King—I am now quoting from the charter—'for 'the increase of our rental, and the profit and patrimony 'of our Crown, and also with a view to the advance-'ment of order and manners, and the promotion of good 'government in the lands underwritten, among the 'inhabitants thereof, and for making those obedient to 'our laws who in times past have been unruly and 'disobedient to our said laws,' granted to him a feu charter of the lands in Urquhart still possessed by his family; to his son John, a charter of the lands of Corrimony, and to another son, also named John, a charter of the lands of Glenmoriston. The aggregate feu-duty payable by the Laird and his sons was £101, exceeding by £1 the annual rent payable, but seldom paid, during the previous two hundred or more years.

It is difficult, if not impossible, to say at what period agriculture was introduced into the Highlands. According to Dio, who wrote in the third century, there was no tillage there in his time, the people living 'by 'pasturage, the chase, and certain berries.' Probably we ought not to read this as meaning that they were absolutely without knowledge of agriculture. Be that as it may, they possessed such knowledge in the sixth century, for in the life of Columba, to which I have already referred, agriculture, agricultural implements, and mills are mentioned. The early Celts of Scotland and Ireland divided their lands into *davachs*, the word being the Gaelic *dabhach*, a vat or large vessel used for measuring corn, and the meaning of it as applied to land being a sufficient extent for the sowing of a *dabhach* of seed. To this extent of arable land was annexed the moor or pasture lands connected with it. Where the word *davach*, or its equivalent *doch*, is found, it proves that part at least of the lands to which it was applied was under tillage before the twelfth century, when Saxon or Southern systems of land measurement came into use in the North. Urquhart was divided into ten *davachs*—Deich Dochan Urchadainn—the Ten Davachs of Urquhart, as they are still called. Davachs in Urquhart are first mentioned in Sir Alan Durward's deed of 1233. The division shows, as has been said, that the glen was to some extent under cultivation before the twelfth century, and, it may also be inferred, that at one time the glen consisted of ten large farms or holdings corresponding with the ten davachs. But if agriculture was early introduced into the parish of Urquhart and Glenmoriston, its progress was for many centuries greatly retarded by wars and spoliations and the ignorance of the times. Reference has already been made to the rebellions of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, in which the parish was involved. In the War of Independence, Urquhart was occupied sometimes by the English and sometimes by the Scots. From the time of the Wolf of Badenoch, in the fourteenth century, till the charters to the Grants in the sixteenth, the parish was the scene of an almost continuous struggle for its possession. In that struggle, and in the petty wars of the Lords of the Isles, the inhabitants were engaged almost without a respite. As a result the population was effectively checked and kept down, the operations of seed time and harvest were almost entirely suspended, and the parish became a great wilderness, incapable of returning the yearly rent of £100, payable to the Crown. I have already mentioned that the agreement between the Duke of Albany and the Earl of Mar shows that the lands were waste and unlet in the fourteenth century. The Exchequer Rolls bear that during the possession of the Lords of the Isles the lands lay waste and the rents were seldom paid. That possession terminated in 1476. In an account rendered in Exchequer by the Earl of Huntly in July 1478, a sum of £33, 6s. 8d. is abated from the annual rent of £100, 'on account of the laying waste of the lands of Glen-'moriston, as was vouched at the audit.' In the following year's account a similar deduction is made, 'on the 'ground that Urquhart and Glenmoriston were waste, 'and could not be let for the year on that account.' Huntly is instructed 'either to let or occupy the said 'lands in future, as no further allowance shall be made 'to him on that ground.' Notwithstanding this, however, the same abatement is allowed to him for the same reason in the account from July 1479 to July 1480: and, as late as 1496, a deduction of 50 merks (£33, 6s. 8d.) is allowed 'on account of the waste of the 'lands of Glenmoriston.' Even after the Grants established themselves in the parish, it suffered greatly from the troubles of the times. In 1513 it was invaded by Sir Donald of Lochalsh, who kept forcible possession of it for three years, preventing the rightful possessors from enjoying their own. When he left, he carried away a large booty of cattle, sheep, and corn. In 1545 Macdonald of Glengarry and Cameron of Lochiel swooped down on Glen-Urquhart with a great host from Glengarry, Lochaber, Glencoe, Ardnamurchan, and the country of Clanranald, and swept the estates of the Laird of Grant and Achmonie of every hoof and every article of food or furniture they contained. The details of these two great raids, as well as the names of the proprietors and occupiers, from which the spoil of 1545 was taken, are still extant. The parish was invaded, and to some extent 'spoiled,' by the Clan Chattan in 1624; by the Covenanters in 1644; by the Royalists in 1645; more than once during the period of the Commonwealth; and several times during the Wars of the Revolution. In connection with the latter event the Laird of Grant supported the Prince of Orange, and as a consequence Urquhart was devastated by the adherents of the Stuarts. In January 1691, two Commissioners appointed by the Scottish Parliament to make inquiry as to the losses sustained by the laird and his tenants held sittings in Glen-Urquhart (so that your Lordship's Commission is not the first that has sat here), and took the sworn evidence of the tenants and inhabitants. The Commissioners' report, dated at Urquhart 3rd and 4th February 1691, bore that said losses amounted to £44,333, 5s. 2d. Scots, including damage to the Castle assessed at £2000 Scots, but exclusive of five years' rents lost by the laird, amounting in all to £30,000 Scots. It was found that, in consequence of the ravages upon the laird's estates, his tenants were so impoverished that he could get little or no rent from them, 'and he was necessitat'—I am quoting the Act of Parliament,—'to discharge his 'tenants in Urquhart the entire rent of the Barony 'which is £6000 Scots, and that for the years 1689, '1690, 1691, 1692, and 1693, their stocks being so 'entirely carried away that they could not continue to 'labour without that abatement.' Glen-Urquhart suffered again in connection with the rising of 1715; and after the Battle of Culloden Glenmoriston was occupied by Cumberland's soldiers, who removed every hoof of cattle to Fort-Augustus, and sold them to drovers from England and the south of Scotland. Not satisfied with this, the Duke, in July 1746, sent Kingston's Light Horse to Glen-Urquhart, who gave the tenant's houses to the flames, and, as proved at a judicial inquiry held in Glen-Urquhart on 23rd January 1747, carried away 257 cattle, 104 horses, 864 sheep, 70 goats, and a quantity of household furniture. This was the last large spoil taken from our unfortunate Glen; but more than 30 years elapsed after Culloden before the inhabitants of the West finally ceased to make petty raids on the more remote pasture lands. The parish

Drumnadrochit.

William Mackay.

was frequently visited by famine in the olden times. These were sometimes the result of war or spoliations; sometimes they were caused by the failure of the crops. I have already referred to the waste state of the country in the 14th, 15th, and early part of the 16th centuries. These periods of waste must have had their corresponding periods of want. There was a scarcity in 1624; a long period of distress from 1689 to 1693, during which, as we have seen, the tenants were unable to pay any rent; and a famine in 1697, when food was so scarce that The Chisholm found it impossible to obtain a peck of meal in Inverness, 'neather for gold or monie 'in hand,' as his Inverness merchant writes him. I have seen the letter in Erchless Castle. About forty of the men of Urquhart and Glenmoriston fell at Culloden, and eighty-four of the survivors were seized and transported to Barbadoes, but perhaps a greater number of the inhabitants succumbed to the famine and pestilence that resulted from the war, and the outrages that followed it. In 1782 there was an entire failure of crop, which was followed by great destitution. To relieve the distressed, Sir James Grant, the then proprietor, who was known as the Good Sir James, sent from London to Urquhart, according to a letter from himself to Grant of Lochletter, which I have seen, '10 'ton of choice picked potatoes for seed, 100 bolls of 'white pease for meal, and 50 bolls Blanesley seed oats.' The year is still remembered in Urquhart as 'Bliadhna 'na Peasarach Baine,' the year of the white pease, and it is still told how people died of want, and how others managed to subsist on blood taken from living cattle, and on nettles and other wild herbs. The potato famine of 50 years ago was utterly insignificant as compared with the absolute *want* of 1783. As was natural, when the checks to population which were in force in the olden times in the shape of war, and turbulence, and spoliation, and famine, came to an end after the middle of last century, the inhabitants of Urquhart and Glenmoriston rapidly increased in number. In 1755, according to Webster's returns, they numbered 1943. In 1763 the population was estimated by Mr William Lorimer, secretary to Sir James Grant, at 2000, and the following are the numbers in 1801 and subsequent census years:—In 1801, 2633; in 1811, 2446 (a reduced number, chiefly brought about by the absence of many men in the war); in 1821, 2786; in 1831, 2942; in 1841, 3104; in 1851, 3280; in 1861, 2911; in 1871, 2769; in 1881, 2437; and in 1891, 2035. The steady decrease which has been going on since 1851, when the population reached the highest point which it ever touched, is accounted for by the fact that the young men are not now satisfied with remaining at home as their fathers did, but go out into the world, and that the young women also leave home to better themselves elsewhere. Of my own father's five sons, one settled in South America, two in the United States of America, and two, including myself, in Inverness. That is an example of what has happened to almost every family in the parish. As the population of the parish increased, so also did the number of tenants, sub-tenants, and cottars. As I have already mentioned, the division of Glen-Urquhart into ten davachs indicates that at a very early period it was divided into ten holdings of a davach each. Some of these davachs were afterwards divided into halves and quarters. In 1509, the charters in favour of the Laird of Grant and his sons show that what is now the estate of Urquhart consisted of 18 holdings, Corrimony of 4 holdings, and Glenmoriston of 12. The charter granted by Randolph to Sir Robert Chisholm, dated 1345, proves that some at least of these divisions existed in that year, and the fact that their Old Extent values are given in the charters of 1509 would appear to show that they existed as far back as the 13th century, when the Old Extent valuation was made. There is recorded in the Register of the Great Seal, under the year 1548, a charter of apprising by Mary Queen of Scots, which specifies the holdings on the estate of Urquhart (with which I shall now more particularly deal) in 1545, and gives the names of the occupiers. The holdings then, as in 1509, numbered 18, and they were in the occupancy of two proprietors (the Laird of Grant and Mackay of Achmonie) and 111 tenants and sub-tenants. The first roll of tenants, which I have found in Lady Seafield's charter chests, is dated 1624. The estate was then let to 64 tenants. A list, dated 1636, shows that there were in that year 110 occupiers, including sub-tenants, being almost the same as in 1545. In 1647 the whole lands were of new let to tenants. Divach was then 'ley and waist,' and no tenant could be found for it. According to an abstract rental prepared in 1765 there were 81 tenants, who had under them 70 sub-tenants and 50 cottars—making in all 201 holders of lands and houses. The statement, however, does not include the sub-tenants and cottars on Shewglie, who were probably about 10 in number. In 1770 Sir James Grant re-adjusted the various holdings, and let them under new conditions. As so let the principal holdings numbered 103, the sub-tenancies being still continued. Some of these holdings were gradually conjoined, and in 1786 there were only 100 on what is now the estate of Urquhart, including 10 tenants on the old estate of Achmonie, which Sir James acquired from Alexander Mackay in 1779. In 1808 Sir James had the whole estate surveyed by Mr George Brown, and divided into 'regular farms and lands.' Sub-tenancies were abolished except on Shewglie, which was at the time held on long lease by James Grant of Shewglie and Redcastle, and persons who had previously been sub-tenants were now, for the first time, made crofters, holding directly of the proprietor. The estate as so let in 1808 consisted of 169 holdings, including the allotments occupied by the villagers of Milton and Lewiston, but exclusive of Abriachan, which Sir James had before this time acquired. The Shewglie sub-tenants, who are described by Mr Brown as 'very poor 'people,' were soon afterwards removed by the principal tenant, and settled elsewhere in the parish, and the farm of Shewglie was taken into the principal tenant's exclusive possession. I may explain that the old arable land mentioned by Mr Macdougall, the first witness, as being in the deer forest, is on the farm of Shewglie. After the settlement of 1808 the population, which had for ages been kept down by wars and other checks already referred to, increased at a rapid rate, with the result that the holdings were gradually sub-divided, and the number of tenants greatly increased. It was consequently found necessary by the late Earl of Seafield (husband of the present proprietrix), who succeeded in 1853, to make a new survey of the estate, and to some extent to readjust and revalue the holdings. This was done by the late Mr George G. Mackay at intervals between the years 1853 and 1862. With the exception that the hill grazings of Shewglie, Lochletter, Drumclune, Glencoilty, and Ruiskich, and part of the hill grazings of Divach and Bunloit, have been afforested, and that the possessions of the small tenants of Upper Balmacaan have been added to the home farm and other places given to them, the holdings on the estate are now the same as those fixed by Mr Mackay's survey, and they consist of the following, viz.:—Home farm of Balmacaan, valued at £200 a year; the deer forest and low ground shooting, rented at £3150, but the probable value of which, after deducting rent of grouse-moor, fishing, gamekeeper's wages, and taxes paid by landlord, is £1900; 6 agricultural holdings at rents between £165 and £80; 9 agricultural holdings at rents between £80 and £30; 244 crofters under £30 (exclusive of 48 crofters on the estate of Abriachan); 47 village allotments under £5; 106 cottars, each having a house and garden. Excluding the cottars and also gamekeepers and foresters who possess land, there are thus 306 possessors of agricultural holdings on the estate of Urquhart, as against 113 in 1545, 110 in 1636, 151 in 1765, and 169 in 1808. The above numbers for 1545, 1636, and 1765 include what I have in this paper called sub-tenants. While the principal tenants have, however, from the 16th century until now held their farms under formal written leases, these sub-tenants were occupiers at will, and whatever rights or privileges they enjoyed were of a meagre and unsatisfactory

Drumnadrochit.

William Mackay.

Drumnadrochit.

William Mackay.

nature. They are still remembered in the parish by the name of *Malunaich*, that is, mailers or payers of mail or small rent, as distinguished from the *Tuath* or tacksmen; and their condition is thus described by Mr William Lorimer, who wrote a manuscript account of Urquhart for Sir James Grant in the year 1763, before there was any change on the old state of matters. 'There are few or no sub-tenants, strictly speaking; that 'is, persons who have some possessions of ground from 'the principal tenants, but there are many cottagers or 'cottars called also mealers [mailers]. A tenant has one, 'two, perhaps three of these, to whom he gives the 'liberty to build a house on his farm. This house has 'three couples with other kinds of wood, all of which 'are taken out of the laird's woods without any payment 'to him. This mealer pays to the tenant yearly a merk '[13s. 4d. Scots, or 1s. 1⅓d. stg.] for every couple for 'this house. The mealer has also a cow, to which the 'tenant allows a little grass. He has also a few sheep, 'and the tenant, for this grass, and the liberty of the 'pasture of the sheep, causes the cottar or mealer keep 'his sheep, and gets other little services from him.'

13,653. What was Lorimer?—To begin with he was tutor to Sir James Grant, and then he became his Secretary. These mailers were the people who were converted into crofters by Sir James Grant. He took great trouble to ensure that they cultivated the land in a husbandlike manner, encouraging the cultivation of lint.

13,654. Had you lint mills?—There was a little factory about three-quarters of a mile from the Inn, and that originated as a flaxmill, which appears as one of the crops grown in Urquhart as early as the 16th century. Sir James introduced turnips and rye grass, and insisted for the first time on a regular rotation of cropping. He strongly objected to emigration, and with the view of keeping the people at home he founded the villages of Lewiston and Milton, and attached allotments to them for the use of weavers, shoemakers, tailors, and other persons who were not, properly speaking, tillers of the land. His written 'scheme,' dated 1769, for the erection of Lewiston, shows that he expected the village to grow into a town. There is much evidence that, with the exception of the few more important tenants, the inhabitants of Urquhart have from a very early time been in a state of poverty. Reference has already been made to the famines with which they were from time to time visited, and to the difficulty experienced in the 14th and 15th centuries in getting tenants for the lands which were lying waste. In 1624, John Grant of Glenmoriston, Chamberlain of Urquhart, writes to the Laird of Grant from Balmacaan, to the effect that he is unable to get tenants for the laird's waste lands, in respect the inhabitants 'are all 'strukin in povertie.' We have seen that after the Revolution the tenants were for five years unable to pay any rent. After the troubles of the '45 they were also for a time unable to pay. Their destitute condition at the time of the great famine in 1783 has already been alluded to. In 1808, Mr George Brown describes the sub-tenants who occupied Shewglie and Shanval as 'very poor people,' and the occupiers of other parts of the estate are described by him as 'miserable poor 'tenants.' When the late Lord Seafield (husband of the present Countess-Dowager) succeeded to the estate in 1853, he found a great accumulation of arrears, and he became so satisfied of the tenants' inability to pay these that in 1856 he wiped them off to the amount of £7447, 16s. 1d., equal to two years' gross rental. By the year 1887 the tenants had, notwithstanding large temporary abatements made to them from time to time, and the amounts of which are contained in Appendix I. hereto, again fallen heavily in arrear, in consequence, to some extent, of the agricultural depression, which began to be seriously felt about the year 1880. In 1887 certain tenants petitioned the Countess of Seafield for further abatements, and the result was that her ladyship instructed me, as a matter of business, to visit every holding on the estate; to make full inquiry into the circumstances of each tenant, and to fix such a rent as in the whole circumstances I was of opinion he ought to pay. I accordingly inspected the holdings, in the company of a skilled surveyor and valuator, and I, thereafter, met the tenants individually, and adjusted terms of new leases in their favour. The rents were found to be somewhat unequal, and, with few exceptions, they were more or less reduced—the average reduction being 28⅔ per cent., and the total annual reduction being £1008, 1s. 1d. In addition to that permanent reduction, I there and then struck off arrears to the amount of £576, 16s. 10d. Several further reductions of rent have since been made. So far as the fixing of the rents was concerned, Lady Seafield gave me a free hand, and I confess that, while I was anxious to act with absolute fairness, as between her ladyship and her tenants, I had also a strong desire, as I still have, to make the lot of the tenants as comfortable as possible. Her ladyship was good enough to express her satisfaction with the result, and so were the tenants. The latter were, in addition to the reduction of rents, to get assistance to build houses. I had reason to hope that for the future their circumstances would be fairly comfortable, and it is, therefore, a disappointment to me that at this date arrears have accumulated on the rents as reduced in 1887 to the amount of £822, 15s. 1d. The climate of Glen-Urquhart is good, and the arable land on the whole of fair quality, although the moor lands afford but indifferent pasturage. With very few exceptions the people are as hard working and industrious as can be found. They are also, on the whole, good cultivators of the soil, and examples of excellent farming are numerous in the parish. I am therefore forced to the conclusion that their failure must be attributed, not to any fault in themselves, but to the defects of a system under which too many have been allowed to settle on the lands. The late Earl of Seafield was much attached to Glen-Urquhart and its people, and from his succession in 1853 to his death in 1881 he resided in the Glen for a great portion of each year. He took a deep interest in the people, and spent large sums of money on improvements, including the erection of houses for farmers and crofters. His policy was followed by his son, who died in 1884, and has to this day been continued by his widow, the present proprietrix. From Whitsunday 1853 to Whitsunday 1892, the sum of £8826, 5s. 8d. has been expended by the proprietor on holdings under £30 rent; £27,768, 14s. 4d. on holdings above £30 rent; £29,171, 10s. 2d. on general estate improvements, including buildings, fencing, roads, and bridges; £12,547, 16s. on Balmacaan mansion house and offices; and £26,118, 6s. 4d. on woods and plantations, making a total expenditure of £104,432, 12s. 6d. in 39 years, or an average of about £2700 per annum.

13,655. Have you given us the rents?—The rents are given in another statement.

13,656. That does not include sporting rents?—There were practically no sporting rents before 1884.

13,657. Have you any fishing rents?—No fishing rents. In short, the whole agricultural and grazing rents since 1853 have been expended on the estate, and in paying public burdens affecting the estate, and the great bulk of the money has gone directly to the inhabitants of the estate.

13,658. Do you mean in wages?—In wages. Take the forest, for instance; all the men are local men. Almost all the men that were employed in building houses and steadings were local men. My father was a contractor, and the people who worked under him were local men. In several instances, perhaps, an Inverness man came in. This expenditure does not include, I should say, the Hotel, which is separate.

13,659. *Mr Sutherland.*—I was going to suggest that you should put the rental in juxtaposition to that statement.—Well, I will do that. In addition to this, rents amounting to £7447, 16s. 1d. were, as has been said, wiped out in 1856, and rents amounting to £6194, 6s. 10d. wiped out between 1872 and 1892—over and above the permanent reduction of £1008, 1s. 1d. per annum made in 1887. My statement has already become too long, but perhaps I may be allowed

to refer in a word or two to the changes that have taken place within recent years in the condition of the people, so far as material comforts are concerned. Mr William Lorimer states in his account of Urquhart in 1763 that the tenants and mailers of his day lived in turf-roofed houses, the walls of which were constructed of timber, turf, and wicker work. That, or worse, was no doubt the condition of the houses for centuries before 1763. Sir James Grant prohibited the tenants being supplied with timber for walls, and the result was that they began to build dry-stone walls, about four or five feet in height. These, in time, gave place to stone and lime walls, and the buildings gradually improved—especially since 1853—until the old black houses have now all but disappeared, and given place to neat, comfortable cottages, stone and lime built, and roofed with slate. In their food and clothing, too, and their household economy generally, the habits of the people have greatly changed. As to food, the small farmer or crofter is no longer satisfied with the bare produce of the farm or croft as his fathers were, but buys in large quantities of tea, wheaten bread, and other stuffs. He no longer tans his own leather, or makes his own shoes (the first pair of shoes that were ever made for myself to measure were made by a crofter, and the leather was tanned by himself), no longer grows and makes his own linen, manufactures his own cloth, or for that matter distils his own whisky.

13,660. *The Chairman.*—They did that at one time?—They did. Mr Lorimer mentions that many in Glen-Urquhart did so. The old fir candles which cost his fathers nothing have given place to paraffin lamps; and, to a great extent, on the lower lands, coal has entirely superseded peat as fuel.

13,661. Among the crofters?—Yes, on the lower lands. These changes may be improvements, and, in any case, I am not here to express an opinion against them. All I wish to point out is that they involve the small tiller of the ground in a heavy household expenditure to which his forefathers were strangers—an expenditure so heavy, indeed, that, let him labour ever so hard and so long, he, as a rule, finds it difficult, if not impossible, to meet it out of the annual proceeds of his holding. (Signed) WILLIAM MACKAY.

13,662. Would you kindly tell me what is the total acreage of this estate?—I may mention that Major Grant is to make a short statement in reference to the forest, and the extent is given there. The total extent of the estate is 46,300 acres.

13,663. How much of that is in farms under £30 of rent?—It is difficult to say. The total arable is 3155 acres, including farms and crofts, according to the ordnance survey. I may mention that in 1808, when a very careful survey was made, the total arable was 2192 acres 27 poles Scots, equal to 2764 acres Imperial measure.

13,664. What I would like to get from you, if you can give me it, is this. You have given me the total area; I would like to know how much of that is under forest, how much under large farms, and how much under crofters?—I can give you the amount under forest, but I have not divided the larger farms from the smaller. The total area under arable cultivation is, ... 3,155 ac.
Moorland used as pasture, . . 10,145
Moorland in the forest, . . . 27,000
Woodlands in the forest, . . . 1,000
Woods and plantations not included in the forest, ... 5,000
46,300 ac.

13,665. That is as you have materials to give just now. You said that a previous landlord, in your opinion, allowed too many to settle on the lands?—Yes.

13,666. That remark applies to the present time, I suppose?—They gradually increased in numbers as the population increased, and the great increase took place within the last hundred years.

13,667. Would you say that the district is congested at present?—Yes, I would; I should like to see a good many of the smaller crofts joined.

13,668. Consolidation of holdings?—Consolidation of holdings.

13,669. In your opinion that would be to the immediate benefit of the occupant?—It would.

13,670. How would you dispose of the outgoing tenants?—I have great difficulty in reference to that.

13,671. I suppose you share the traditional opinion of the estate against emigration?—No, my lord, I do not. If I were a young man I should go abroad tomorrow.

13,672. That is yourself individually; but, as a cure for the evil, would you not rather see the people who are removed from holdings in order to consolidation afforded other holdings in the neighbourhood if the land could be got?—If sufficient land could be got to make them comfortable, without interfering with the rights of other persons, I should certainly prefer to see the people settled in Glen-Urquhart.

13,673. Now, without discussing the question of existing rights with which we are not immediately concerned, are you of opinion that to some extent at least there is such land?—I think there is no land that can be cultivated by crofters profitably.

13,674. Are you of opinion that there is such land capable of advantageous occupancy?—I am perfectly satisfied that there is no land in Glen-Urquhart capable of advantageous occupancy, except, of course, what is already occupied, what is already in the hands of farmers or crofters.

13,675. But, taking lands in the hands of farmers, but within the terms of the remit, is it your opinion that there is such land capable of advantageous occupancy by crofters?—Well, I think it is very possible that you might divide the larger arable farms, but I don't think it would be to the benefit of the country.

13,676. That is another question I am quite willing to put to you; but would it be to the advantage of the crofters?—I don't think it would; my experience of the crofters in Glen-Urquhart is that it would be very much better for them not to have small holdings.

13,677. But I understand you are of opinion that there is congestion which would be relieved by consolidation?—Yes.

13,678. Don't you think that the persons who might be taken away from these holdings with a view to consolidation could be settled in neighbouring holdings to their advantage upon grazing lands?—No, I do not see where you could put them. I do not see where you could possibly get arable lands for them. You could get grazing lands possibly by taking the forest, but along with the grazing lands you must have considerable arable lands for crofts.

13,679. But I am taking the case of grazing lands belonging to the farms. Could not these people be settled on grazing lands belonging to the farms, easily capable of being made arable, with corresponding grass?—I think your lordship will find, when you go over the grazings attached to the arable lands, that there is no land capable of being reclaimed with any advantage.

13,680. Of being reclaimed?—Being converted into arable land.

13,681. I don't know the glen,—I have never been in it; but don't you think there is land forming part of the grazing lands of these farms easily capable of being rendered arable?—No.

13,682. You heard a good deal of evidence with regard to extension of grazings?—Yes.

13,683. Is it your opinion that such an extension of grazings, assuming that it could be got in some legitimate manner, would be to the advantage of those obtaining it?—I believe that a small extension of grazings, in the case of Wester Bunloit, would be to their advantage if it could be got.

13,684. You are of opinion they are in need of it?—I don't think they are in need of it; I think they are doing pretty well as they are, but it would certainly be to their advantage. I might like to get a little more land myself, but I am not in need of it.

Drumnadrochit.

William Mackay.

13,685. May I take you as putting in a claim?—If other claims are to be put in, I may do so; I am a crofter on the estate, my lord.

13,686. What is the extent of the farm of Balmacaan?—I am afraid I cannot tell you at present. It is valued at £200, I may say.

13,687. Could you tell me, roughly, how much is arable and how much grazing?—I am afraid I cannot.

13,688. Can you give me the stock it carries at present, or is supposed to carry?—Major Grant can do that.

13,689. I understand you leave to him the evidence to be given with regard to the forest?—Yes, the forest and the home farm.

13,690. You made a re-valuation at the special request of Lady Seafield some years ago?—In 1887 and 1888.

13,691. And you made a special inquiry with skilled aid into each individual case?—Yes, I visited every holding, and had a meeting with every farmer and crofter.

13,692. May I venture to ask what was your rate arable, your average rate in fixing the new rents?—Well, it varied very much. I can give you instances. Your lordship will keep in view that the altitude here varies from about 50 feet above sea-level to 800 or 900, so that, of course, the quality of the land varies, and the climate varies. Take Balchraggan, which is about half way up, I valued it at 12s. 6d. an acre, the arable land.

13,693. Give us one or two other instances?—I valued the arable land of Breackry Reach, which is about the top, at 9s. per acre. I valued the arable land of Drumcore, which is also near the top, at 8s. per acre. Garbeg, which is very high, I valued at 9s. per acre. I will see whether I can get any of the low ground valuations. Milton Brae crofts, one of which Mr Macdougall, your first witness has, I valued at 10s. 6d. per acre.

13,694. Where is it?—At Milton, just immediately behind the village of Milton.

13,695–6. What is the altitude?—Perhaps 100 feet above sea-level. These are the Milton crofts generally; I don't know which one he got. Going further up the glen we have Polmaily, some of it at 9s. an acre and some at 8s.; Camault, which is up about 600 feet, I valued at 7s. 6d. per acre; William Macmillan, Corrish, about the same altitude, but better land apparently, 10s. 6d. per acre; Lochletter, which is one of the old large farms, 12s. per acre the most of it, and a few hard pieces at 7s. 6d.; Shewglie, which you have heard a lot about, I valued 48 acres of it at 14s. and the remainder, about 100 acres, at 10s.

13,697. May we take the figures you have given us as representing the lowest and the highest?—I have not given you the lowest yet, I think.

13,698. You have given us nothing lower than 7s. 6d.—I wanted to see the factor's farm. We fixed Drumbuie at £56 without mentioning the rate. But in the case of the Lewiston lots,—the allotments of the tenants, the highest is 14s. an acre, and the lowest is 12s. 6d.

13,699. Perhaps we may take these figures as fairly representative?—I think so; the Lots are the lowest in altitude.

13,700. What is the average altitude of the whole? They vary, of course?—I should say that the average is about 400 feet.

13,701. What is the average rent per sheep, can you tell me?—No, we just valued the pasture at so much per acre, but I may mention that the pasture of Glen-Urquhart is not good,—I think the tenants will all agree with me there, especially on the north side.

13,702. I take it from these figures that when you fixed these valuations it was in contemplation of the tenants being able to cultivate their holdings to profit?—Certainly; I thought they could do so, except on the very small holdings where they were expected to go away and earn wages elsewhere.

13,703. In a number they were not supposed to supplement their earnings from the croft by labour elsewhere?—Roughly speaking, we thought that if a man had 28 or 30 acres of arable land he ought to support himself on the holding.

Drumnadrochit.

William Mackay.

13,704. Don't you think an extension of that system might result in profitable cultivation?—That is what I have been suggesting,—that two crofts should be consolidated into one. You cannot extend the arable land; it must be a work of consolidation entirely.

13,705. Can there not be combined with consolidation an extension of holdings?—Not an extension of arable land.

13,706. You think there is no room?—Not to any appreciable extent of arable land. I may explain that by saying that this has been a well-inhabited glen always, and every available inch of land suitable for arable has been reclaimed.

13,707. Then is your view this, that assuming the process of consolidation to be adopted, the only course for those who are obliged to remove is to go somewhere else altogether?—Well, of course, if—

13,708. I am not suggesting that, but is that an inevitable inference?—Unless they are satisfied with being cottars.

13,709. Have the farmers who are above the rents of crofters not during the last twenty or thirty years considerably extended their arable by reclaiming land?—No. There have been, of course, extensions here and there, but I find that the total extensions of arable land from 1808 down to this date are about 400 acres, including what had been reclaimed by proprietors, farmers, and crofters.

13,710. For nearly a century?—Nearly a century. I will give you the exact figures. In 1808 the total arable was 2764 acres, and now the total arable is 3155 acres, so that there is less than 400 acres of an increase in the century.

13,711. I must put it to you in this form. Is there no part of the grazing land in the farm of Balmacaan, old arable capable of being cultivated?—I don't think there is any old arable on the farm of Balmacaan.

13,712. You think there is none?—There is none except the deer park, and that is only a few acres.—About 10.

13,713. But old arable?—That is old arable.

13,714. You say that the present arrears of rent amount to £822, 15s. 1d.?—Yes.

13,715. As I understood you, you do not put that down to the result of outside influences?—Well, no, I do not. I think as I have already said—that it is very likely the result of depression in farming, and of the arable holdings being too small.

13,716. Is there any holding in the glen at present that comes up to your notion of an ideal croft, in point of area?—I think there are several. This is the draft of my Report in 1888; perhaps I may be allowed to refer to it.

13,717. Certainly?—There is a very nice holding at Garbeg, occupied by John Cumming, who has got 28 acres arable and a share of outrun.

13,718. And what is his rent?—His rent used to be £32, but I reduced it to £25.

13,719. And is he in arrear?—I don't think so.

13,720. Then you admit, or rather you have stated substantively, that there exists an undesirable state of matters here, with regard to the size of the holdings at any rate?—With regard to the size of the smaller crofts.

13,721. How would you remedy that?—I have no remedy at all to suggest, except that they should be weeded out. I know it is a very difficult thing to do, and I should not like to be the one to have to do it.

13,722. And *quoad ultra*, you don't explain?—I don't explain.

13,723. *Mr Shaw Stewart.*—Have you any opinion as to club farms, as to whether they are advisable, or suitable, or advantageous?—There are no club farms proper in Glen-Urquhart, or on any of the estates with which I have to do; but I have had to do with club farms, and I am decidedly of opinion that they are most undesirable.

13,724. Would you mind stating shortly what your reasons are?—My reason is simply this, that with club farms it is impossible to get the tenants to agree on all

Drumnadrochit.

William Mackay.

occasions. I have been acting for one or two club farmers myself during the last two or three years as a solicitor. They had quarrelled with the result that they have practically ruined themselves in litigation. That is one instance. There is another instance in this glen,—it is not quite a club farm, but they have the moor in common, and each person is entitled to so many cattle, so many sheep, and so many horses. One man was better off than his neighbours, and he put too many beasts on, and they quarrelled. For the last fifteen years I have never been out of difficulty with regard to that modified club farm.

13,725. That exists at the present time?—That exists at the present time.

13,726. *Mr Gordon.*—I would like to get your notion about this club farm, because we have heard a great deal about it in different quarters. The general impression is that a system of club farming is a decided advantage, and although these disagreements have occurred in Glen-Urquhart, it has been found in several other places we have been in that they have agreed and that a properly constituted farm has been worked very well. They give their reasons thus far, that it enabled them to keep a better class of stock by combining, and a better size both for the cattle and the sheep; that the sheep were better marketed, and that fair play existed all round,—that is, that the stock belonged to no special individual, and no man got the better of his neighbour. Now do you think still that that state of matters could be carried on here?—I certainly think that it would be a mistake to form club farms in Glen-Urquhart. On the other hand, I think that the present system of each tenant having his own arable land, and having also his own separate stock, but the stock grazed on a common moor, is the best. I am thoroughly of opinion that each tenant ought to have his own stock exclusively. My experience,—I have only two cases in view, and they were not on this estate excepting one which I might call a modified system,—is that a feeling of jealousy arises among the club farmers; one man undertakes perhaps too much.

13,727. Takes too much?—Undertakes too much, perhaps takes too much too, but he undertakes too much, and a feeling of jealousy arises, and there is unpleasantness, and as I know in one case, not only quarrels, but ruinous litigation.

13,728. That may proceed possibly from bad management, but certainly if the club farm system is properly carried out it is better for the tenant and better for the landlord. If you have twenty people with individual rights in a common grazing, you have these twenty people going at will all over the place, each one looking after his own cattle and sheep?—No, I beg your pardon. In Bunloit, where I remember the old modified club farm, they had one shepherd; they were not allowed to do that sort of thing.

13,729. But there is nothing to prevent them except by mutual agreement?—They will do that in any case; if they are club farmers, they like to have a 'stravaig' over the whole place.

13,730. But if they are club farmers, it is their duty to appoint a committee who in turn appoint a shepherd. Certainly, the evidence we have had hitherto has been very much in favour of club farms.—Well, I have thought of the matter of club farms for the last eighteen years,—since I have had anything to do with the management of estates,—and I certainly think the system is a mistake. If I had to allocate the land anew, I should certainly not encourage any number to take a club stock. [*The Chairman.*—Would you not concede this, that the principle is good if fully and fairly carried out?—If human nature were perfect, it might be, but with the present state of human nature there are sure to be disputes.]

13,731. Have you considered the Act of Parliament in reference to this matter, Mr Munro-Ferguson's Act?—I have considered it.

13,732. That Act provides for a specific and general management of club stock?—I know, and I will go farther back than that. You mentioned that if it was not a club stock, a general stock, one tenant might be stronger than his neighbours and might overstock his share, to the detriment and loss of his neighbours. Well, I found in the Chisholm charter chest, a regulation by the baron bailie of Erchless, dated early in the 17th century, against that; and he ordained that no joint tenant of a common moor shall put more beasts on the moor than he is entitled to by his souming, and that if he does, he is to pay I really don't remember how many rents for each beast. That took place in the 17th century, and the same difficulty would be experienced now.

13,733. The difficulty would be to enforce the payment. I am sorry we cannot agree on that matter.—I am very sorry.

13,734. Would you be kind enough to explain to the Commission what your opinion is as to the proper size of a holding on which a man can subsist within the boundaries of his croft?—Very much depends upon the climate, upon the altitude, and upon the quality of the land; but my own idea, judging from Glen-Urquhart, is that the arable should extend to 25 or even 30 acres,—30 acres I should like,—and a sufficient quantity of pasture to enable the man to keep two small horses, and perhaps four or five cows, and a few sheep—twenty-five to fifty sheep.

13,735. Would you rather put it in the form of a valuation, that is to say of a rental?—Well, it is exceedingly difficult to do; I will tell you exactly what I did.

13,736. But in a general way, would it be about a £20 value?—I should be inclined to put a little more than that upon it; perhaps £25.

13,737. You attribute the inability of these small tenants to pay their rents to overcrowding?—To a great extent. Of course, within the last few years there has been considerable depression.

13,738. You assume that it is owing to the number, that is to say, that it is the upkeep of the tenant and his family which requires a good part of the free income of the croft to maintain them?—I have no doubt that is a very high item.

13,739. Is that, in the main, the result of overcrowding?—That is the main cause.

13,740. Do you suppose that these crofters, as a rule, can pay the same rents as tacksmen do for the land?—As a large farmer?

13,741. Yes?—Well, on the whole, I don't think they can.

13,742. Not if they are overcrowded?—Not if they are overcrowded.

13,743. And you think it would require a holding of 25 acres arable land before they could pay the same rent?—On the average a man requires 25 acres of fair land to occupy himself fully.

13,744. *The Chairman.*—And you would exact less rent from that man than from the neighbouring large farmer on similar ground?—Well, very much depends upon the land; I don't know that I would exact much less for that size; I think a man ought to pay his way with a holding of that size.

13,745. The free rental, after maintaining himself and his family, would be sufficient to pay the rent?—Certainly; but in a croft under 25 acres the man cannot be employed all the year round; he cannot support himself, and must go outside; he must get labour elsewhere, and eke out, so to speak, the proceeds of his croft.

13,746. *Mr Forsyth.*—Taking the case of the smaller crofter, of which we have just been speaking, the man who must seek labour outside to assist him to live, have you any ideas as to how the rent should be fixed in his case?—In the larger crofts or small farms the man can make his living entirely off his holding, and can afford to pay a certain rent which is governed more or less by the demand for the holding; but how is it in the case of the smaller crofts that you would value them?—I should say that the same rule should apply; you should take the value of the land irrespective of the question whether the man can live upon it or not; take the value of the land, and fix that as the rent.

13,747. *Mr Sutherland.*—You have given us some

Drumnadrochit

William Mackay.

very interesting statements of a historical nature, and though these may not be very germane to our inquiry. —I was afraid they might not be.

13,748. I have no objection to it at all, and I suppose none of the other commissioners have, but as the points have been raised I would like to ask a question or two regarding Highland history, on which you differ in some respects from the recognised authorities? —I do in some points.

13,749. I take it that your statement was given from the landlords' point of view?—Not at all; it is founded upon my own independent point of view.

13,750. Founded upon documents that you discovered in the possession of landlords?—And on the public records.

13,751. Which were entirely records relating to the relations between landlord and tenant?—Quite so.

13,752. But you no doubt admit that outside the range of these there are large and ample materials from which to make deductions as valuable as your own?—I have not been making deductions; I have been stating facts.

13,753. And making deductions therefrom; otherwise the statement would not be of very much use?—I don't know that I have made any deductions.

13,754. Did you not intend us to infer something regarding the land tenure of the people in the old times? —I wished you to infer,—at least, I infer myself—from the division of the estate into 'dabhachs' at the very outset, that there were ten dabhachs or ten large holdings. I think that is the only inference I draw throughout the whole paper; all my other statements are stated as facts.

13,755. You made some remarks regarding rights that the people had to land,—that they were conceded entirely by the landlord, and I presume that that belief was founded upon these documents that you have referred to?—I don't remember that I made any statements as to the rights of the people to the land.

13,756. I think you said that there were rights conceded to them?—Do you mean since 1808.

13,757. I could not specify the time.—The only rights conceded to them were in 1808, when the old cottars or sub-tenants were made crofters.

13,758. But the very fact of something having been conceded to them presupposes that the people had not these rights?—I don't know that I would call it a concession; it was an ordinary transaction; they were offered the lands at so much rent, and they took it.

13,759. But that is coming down to more modern times?—In 1808, but I have not referred, I think,—my memory may be at fault, but I don't think I have referred to any concession either on the part of the proprietor to the tenants, or of the tenants to the proprietor.

13,760. If you are content to modify it to that extent, I have no objection. You mentioned the word '*dabhach*;' are you aware of the interpretation which Skene and other authorities put upon the word *dabhach*?—Yes.

13,761. And Cosmo Innes?—Yes, but I am perfectly satisfied they are wrong. This is an Irish word, and the greatest authorities on the Irish language give *dabhach* as a vat, and we know it as '*doch*.'

13,762. But you are aware that it is stated by these writers that the word was introduced into this country from the valuation put on the land in the Western Highlands for the purpose of paying tribute to the Scandinavians?—But you find no *dabhachs* on the west coast at all; they are all on the east coast and inland. If I remember well Skene is entirely wrong, and Cosmo Innes entirely at sea. One guesses that it was the land that might be ploughed by two horses, *da each;* and another one suggests that it might mean the land that could be ploughed by an ox, *damh-ach*, but the fact is the thing is decided. I may mention it is a well known word in Ireland.

13,763. Who decided it,—yourself?—Stokes and other Irish authorities. I may mention,—I don't want to put myself on the same level as Stokes,—but that has been my own idea for many years.

13,764. You stated with regard to the '*tuath*' that the alternative name for him was tacksman. May I ask your authority for that?—A tacksman is a man who holds land under a tack or lease,—you may, if you like, call him a leaseman.

Drumnadrochit.

William Mackay.

13,765. But you stated that '*tuath*' was another name for tacksman; I want to know on what authority you made that statement?—I think I put it in this way, that the '*tuath*' were the larger tenants, a man might yet be a '*tuath*,' a member of '*tuath*,' without being a tacksman. If he had a large farm from year to year he might be a member of '*tuath*'; a tenant is never a tacksman without a lease or tack.

13,766. You know the use of the word in ancient Irish literature,—the '*tuath*.' Do you mean to tell me that there were tacksmen in Ireland?—It is not the same word at all.

13,767. You are aware,—I don't know whether it is the case here,—but in the part of the country I belong to I never heard the word '*tuath*' applied to the tacksman, but to the small holder?—Well, in Glen-Urquhart it is always applied to the large holders only.

13,768. Are you not aware that the word '*tuath*' is applied to what is now known as the crofter?—Not at all; it is the very reverse; '*tuath*' is the large farmer and '*màlanach*' is a small farmer.

13,769. I was coming to that. I am not ignorant of the Gaelic language, and I never heard that word.—You know that the Gaelic word for rent is '*mal*.'

13,770. I know that there is no Gaelic word for rent, and that the Norman-French word you give has always been used. You quoted Mr Lorimer; do you know what his country is?—Morayshire.

13,771. And his knowledge of Gaelic is complete no doubt?—In Morayshire the knowledge of Gaelic was in his time very extensive.

13,772. But, as a matter of fact, do you know that Lorimer was an authority equal to those I have mentioned?—I know that Mr Lorimer in stating his facts appears to have recorded exactly what he saw with his own eyes; he did not go and theorise, but simply saw certain things, and reported them to his chief.

13,773. He probably would be as good an authority upon the derivation and meaning of Gaelic words as we would be if we went to France?—Not at all, he lived all his days in Castle Grant in Morayshire. He went with Sir James Grant as a young man, and he lived for about fifty or sixty years in this centre of the Highlands (Castle Grant), where very little but Gaelic was spoken at that time.

13,774. As a matter of fact, have you any knowledge that he could speak Gaelic at all or understand the language?—None at all, but I don't know that such knowledge was necessary to enable him to count three couples in a house, and to find out what a mailer had to pay.

13,775. But you see you are introducing a word which is not in Gaelic?—Which word?

13,776. '*Màl?*'—Well, it is the word applied to rent.

13,777. But you say this word was introduced into the Gaelic language in the day of that writer?—Not at all, it was long before his day. He heard the word as it was applied in his day, and he simply reports that fact.

13,778. So then you speak of the people in Glen-Urquhart at that time in certain positions as these '*màlanaich?*'—Certainly. I have heard my mother, who was the daughter of the tenant of Rusgich, mention a dozen times about the '*màlanaich*.'

13,779. You have a knowledge of the Highlands outside Glen-Urquhart?—Yes.

13,780. Did you ever hear '*màlanaich*' so applied outside this district?—Yes, by Sir Kenneth Mackenzie of Gairloch. I told it to him, and he said:—'Well, I 'could never make out what that word was.'

13,781. Is he a Gaelic speaking gentleman?—Certainly.

13,782. Where did he hear it?—In Gairloch, I presume, possibly he may have heard it in many places.

13,783. You made a general statement as to the changes that had occurred, which were no doubt due to military circumstances and otherwise; were you struck with the facility with which the land could be conveyed

from one party to another? I have no doubt you were. —I was particularly struck with the facility with which the lands in Glen-Urquhart have been changed from one party to another within the last three hundred years. The Lairds of Grant were particularly careful to enter into long leases,—I can show you some of them here,—and every twenty years, every nineteen years, there was almost a complete change on many of the farms. There were new leases given when new tenants took the farms and when old tenents renewed their bargains.

13,784. How do you account for the great facility with which the lands were transferred?—Simply because very likely the man who offered the highest rent, and who proved himself likely to be the best tenant, would get the land. It was just exactly in the same manner as if you were selling a cow or a horse.

13,785. And who was the party selling?—The landlord.

13,786. The landlord?—Yes.

13,787. Was it the landlord that transferred the lands from Randolph, Earl of Moray?—I beg your pardon, you are referring to the change in ownership?

13,788. Yes.—I, on the other hand, was referring to the change in tenantry.

13,789. How then do you explain that?—Would you kindly repeat your question?

13,790. You stated that the lands were passed over in succession from Sir Alan Durward [Quentin Durward] to some other person in the time of Robert the Bruce, and ultimately to others of whom the Earl of Seafield was one?—Yes.

13,791. How do you account for these transfers of land?—Well, I account for it in this way. The titles show it distinctly. In the case of Sir Alan Durward the Crown granted the land to himself and his heirs male. He died in 1275, I think, leaving only daughters, consequently, according to the Feudal System, the lands reverted to the King. Very well, the King held the lands, he put the Cummings of Badenoch into possession until the time of Robert the Bruce, and then he granted a charter of the lands to Thomas Randolph, the famous Earl of Moray, and his heirs male. Randolph had two sons, both of whom were killed in battle unmarried and without children, and, of course, the destination failed, and the lands again reverted to the Crown. The same thing went on until they were given to the Laird of Grant without any restriction as to succession.

13,792. Oh, indeed, or any restriction as to rent?—Yes, he had to pay a rent of £101 to the Crown, and he pays that yet.

13,793. He pays that yet; in what form?—He pays it in money.

13,794. What is it called?—Feu-duty.

13,795. And you stated, I think, that some of them held it on condition that they should pay a certain amount per annum?—Yes, £101.

13,796. And as to the conditions upon which they are held now, this £101 is still being paid annually?—Still being paid, and in addition to that there is what we call a casualty payable when there is a change in the succession, and the Crown gets the benefit of that.

13,797. Who is the official who gets payment of that?—The Crown Receiver in Edinburgh.

13,798. I wish to ask you with regard to those reductions of rent that were made and your valuation of the land in 1887. Of course, I am not going to question your competency as a valuator?—Well, I had skilled assistance.

13,799. You had skilled assistance, doubtless. Can you account for the reduction taking place in 1887 more than in any other year?—I cannot, except that there was a great depression for several years beginning about 1878, and everybody, large farmers and small, were getting reductions. I put in a statement, which shows the reductions given annually, from the year 1872–3, £40, to 1891–2, £26, 13s. That shows my own great reduction in 1887–8, £1584, 17s. 11d.

13,800. Twenty eight per cent. you stated?—Yes.

13,801. There is this point; I may be wrong, but what I gathered from your statement was that in 1887 certain tenants-at-will were converted into leaseholders?—They were not tenants-at-will, except between 1882 and 1887. The new leases were granted to the people in Bunloit in 1882, and to the rest of the glen in 1887.

13,802. The tenants of Urquhart have always been under lease?—There was a slight interval, but that was merely the delay in preparing the documents. The lands were let and the conditions fixed before 1882.

13,803. They would be in this position, would they not, if, after the passing of the Crofters Act in 1886, they had applied to the Crofters Commission they would have their rents fixed by them and they would be under the Crofters Act?—Some of them.

13,804. Can you tell us what proportion of them would be in that position?—A considerable number; I do not know the number, but I should say the bulk of them; certainly, the great majority of them were in that position.

13,805. Is the result of that, then, that those crofters to whom you refer are now changed into leaseholders and consequently outside the Crofters Act?—I do not mean to express a legal opinion upon a question like that, but it is certainly the result that they are leaseholders now. But I may mention that I put it to them 'You can go to the Crofters Commission or you 'can take my valuation,' and without exception they all took my valuation. It was a very good thing for them, for a great deal of money has since been expended on their holdings by the proprietor.

13,806. I think you indicated that you can give us no assistance with regard to finding land suitable for cultivation and occupation by crofters on this estate?—Yes, I said so.

13,807. And you said that the reason was that the limit of profitable cultivation is, in your opinion, reached?—Reached and gone too high. The limit has been exceeded so far that since 1887 one or two crofting holdings have been discontinued as arable land.

13,808. Of their own free will?—Of their own free will they have given up cultivating these crofts and they are now under sheep.

13,809. And the other reason you gave, I suppose as a concurrent reason, was that there were too many people on the land?—Yes, some of the crofts are too small.

13,810. But is the population too large in Balmacaan forest, do you think?—There is a very considerable population of deer in Balmacaan forest. The deer is the only animal perhaps, except rabbits, that goes into it or that lives in it; man cannot.

13,811. But man did live in it?—Never; there was not a house in Balmacaan forest.

13,812. That is not the evidence we heard to-day?—Yes. One man said that there was one house at the east end of Balmacaan forest where the deer park is now; but I say, and you can take my word for it, that no person except one or two shepherds were removed from the deer forest.

13,813. It is a question between a deer park and a deer forest?—There is a small park which was, until a few years ago, part of the home farm.

13,814. Do you not believe that the occupation of grazing attached to arable land would make the arable land more valuable to the holder?—Well, at present, I do not think it would, because you won't get for the cow what will winter her for more than three months. It would not pay. I sold a calf the other day for 10s.

13,815. And is that the average price?—That is the average price at this time of the year.

13,816. And you think it would not be to the benefit of the people in Lots to have grazing?—I do not say so; every man that has a croft should have a little outrun.

13,817. How much?—Well, I have given my view.

13,818. Your view is given practically because I presume you have had some say in the matter of what they have now?—I had the whole say in the settlement of 1887.

13,819. So that what you have done is the best expression of your opinion?—Yes. In fact, they had the pasture before my time.

Drumnadrochit. William Mackay.

13,820. And they had more pasture before?—The Bunloit people only.

13,821. And you think it was to their advantage that it should have been taken away from them?—It was only of the annual value of £22; but I do not think it was to their advantage.

13,822. How do you reconcile that with your statement that it was to their advantage to have it taken from them?—I did not say so.

13,823. How much do you say is to their advantage?—I should say that a model farm of 25 acres might have an outrun of 100 acres including the grazing.

13,824. But is it not the fact that these people had grazing and that their grazing has been curtailed?—They had, but they have got very good grazing still.

13,825. So is it down to what you think is right now?—I think it is still enough. I would remind you of this, that Shewglie was never a crofting place; the moor of Shewglie was always attached to a large farm for the last three hundred years; Lochletter the same; Drumclune the same; Divach the same; Glencoilty the same. All these are large farms. The only crofter township that lost grazing was Bunloit—Wester Bunloit.

13,826. Is that an exception to your general statement?—I have already said that I would have no objection to see the Bunloit people have a little more grazing; but I think they are fairly comfortable.

13,827. But you heard what they had to say here to-day?—Yes.

13,828. And you have no reason to doubt it represented their opinions?—I know it does.

13,829. Do you think in the face of that that it would be desirable that the amount of pasture they desire should be given?—If that could be given without hurting the forest, without hurting the interest of other people, I do not know that any great harm would be done.

13,830. Your first interest is to preserve the forest?—Not the first; there are other interests.

13,831. But do not you think the interests of the people are of more importance than the preservation of the deer forest?—Certainly, but if you can do justice to the people and to the proprietor at the same time, it would be all right. I should like immensely to get a big slice of the deer forest; but I do not think I should be very likely to get it without injuring Lady Seafield.

13,832. You are back to where you were; that because it cannot be got without taking it from the deer forest, you think it should remain where it is?—I do not know where it could be taken from the deer forest without injuring it.

13,833. And if it could, you would have no objection?—Not the slightest.

13,834. Then you said something about club farms, and you said that the objection you had to them was that some people who had a club farm, to your knowledge, did not agree as to the working of it?—Yes, two cases came within my own experience and I know of several cases where they did not agree.

13,835. And you attribute it to the faulty construction of human nature?—Yes, I would very likely quarrel myself if I was one of them.

13,836. But, taking human nature as we find it, don't you think reasonable rules could be made that there would be no quarrel?—You can't make rules which will prevent quarrelling.

13,837. You are aware that an Act of Parliament has been passed regulating these matters?—And I am aware that it is practically waste paper.

13,838. And, as a matter of fact, do you think crofters are more likely to quarrel than others?—No; I have quarrelled with people who were concerned with me.

13,839. But that is no reason why a club farm should not be established more than any other business in which men are associated?—Of course, if it is necessary to establish a club farm, then by all means have it. But what I say is that it is a most objectionable system. Give them the land that would be used for the club farm, but give each his own stock and there will be no quarrelling—at least not so much.

13,840. Apply that to Bunloit; look at the great waste of management there in each man attending to his own few sheep?—Oh, they don't do that; there is one shepherd.

13,841. But that is a club farm, is it not?—No, if you call that a club farm, I will agree with you at once. The stock belongs to each crofter individually.

13,842. But the objection which has been urged in our hearing everywhere is that the stock would be worse when it belongs to persons who can only have small quantities?—Well, there is something in that; there is no doubt that is a difficulty, but you can very easily arrange to have fresh blood brought in every second or third year just as in a club farm. I believe the Bunloit people used to have their common bull and their common ram just as well as their common shepherd.

13,843. Just one question with regard to the periods of distress you referred to. Do you know if there was distress at any time in Glen-Urquhart when it was not common all over Scotland?—I can't tell you about those old periods of distress. I can only say that these letters and documents I have referred to, show that there was distress in Glen-Urquhart. I know that in 1782 there was distress all over the north of Scotland.

13,844. But a gentleman of your wide reading must have read of this distress being in the Lowlands also at that time?—There have been distresses there, of course.

13,845. Were they coincident in date?—I can't tell you, but in the south of Scotland they were just as badly off under the small holding system in the Border counties as they are now in the Highlands.

13,846. Which shows, does it not, that a small holding, or the comfort in very small holdings, does not depend upon the latitude at all, but on the fact of its being too small?—Oh, the Lowlands of Glen-Urquhart are as fertile a place as you can get in the south of Scotland.

13,847. You see no reason to believe that the periods of distress were not common all over the country?—I think it is very likely.

13,848. You may take it that they extended as far south as Ayrshire; I have been reading of it quite recently, and I find the distress was very general, extending even to Ayrshire?—Of course, I did not refer to the periods of distress to show what they would be in future; I simply showed the condition in which the people lived.

13,849. A historical fact?—A historical fact.

13,850. But you are quite alive to the fact that with the superior facilities there are now for communication, and from other causes, they would be less likely to occur?—I am alive to the fact that, if the crop in this country fails, it is more easy now to get provisions from elsewhere, but then that does not help the croft.

13,851. Now, with regard to that point, can you tell me how much of the bread used in this locality is grown in the locality?—How do you mean?

13,852. Do the people live upon bread that is raised here?—No, you will find, if you watch the steamer at Temple Pier, hundreds and hundreds of bolls of meal coming in.

13,853. And perhaps bread?—And perhaps bread.

13,854. Does the bread eaten in Inverness grow in the neighbourhood of Inverness?—No, but they do not cultivate the High Street of Inverness.

13,855. The neighbourhood of Inverness, I said?—No, not exactly.

13,856. So that that would not apply to Glen-Urquhart any more than to Inverness as an objection to the people settling in the glen?—You misunderstood me. I simply referred to the quantity of bread purchased as an item of the additional expense which the crofter has now to meet, compared with formerly. I don't blame him for taking it at all; if he thinks that biscuit is better than oatcake, I don't agree with him, but that is his lookout. I am only pointing out that he is making this expenditure which his father and grandfather knew nothing of, and he has to pay for it out of the proceeds of a small croft. I say that if a man has any family at all, he can't do it.

13,857. But don't you see at the same time he is growing corn and selling it?—Not in Glen-Urquhart, I

Drumnadrochit. William Mackay.

am sorry to say; not much. The crofter here does not sell much; he does not have enough for himself.

13,858. But the general argument against it would not hold, namely, that it would not grow bread that could be eaten by the people themselves?—Oh, Glen-Urquhart should grow very good bread.

13,859. Yes, but as a matter of fact it does not, and it is better for them to eat wheat imported from America?—They do it.

13,860. But as a matter of fact, it is better for them?—I don't think it is better for them. It may be done, but it is not better.

13,861. My point is that it cannot be used as an argument specially applicable to the Highlands, that instead of eating the bread of their own raising, they eat the bread grown in America?—Certainly; but you have to provide the wherewithall to buy that bread, and where are you to get the money?

13,862. It comes from the proceeds of the corn they sell?—They don't sell corn in Glen-Urquhart; they sell potatoes.

13,863. *Mr Maccallum.*—I notice that you say you are dissatisfied with the position of the crofters; they have not been able to pay their rents?—I did not say I was dissatisfied; I said I was a little disappointed at the result of what I thought my very liberal valuation.

13,864. You are disappointed with their condition?—Yes.

13,865. And the only remedy you point out is consolidation of holdings and emigration of the people?—I did not suggest emigration.

13,866. But you can show us no other way of remedying the present state of matters?—I should like to see Sir James Grant's idea of Lewiston becoming a large town carried out. Lewiston is a village down here, and there was a most elaborate scheme proposed about a hundred years ago for making it a town.

13,867. But seeing that agriculture is the great means of livelihood here, the only remedy must be emigration of the people, I suppose?—There are a great many artizans here, carpenters, shoemakers, masons. A good many of them go to the south, they go to Inverness and they do a good deal of work here. They have nothing to do with agriculture.

13,868. Do you think the reason they did not succeed is that there were too many on the land?—Too many on the crofts. The crofts, as a rule, are too small; many of them are very small.

13,869. And there is no room to be found for them on this estate?—No, I should like to see the smaller crofts extended.

13,870. And, therefore, the only thing that could be done would be that they would have to leave the parish?—Well, they might become cottars and work here.

13,871. Would that not be worse?—I do not think so; I think the cottars are very much better off than the small crofters.

13,872. Is your remedy that they should become cottars?—I have no remedy. I simply wish to point out that there is a difficulty in the present system, that many of the crofts are too small. Of course, you can cure that by the people going abroad or becoming cottars, artizans.

13,873. Well, is there a field for them becoming artizans there?—Like the people of Inverness they will have to go over the country where work is to be had. There is certainly a field for masons and carpenters in the district.

13,874. Do you really think that the surplus crofter population might live comfortably in this glen without land?—I do not know that I quite follow you.

13,875. Do you think that the surplus crofter population might live here as artizans comfortably without land?—Well, I know that the cottars in Glen-Urquhart just now, in Milton and Drumnadrochit and Lewiston, are, on the whole, in very good circumstances.

13,876. Is there room for more of them?—Yes, you can build all the way down to Loch Ness.

13,877. Well, they must either emigrate or become artizans?—I don't think there is 'must' in the matter; perhaps they would prefer to work out their own redemption as they are.

Drumnadrochit. William Mackay.

13,878. You do not think that emigration is a very satisfactory remedy?—Oh yes, and I will advise my boys when they get up to emigrate. My own brothers have done so and I am sorry I did not do it myself.

13,879. Emigration, you think, is a very good remedy?—Very good.

13,880. You have shown us that the population is decreasing at an ever accelerated rate?—Since the year 1851.

13,881. For instance, there has been a diminution of 402 in the last decade?—Yes.

13,882. Now, if emigration were to go on at any great rate, there would be a still more accelerated decrease in the population?—Well, my own idea is that the decrease in the population will very likely go on until things will correct themselves, and then it will stop.

13,883. How low would you like the population to come to?—To about what it was a hundred years ago—1600.

13,884. And you think that would be a satisfactory condition of affairs?—I think if it were reduced to 1600, there would be room for all, and pretty fair crofts.

13,885. You told us that the proprietors of the estate formerly did not like emigration?—No. I have come across reports by this Mr Lorimer who writes against emigration.

13,886. But you wish the population written down to 1600?—I wish that a man should better himself, and if he cannot do it in this part of the world, let him go to some other place.

13,887. Don't you think that more than one-half of the estate is under deer?—Well, I daresay it is under rough pasture land, but I don't think you could put three crofters into the deer forest so that they could live.

13,888. You said already that no population could live in the deer forest except rabbits or deer?—There is a little less than half.

13,889. Is there not 28,000 acres under deer?—27,000; just about half.

13,890. And 45,000 is the whole estate?—46,300; practically half.

13,891. And there are 1000 acres of woodland? Now, you say that only deer and rabbits could live in the forest. Is it not the case that at any rate sheep lived there?—Oh, yes, and cattle in summer.

13,892. Then you have to correct your statement by that, to the extent that sheep and cattle could live there?—I said, if I remember well, that deer and rabbits lived there.

13,893. Were the only population that could live there?—That lived there.

13,894. 'That could,' I thought you said?—Well, if I said 'could,' I delete the 'could.'

13,895. You would like to see crofter holdings consolidated, but do not you think that there has been too much consolidation going on with regard to the deer forest? Has it not been consolidated at too great a rate?—There has been no consolidation of deer forest from crofters' holdings.

13,896. But grazings, for instance?—I do not think so. I think these grazings are much better for the country under deer now, than they would be under sheep, and I will tell you why.

13,897. But there has been a consolidation so far as the deer forest is concerned?—Yes, but the grazings of Shewglie, Lochletter, Drumclune, Glencoilty, and Divach, which were large farms, have been converted into deer forest.

13,898. And you say that the grazing is very poor?—Yes, it is very poor; in fact, the high grazings of Glen-Urquhart are exceedingly poor.

13,899. We had it stated to the Napier Commission in a paper by the Rev. Mr Macrae, that the grazings of 10,000 sheep were added to the forest?—Well, I prefer not to refer to Mr Macrae who is now dead. But as I am asked about it, I must say that his paper is very inaccurate.

Drumnadrochit.

William Mackay.

13,900. We need not go into that point; I refer to what was given in your presence here to-day. Evidence was given to-day that the grazings of upwards of 8000 sheep were added in recent years to the forest?—That was a mere guess. The man who gave that evidence knew nothing about it.

13,901. And how many do you yourself say?—It is difficult for me to say. Mr Macdougall gave the sheep at Rusgaich at 1000; in this valuation which I hold in my hand, the stock is stated at 600, so that is 400 off his 1000 sheep—practically a third off.

13,902. *Mr Sutherland.*—Off that particular farm?—A third off the stock that Mr Macdougall stated.

13,903. Off that farm?—Yes. Apply the same rule to the whole.

13,904. Why?—Because he is exaggerating. He has exaggerated the stock on this farm.

13,905. *Mr Maccallum.*—But you were present yourself and were at liberty to cross-examine him upon any point?—I did, and he was examined by his lordship also on that point, and he confessed that he had no knowledge whatever on that point.

13,906. But he mentioned the authority on which he gave it; and now, as you find fault with that way of giving evidence, can you yourself certify everything you say as being of your knowledge?—I have given nothing to-day except what I know personally, or what I have got from old documents which I produce. I did not go to any person and ask him what do you think, or what information can you give. No one knew anything whatever of what I stated until I read it to you to-day.

13,907. But you are not able to contradict this evidence to any great extent, except that 400 which you take off?—Well, do you mean Mr Macdougall's statistics?

13,908. Yes.—I do not know exactly to what extent he is wrong over all the farms; but in the case of Rusgaich I know, for I have got the numbers.

13,909. Assuming, then, that he is right, these lands were added to the old forest?—There was no old forest; there was no forest in Glen-Urquhart before 1857. The first afforesting took place then.

13,910. There was no forest before then?—No forest before then.

13,911. And the forest was made up of sheep grazings?—Yes, large sheep grazings, with the exception of Bunloit.

13,912. And these grazings were fit to uphold a very considerable stock of sheep?—Oh yes.

13,913. Could they not do that again?—They certainly could do that again, but I say they are much more profitable and very much better to the crofters as they are.

13,914. What benefit do the crofters get from them?—The old rent of the whole lands now under forest was £628, and that was in the good old days when sheep farming paid; if you were to advertise them now, I doubt very much whether you would get them let at all; but take it that you would, and that you would get £500 for them. Well, Mr Bradley Martin now pays upwards of £3000 for the lands. He has five or six keepers, regular keepers, and he employs a great many gillies and other people in summer, thus giving employment to many more than could possibly be employed upon sheep farms. In addition to that, he spends a lot of money in the district, and buys the hay and corn of the crofters. Repeatedly during the last half dozen years I have had to give crofters time to pay their rent until Mr Martin arrived and paid for the supplies.

13,915. *Mr Sutherland.*—But you forget what you stated to me, namely, that they did not sell corn at all?—They sell hay, not oats for meal.

13,916. *Mr Maccallum.*—Do you say he pays £3000 for the deer forest?—He pays £3100 annually—Lady Seafield pays for the keepers and part of the rates.

13,917. These are large deductions?—I put the nett value of the forest at £1900. But I say the crofters derive fifty per cent. more benefit from the forest than they could possibly if it were under sheep.

13,918. I have before me a Return of deer forests, the latest Return to Parliament, and the rent there is given at £1300. How do you account for that?—Well, the total rent is about £3000. What is the date of that?—Probably Major Grant handed that in as an estimate.

13,919. How are we to get the proper figures, if these are not correct?—I am giving you my view of it, that I think the forest is worth £1700 to £1900. There is a large grouse shooting which is included in the forest, and the rent of that is about £500. That has to be taken off my figure of £1700 or £1800.

13,920. But you admit this, or rather you have of your own accord stated something to this effect, that the crofters are very good agriculturists and make the most of their lands?—Yes, on the whole, they do; I must say they are very good agriculturists and they are hard-working people.

13,921. They have improved the crofts at the present day?—Some of them have.

13,922. That being the case, don't you think that they could very probably improve some of this land now in the forest?—No, you can't improve subjects that are not improvable.

13,923. But those who, you yourself admit, are good agriculturists, say that they could do so?—No, I have not seen a good agriculturist here to-day. They are not good agriculturists who came here to-day; there were a carpenter and a blacksmith.

13,924. But we had some of your crofters?—Not the best of them. Not those who hold the best land.

13,925. It is your opinion that there is no desire to get land?—I do not know what the desire is; there is a craving for land everywhere.

13,926. You would admit that the crofters on this estate think they would do a good thing if they got the land?—They think so, but I think they are mistaken. But they have never told me they wanted land except this Bunloit township. I have been connected with the estate for the last eighteen years, and not a crofter asked me for land except the Bunloit people.

13,927. You are quite clear in your mind that the land is of such a nature that it cannot be improved?—There is no room for more arable land. The whole of the arable land has been taken in, has been reclaimed, the whole of the land fit for arable land.

13,928. Then one remark as to 'tuath' to which you referred. Did this proverb circulate in this district:—'Is treise tuath na tighearna?'*—I do not know that it did in this district.

13,929. Now, do you think it means the big farmers?—I can't tell you; possibly it means people generally, but, certainly, if it means the big farmers, there is great truth in it.

13,930. I want to get your own opinion; do you think it really applies to the big farmers?—I think it does, because the result of my researches is this, that except the big farmers, the general people took very little interest in public affairs in the olden times. The whole country side was managed by the proprietors and the big farmers, and the big farmers were consequently not only in a majority, but also stronger in every respect than the proprietors.

13,931. Is that your interpretation of the term? It is quite a new interpretation to think that it means large farmer?—Before 1808 (I am referring to Glen-Urquhart) there was only one class of farmers.

13,932. Don't you know really that in Skye, for instance, 'tuath' always means the crofting townships?—No, I don't; if such is the case, it is quite the reverse in Glen-Urquhart.

13,933. *Mr Macleod.*—The most of the evidence we have had to-day, in fact the whole of it has applied particularly to this Balmacaan forest. But, I think you have added, in your statement or in your examination, that there are no other farms or grazings that could be made available for small tenants or crofters?—No, there is no arable land I know in the forest.

13,934. I am not speaking of the forest now; I am speaking of farms, grazings we will call them.—Would you kindly repeat your question?

* 'A tenantry [or tribe] is stronger than a lord [or chief].

rumna-
rochit.

'illiam
ackay.

13,935. Is there any land in any grazing on the estate that in your opinion is available for crofters or other small tenants?—Do you mean arable land?—

13,936. In the way of being profitably cultivated or otherwise advantageously occupied?—Well, all the farms in Glen-Urquhart are let on lease and have been let on lease for many years as what we may call large farms. If you were to get these arable lands divided, crofters could certainly live upon them, but where are you to get the buildings for them? They would require expensive buildings, and if you pay the expense of the buildings, and charge interest upon that money, my opinion is that the farms cannot be worked profitably by crofters.

13,937. Of course, you are quite aware that we are not concerned with that question at the present time at all?—But as practical men you must take all the circumstances into account.

13,938. But we have got a special duty to perform; no doubt in the proper place and at the proper time due consideration will be given to all these things, but what I am anxious to get at is, if it is possible, putting these considerations out of sight for the moment and simply answering this question—I will give it in the exact words of the remit if you prefer it—whether there is any land now occupied for the purposes of a deer forest, grouse moor, or for other sporting purposes, or for grazing, not in the occupation of crofters or other small tenants, which is capable of being cultivated to profit, or otherwise advantageously occupied by crofters or other small tenants?—There is no reference to arable land there, I see. Well, then, I correct my last answer, and I say most emphatically that there is no land in Glen-Urquhart that could be profitably worked as mentioned in the remit.

13,939. That is so far as farms are concerned. Then you made the sweeping statement with regard to the deer forest of Balmacaan, that it had never been occupied except by deer or rabbits?—No, I never said that.

13,940. What did you say?—I said a lot about the deer forest, but I certainly did not say that.

13,940*a*. What did you say?—I said that no crofters ever resided within the forest; no tenant ever resided within the forest; and no cottar ever resided within the forest. With the exception of the deer park and those little patches that Mr Macdougall mentioned, the deer forest consists exclusively of what were grazings, sheilings principally.

13,941. Then is it a fact that the whole of the land which is presently deer forest was grazed by sheep and cattle and horses at one time?—Yes.

13,941*a*. And was it possible to graze these sheep and cattle and horses without any population being there?—Before this was deer forest the population was exactly where it is now, outside the forest, in Bunloit, in Easter Bunloit, in Divach, and all round the farms. The arable lands have not been included in the forest, if you will understand me. The old farms and holdings still exist, but the hill grazings were taken from them, and converted into deer forests.

13,942. Then were there no extensive clearances at Balmacaan itself?—There were eight tenants removed from Balmacaan for the purpose of having their holdings attached to the home farm and that was before this forest. There was not a crofter cleared in Glen-Urquhart for the deer forest proper.

13,943. Not directly?—No, nor indirectly. The forest came in years afterwards; and not only that,—if you will allow me to say so,—there is no part of the land that the crofters in Balmacaan possessed now within the forest.

13,944. I am coming to that?—There is one farm, Glencoilty, James Mackintosh, he had the westmost holding in Balmacaan and he had the whole of the grazing in Glencoilty. The crofters had what was called the Herd's Hill and that was taken from them for the purpose of being planted. It was an old plantation and it was replanted.

13,945. Coming back to these eight tenants, there were a number of cottars there as well?—Yes, I think there were.

13,946. You do not deny that there were?—I know that there were; they had no land. The cottars are still here; they are in Lewiston and other places. Drumnadrochit.

13,947. But they are not there?—But they are better off; they have better houses and everything. William Mackay.

13,948. I do not deny that at all; at the present moment we are speaking about Balmacaan, and I am anxious to know how it was that all those tenants and crofters were removed from there without any of their land being added to the deer forest. I am speaking now of the present moment. Is it not a fact that all those tenants who were removed from there, the cottars who were removed, what arable land they had or the principal part of it was added to the home farm?—Yes, that is the case.

13,949. And what grazing they had, if there was no forest, went into the sheep farm?—No, it was planted.

13,950. The whole of the grazing?—The whole of the crofters' grazing was planted. They had the Herd's Hill. I have already mentioned that Mackintosh had the westmost holding of Balmacaan, and also the sheep farm of Glencoilty, for which he paid £90; that went into the forest.

13,951. Are those tenants there now?—No.

13,952. Well, there has been that addition to the forest?—The grazings were added to the forest certainly, the same as Lochletter and Shewglie and Drumclune, but these were all large holdings and the people were not removed; the farms still exist and the people are still there, but the grazings have been taken off.

13,953. But there are none of the Balmacaan tenants there?—But they were removed before the time of the deer forest, so that their holdings could be attached to the home farm.

13,954. But their grazing, the grazing that they had when they were there, is now part of the forest?—The grazing that one tenant had.

13,955. Out of the eight?—Out of the eight.

13,956. Where is the other seven tenants' grazing?—It is planted.

13,957. The whole of it?—The whole of it.

13,958. What area will it be?—Not a very large area: perhaps 5 or 6 hundred acres or more.

13,959. Do you think it looks probable on the face of it, where there was such an enormous extent apparently of hill grazing with little arable, that all the pasture land that these seven tenants had was included in a small plantation?—I am not dealing with probabilities at all, I am stating facts, and the fact is that the whole of the grazing of the Balmacaan crofters, that is those of them who were under £30, seven of them, was planted, and that the other grazing of Mackintosh was added to the deer forest.

13,960. I do not wish to say or to suggest that you are quibbling in any way, but I say this, that it is only within recent years that we have had the term 'crofter' defined as a tenant paying under £30 of rent?—Quite so.

13,961. And when I speak of the eight tenants who, you say, were in Balmacaan, taking your own figures, I speak of the tenants that were there irrespective of the rent, because I do not know what the rent was?—Well, they were all under £30 except Mackintosh.

13,962. And you say absolutely that, except for Mackintosh's grazing, there was no part of their grazings added to what is presently the deer forest?—The deer are now allowed to go into the plantation, now that it is well grown, but the grazings were taken from them for the purpose of being planted. That is the point I wish to make. There was no grazing taken from them for the purpose of being converted into the deer forest; it was all planted.

13,963. I am quite prepared to give the estate management all the credit that arises from the fact that they did not clear out these small tenants to make room for the deer forest. But what I wish to clear up is certainly a point that has been obscured considerably, and that is that at the present moment the pasture that these Balmacaan tenants had is a part of the deer forest?—Well, it is a plantation and the deer are now allowed to go into the plantation.

Drumnadrochit.

William Mackay.

13,964. You spoke about the amount that was expended upon the estate, and I notice that you differentiate between the different expenditures?—Yes.

13,965. You put the expenditure on holdings under £30 at some £8000 odds?—Yes, something like that.

13,966. And then, on a larger class of holdings, you state the expenditure at £27,000?—Yes, that is the case.

13,967. And you state a further expenditure of £28,000?—£29,000.

13,968. What was that on?—That was on general estate improvements—roads, fences, bridges.

13,969. So that, speaking roughly, there has been an expenditure of some £8000 on holdings under £30, and a matter of £55,000 on the larger holdings and general estate inprovements?—Yes, that is the case.

13,970. Then you spoke of the area of arable land in 1808 as compared with to-day and said the increase was a little less than 400?—Yes.

13,971. Might I ask you where you get the figures of 1808?—This is the survey of 1808.

13,972. That is by Brown?—Yes, by Brown. He surveyed the whole estate, and I have got his plans as well.

13,973. And your figures for the present time are taken?—From the ordnance survey.

13,974. Thanks. I simply wanted to get that down. You gave a number of figures, with regard to the amount of rental, that had been derived from the property?—No, I don't think I did that.

13,975. I think there was a statement of the amount of the rents?—No, the abatements possibly.

13,976. But I thought you said you had a table of the rents?—No, I did not refer to detailed rents. I gave the total rental.

13,977. You gave the total rental?—Yes, I did not distinguish between the larger tenants and the crofters.

13,978. But you were to make the distinction?—No.

13,979. I thought you promised some figures?—I promised a list of the tenants and the dates of leases.

13,980. Coming back to Balmacaan for the moment, I think that was in the proprietor's hands for a number of years?—It has been almost always in the proprietor's hands for hundreds of years.

13,981. And it would not appear in the Valuation Roll?—Oh yes.

13,982. Except as a grazing subject?—The home farm.

13,983. I am not speaking of the home farm, but the forest.—What is your question?

13,984. Has the forest of Balmacaan always been let?—As a deer forest?

13,985. Yes.—It has been always in the proprietor's hands until I think 1885, after the death of the late Lord Seafield.

13,986. And I think about that date it was in the Valuation Roll?—It simply appeared as a grazing at £628, I think, being the exact rent paid by the previous tenants for the grazings.

13,987. What I want to bring out is that that £628, which we see as the total valuation entered in the roll for that area of country, only refers to the grazing rent?—Oh, that is quite true; that was always the case with deer forests.

13,988. Up to within recent years?—Up to within recent years. The exact rent that the old tenants paid before it was a forest was £626, 2s. It was entered in the Valuation Roll as a forest at £628, I think.

13,989. So that in making any comparisons between the rent paid then and the rent presently received, it has to be kept in view that as the law stood at that time, the subject being in the proprietor's own hands, only the grazing rent was entered?—Quite so.

13,990. Now you stated with regard to the question of the rent of the Balmacaan forest, you went first to draw a comparison between what could be got to-day for it as a grazing subject, that is £500?—Well, I think you would have a difficulty in getting even that.

13,991. Well, take it at £500 as compared with the £3000, but as a matter of fact you did not get £3000?—Oh no, I was putting it at £1700 or £1900.

13,992. We will take it at £1700; or, Major Grant having entered it at £1300, add the shooting £500, making it £1800?—Yes.

13,993. Well, taking the grazing rent that could be got at £500, and the grouse rent which could be got at £500, that would be £1000, and there would only be a difference between what can be got for the subject as a grazing and grouse moor subject and as a deer forest, of £300?—Would it not come to more than that? the difference is £800. You put £500 on the forest as a grazing, and £500 on the moor, that is £1000; whereas we get £1800 now.

13,994. So that the difference is £800?—Yes.

13,995. Then you built a lodge?—No, Balmacaan House is the old family house.

13,996. I thought you said you spent a very large sum of money on that?—It was built for Lord Seafield; it was added to. It was not built since it was let, I mean.

13,997. Is it your presumption that the whole value of the subject as a deer forest would disappear if it were otherwise occupied than at the present time?—I do not quite follow you.

13,998. Supposing that forest were grazed with sheep, as it appears to be at certain seasons, do you think the whole value of the subject as a deer forest would disappear?—Well, I have for argument's sake said that you might get £500 for it, but I doubt it.

13,999. But I am assuming for the moment that we would get the £500 for the grazing, and I am assuming also that we would get the grouse rent?—But in a deer forest you would not get grouse for years. There is no grouse there at present, because they kill them and keep them down. The tenant of a deer forest does not like to have grouse to disturb the deer, and they are kept down; so that, if it were discontinued as a deer forest it would take three or four years before you could let it as a grouse moor.

14,000. Then why do you value the grouse rent at £500?—This grouse rent is of ground separate entirely from the deer forest. The grouse moor is away beyond Drumbuie.

14,001. But if it is not on the forest, why are there no grouse on it?—You are referring to letting the forest as a grouse moor; that is a thing you can't do for three or four years. The grouse moor which is at present let is away from the deer forest.

14,002. In any case, it is part of the £1800?—Yes.

14,003. Supposing that we get a grazing rent of £500 and we get also a grouse rent of £500, that is £1000?—Yes.

14,004. Now, what value would you put upon the grouse you think could be got in four or five years, supposing the grouse were allowed to increase?—Well, I cannot tell you, perhaps £200 or £300. The £500 includes Lochletter and the whole glen from Kilmartin. For the £500 you get a stretch of 10 miles or more.

14,005. What I am anxious to get is this—What would be the value of the place if deer were removed?

14,006. No; what I want to get at is this, what do you consider the amount of depreciation there would be, supposing that that land were re-occupied by sheep, grazed by sheep?—Well, you would possibly get the £500 for the whole forest, you might get perhaps £200 or even £300 for the grouse; that would be £800.

14,007. So that the difference between the two would be £800 as against £1300?—Yes.

14,008. That is £500?—Quite so.

14,009. Do you know what the total rental of the tenants under £30 is?—No, I am sorry I have not got that.

14,010. You state the amount of arrears at £800 odds, and I would like to make a comparison between that and the annual rental?—There would be no difficulty in giving it.

14,011. Is it £1000?—I daresay it is, but I can give you the exact figure.

14,012. So that the tenants are less than a year in

arrear?—Well, I think a year is pretty good progress in five years.

14,013. You think so?—Yes, when fair rents are fixed.

14,014. Then you consider that the larger number of the tenants in the glen were tenants-at-will in 1887 when you gave them leases?—I think so, but the list that I will give you will show you exactly how they stood. My first impression here to-day was that I gave leases to them all. I gave leases I know to the bulk of them and reduced the rents of them all.

14,015. Then about this Balmacaan home farm, is it a separate subject, or is it held along with the forest?—It is a separate subject, entered separately.

14,016. And who is it occupied by?—It is in the proprietor's own hands and always has been.

14,017. It is not an adjunct to the deer forest?—No, it has nothing to do with the deer forest.

14,018. And is it partly arable?—Principally arable.

14,019. Is there no pasture attached to it?—Practically none. There is a little attached to Clunebeg, which is worked along with it.

14,020. You expressed a very strong opinion indeed with regard to club farms?—Yes, I feel strongly about club farms.

14,021. And you said there were cases within your knowledge where they had disagreed?—Yes. There was one case of a pure club farm and another of what I call a modified club farm.

14,022. You do not think it was because there was a solicitor about that, there was a quarrel?—No, they quarrelled before they came to the solicitor. Unfortunately, people don't come to us until their quarrels have gone too far.

14,023. Might I ask, if it is not asking too much, what was the particular difference in the case you refer to; probably you might be able to give me the information without being too particular?—Well, I don't wish to mention names, but if you really want it, I can tell you where the township is and who the tenants are.

14,024. No, no, what I want to get at is what the particular difference was in this case?—Well, Cluny Macpherson (it was on his estate) formed this place into a club farm many years ago, and for a few years the tenants did very well indeed. I think there were seven or eight of them. They had their own separate houses of course, their own separate plots of arable land, and their own cattle and horses; perhaps a horse each; but they held the moorland in common and the sheep in common. They appointed one of themselves as manager, and so far as I can judge, he is a very intelligent good man and he knows all about sheep farming. Jealousies arose; they thought he was taking too much upon himself, and after a year or two of that, the factor endeavoured to bring them all together and to agree. But after a time, their blood became so hot that they would not meet annually to adjust accounts. Instead of doing that, they went into the sheriff court at Inverness for a count and reckoning and I was employed by some of them to act for them. And my own clients acted so unreasonably that I threw the thing up and said I would have nothing to do with them, after trying to bring about an arrangement. So that the solicitor in this case came rather as oil upon the troubled waters.

14,025. I am quite willing to believe that in your case. Now, can you tell us this, whether it was provided for in the arrangements they had for an annual election of manager or managers?—It was provided for an annual election of manager or managers and also for an annual audit of the accounts, but, as a matter of fact, for years the same man was appointed manager. In fact, he was really the backbone of the whole place.

14,026. I may tell you that in Skye, where there were several instances spoken to of successful club farms, that usually was the rule; that naturally enough the manager or managers continued year after year.—Yes.

14,027. But what I cannot understand in the case you have mentioned is, why, if there were seven tenants against this eighth man?—Oh no, some of them took his side. There was an almost equal division; it was a general flare up.

14,028. There was no majority?—There was no majority.

14,029. And do you think that would be likely to occur generally?—Even in Glen-Urquhart, where the people are very good and Christian, I have seen a good deal of it; quarrelling about grazings, quarrelling about the number of sheep that each ought to have. I am not going to give names, but that is going on now in a township in Glen-Urquhart.

14,030. But don't you see this club farm would be the very thing to obviate that, because there would be no individual sheep to quarrel about?—Well, of course, you can argue for a fortnight about this, but, my opinion is, that a club farm would be a mistake. You cannot have a whole lot interested in a thousand sheep without having jealousies. You may have an enormous ranche with the whole thing done by a man with a large salary. But if they are all people of the same class, their jealousies are aroused; they do not like one of themselves to be superior to them all.

14,031. I am sorry that your opinion of your countrymen should be so unfortunate?—It is not of my countrymen in particular; that is a general rule, I think, that applies all over the world.

14,032. *Mr Munro.*—I want to put one or two questions in order to elicit some information which I know no one can give better than yourself. I understand from evidence which you gave to-day that you were disposed to deal generously with the Seafield tenantry, while not forgetting your obligations to the Countess of Seafield?—I was.

14,033. But I suppose I may take it that in your intercourse with the tenants you very naturally looked at this matter from the landlord point of view more than from the tenant point of view?—Well, I may tell you this, that when Lady Seafield asked me to meet the Glen-Urquhart people, she said:—'I wish you to do it, Mr 'Mackay, because you know them all, you know their 'circumstances, and I give you a free hand so far as the 'fixing of rents is concerned; it is in your hands.' She objected even to my taking any person with me, but I considered the responsibility on myself too much with my small experience of farming, and I did take a skilled valuator with me. But, I may mention that in the majority of cases, the rents fixed by me were under the valuation of the skilled valuator.

14,034. What I want to be at is this, the evidence which you have given to-day has been altogether from the point of view of the relation between the landlord and tenant?—Yes.

14,035. And I wish if you would go with me for a moment and take an outside view of the matter, and consider what effect the conversion of grazing farms into deer forest has upon the prosperity of the neighbourhood and the national prosperity. Now, you told us that in forming the Balmacaan deer forest I think there were some 8500 sheep displaced?—That has been told; I took 400 off that at any rate.

14,036. Well, say 8000 along with their families and dependants?—Along with their families, did you say?

14,037. Yes.—The families were not removed.

14,038. They were continued in the arable land farms?—They were, and there they are still.

14,039. Do you not consider that there was some loss to the nation in the displacement of 8000 sheep?—Well, considering the enormous number of sheep in the United Kingdom, the loss is nothing; it cannot be appreciated. And the prices of sheep are just now such that it would be a very good thing if there was a very much greater displacement.

14,040. I do not admit your contention there, because the whole national wealth is made up of units. Therefore, supposing for example, that the whole of the landowners in the Highlands were disposed to convert their sheep farms into deer forest, do you think they would be justified in doing so without having regard to the effect which that would have upon the prosperity of the people at large?—My idea is, that so far as the prosperity of the Glen-Urquhart people is concerned, it has been rather increased by the afforestment. There is more money distributed among them than before.

Drumnadrochit. William Mackay.

14,041. But I am sure that you make some distinction between what is called the distribution of wealth and the creation of wealth?—Well, I do not care where it is created if I get it.

14,042. But what I wish you to understand is this, the population of Glen-Urquhart on your own admission, from 1851 to 1891, has decreased by some 1100. Now, does that not infer the displacement of a considerable proportion of industry or wealth-producing population from the land?—Oh, no; that is to be accounted for by the fact that as soon as a young lad comes to be seventeen or eighteen years of age, he leaves the glen. The father remains and the same industries remain, but there are not the same number of people living in each family. I remember, for instance, when I was a boy myself, the young men always went away in summer as labourers and navvies and harvest-workers, but they returned for the winter and did not go away again till the beginning of summer, so that the summer population was always lower than the population in April when the census is taken. They do not now return for the winter.

14,043. Then you do not attribute any diminution in the population in Glen-Urquhart to the creation of the deer forest?—No, I am satisfied there is no diminution from that cause.

14,044. It arises solely from the desire of the people to better their own position?—Just so.

14,045. In fact, just what induced you yourself to leave the glen?—Yes, and my four brothers.

14,046. Then about another matter. You now receive very large quantities of oatmeal imported into the glen?—Yes.

14,047. Is it not possible that a considerable proportion of the land now lying waste might be made to produce corn and feed the people, and thereby not necessitate the same importation of foreign goods?—At this moment I cannot mentally put my finger on 10 acres altogether lying waste that is fit to grow corn.

14,048. I suppose you are aware that Glen-Urquhart, in average seasons, produces excellent qualities of corn?—Some parts of it produce as good grain as anywhere in the north of Scotland.

14,049. You are aware that Glen-Urquhart has produced wheat weighing 64 bushels?—That was only for a few years, and then it exhausted the land.

14,050. Are you aware that farmers in Glen-Urquhart have in more seasons than one taken first class prizes for the superior quality of their corn?—Oh, in the low-land farms, like Drumbuie and Balmacaan, I am glad to say they have always led the van in prize taking.

14,051. And is there no other land that could be put in the same position as Balmacaan and Drumbuie?—No land that is not already under cultivation.

14,052. I think you told us you are a crofter yourself?—Yes.

14,053. How many acres have you?—I have 6.

14,054. Have you ever made out any balance sheet?—No, but I am afraid the balance would be on the wrong side.

14,055. Are you in arrears of rent?—Well, they are very lenient with me; I may say that I reduced my own rent in 1887.

14,056. What was your rent?—I really do not remember; I think it was about £5, but I can give it to you exactly. £4, 5s. and I have got a 99 years' lease of a house, for which I pay 15s. of ground rent.

14,057. It is rather an interesting inquiry to find out how a lawyer prospers as a crofter.—Well, I am afraid the balance would be very much against the profits.

14,058. But you have never made out a balance sheet of any kind?—No.

14,058*a*. *Mr Sutherland.*—You are not a successful crofter?—No, but it is perhaps more a matter of sentiment with me than otherwise.

14,059. *Mr Munro.*—You have not paid the rent of the croft out of the croft, but out of the law?—Out of the law, so far.

14,060. You have given us a vast deal of information from outside sources. Have you taken any pains to verify the facts and figures you have submitted to us?—All my facts and figures are taken from original documents. My first figures of 1545 are taken from a deed upon the public record, recorded in 1548. My subsequent figures are all taken from original documents now before his lordship.

14,061. I suppose you are aware in advertising a deer forest it is a common thing to insert in the advertisement as an advantage or inducement a diminution of the population?—I never saw that inserted. I have often seen it mentioned that there were no crofters in the forest.

14,062. Have you never seen it inserted in the 'Sportsman's Guide' that Inverness-shire was one of the most thinly populated counties in the kingdom, and, therefore, advantageous for sporting purposes?—No, I have not seen that.

14,063. It is so?—I have no doubt it is.

14,064. I will only add that I am bound to tell you that so far as my observation goes, you have given your evidence with obvious fairness and sincerity?—Thank you.

14,065. *The Chairman.*—You mentioned arrears amounting to £822, 15s. 1d. Would you tell me how much of that sum is due by crofters?—The whole of that is due by crofters under £30. I have not included the arrears of rents above £30.

14,066. There are such arrears?—There are very few, not worth mentioning.

14,067. *Mr H. V. Maccallum.*—I would like to refer you to a statement sent by the Rev. Mr Macrae, the Free Church minister, to Lord Napier's Commission, and appearing on page 365 of the Report of the Commission. Mr Macrae states that 'about the year '1867 the whole township of Balmacaan, where there ' were over 20 families who were living pretty comfort-'ably, had to be turned out in a body, as the place was ' to be *directly* added to the forest.' Is that statement correct?—Well, as I have already stated, I would prefer not to criticise this Statement, as the author is dead; but I may say, as the question has been put to me, that this is most inaccurate. There were 8 tenants and I do not know how many cottars; and as I have already explained, their lands were not directly added to the forest but to the home farm of Balmacaan.

14,068. *The Chairman.*—I think you have said all that already?—I have said all that.

14,069. I put questions to you suggested by that very sentence.

14,070. *Mr H. V. Maccallum.*—You are aware that has been very much founded on in the past as an instance of clearance?—I have seen it referred to several times.

14,071. *Mr Macleod.*—It is only fair to point out, Mr Chairman, that Mr Mackay has admitted, as I understand it, that the pasture of those tenants was added to the deer forest and is a portion of the deer forest?—But that is not the statement made here. The statement is that they were removed for the purpose of its being *directly* turned into a forest. They were removed for the purpose of having their lands added to the home farm and their grazings, the grazings of the crofters were planted. Now, of course, the deer are allowed to go into the plantation.

14,072. There was a deer forest formed there?—Before that, yes.

14,073. And the pasture that those tenants had was added?—The pasture that one tenant had. I have explained that repeatedly.

14,074. Very well, put it that way.—Glencoilty, for which he paid £90, was added to the forest.

14,075. There is no doubt that the tenants were turned out, not to put too fine a point upon it; they did not leave of their own accord?—No, I don't suppose they did.

14,076. They did not leave in a body?—No, they gradually got places elsewhere.

14,077. As the place was to be directly added to the forest?—Well, that is not the case. The place was not added to the forest at that time. It was planted.

14,078. There was a portion of it added to the deer forest?—Before a man was ever turned out.

14,079. But don't you think that it is a fair inference to put upon it, in justice to Mr Macrae who is not here to speak for himself, that they were turned out for the deer forest?—I may mention that Mr Macrae was not here at the time, so that his information was hearsay entirely.

14,080. And that the people would naturally take it when they were turned out and this was planted, that it was really if not directly added to the deer forest?—But it is not what the people would take it; it is what actually did happen that we are concerned with.

14,081. *Mr Sutherland.*—Where is the land now?—The arable land is part of the home farm.

14,082. And the rest is in the deer forest?—The rest is in the deer forest.

14,083. *Mr Macleod.*—That is the case now?—Yes, and I have admitted it all through.

14,084. *Mr Maccallum.*—You explained the discrepancy between your valuation of the forest and this by saying that Major Grant did not include the grouse moor?—Yes.

14,085. But does that explanation now stand when we hear from you that the grouse moor is not in the deer forest at all?—Yes, certainly, because the total rent paid is £3100.

14,086. But in comparing the value of it under deer with the rent that was paid when it was a sheep grazing, you say that £1800 was got for it now as a deer forest?—Well, after taking off the taxes, that is roughly the figure that I put on it. After taking off taxes and other payments, I think I said it would be about £1900.

14,087. But if you are including the grouse moor, that is not in the forest at all?—Yes.

14,088. Very well, how does the comparison stand in that way when you include a grouse moor that is not in the forest at all?—I cannot see the force of that. The grouse moor is let along with the forest, you know.

14,089. Did we not hear that it was not let at all; that is my impression?—Oh no, it is let along with the forest and is included in the rent of £3100.

14,090. Was that grouse moor part of a sheep grazing that was valued at £628?—No. It is not over that grazing at all. The grouse moor has been a grouse moor for many many years. Mr Martin has that and pays a rent of £500 for it. In addition to that he has got the deer forest.

14,091. At £1300. Why do you include the grouse moor in the comparison?—Don't you see I gave the value of the shootings that Mr Martin had, including both the deer forest and the grouse moor.

14,092. But we were talking simply of the deer forest and you included the grouse moor?—Of course, I included the grouse moor in his total rental.

14,093. But what is the use of including the grouse moor?—There is no use arguing about it.

14,094. Then your statements are of no use as facts?—That may be your opinion.

14,095. Now you say that £628 was the exact sum paid by the farmers when the forest was used as a grazing?—For these grazings; the exact sum taken off them by agreement when the grazings were taken. £626, 2s. was the figure.

14,096. They were never let separately for that sum?—Oh no, because these grazings were always attached to the arable land.

14,097. Then it is not an exact sum; it is only a valuation which is made?—The exact sum that the grazings were valued at, and the tenants agreed to the valuation, was £626, 2s.

14,098. Exactly, I only wish to point out that that is the way it has been got.—Quite so.

14,099. And there might actually have been an increase of rent?—Possibly a decrease.

14,100. *Mr Sutherland.*—I would be obliged if you would explain what is meant by the heading 'Judicial Rents' in this paper you have handed in?—The rents in the olden times were fixed by the baron bailie, who held a court, and the rents as then fixed were called judicial rents. I have found out exactly how they were fixed in one instance. Several people came forward and said to the baron bailie in open court, after the court was fenced:—'I will give so much for Allanmore; I will give £10.' Then another man would jump up and offer £15, and so on. Sometimes a man who offered the highest sum did not get it; the choice would depend upon circumstances.

14,101. It was what might be called an auction of the lands?—It was an offer just as you ask for offers now-a-days, and say the highest offer might not be accepted

14,102. And that is the judicial rent?—That is the way in this case, at all events.

14,103. Is that the general way?—No. Sometimes there was no competition, the rents were agreed upon by the landlord and the tenant.

14,104. What was the institution of the baron bailie court for?—Oh, the baron bailie court could hang a man; it could do many a thing. The baron was a most important person.

14,105. But I want to know—if you can give us the explanation,—how this interference with private property was allowed?—It was not an interference with private property.

14,106. What jurisdiction had the baron bailie?—He had very large jurisdiction, especially before heritable jurisdictions were abolished after 1746. He could try a person for crime.

14,107. But with regard to the fixing of the rent?—Well, he was the factor, as a rule, or chamberlain.

14,108. For whom?—For the proprietor; for the landlord.

14,109. Was he a public functionary?—Not a public functionary. There was the old heritable jurisdiction which barons had. The bailie was the man who held the court; he was the bailie as a substitute for the landlord.

14,110. And was it a public court for the fixing of the rent?—Yes, only that it was held by the bailie.

14,111. So that the Crofters Commission is not without a precedent?—Oh no, they did not fix rents in that way. They took in offers, and, of course, the baron bailie used his own judgment as to what tenant to take.

14,112. *The Chairman.*—If I am not mistaken, the late Mr Donald Munro, chamberlain of the Lews, was baron bailie so late as 1875, when the Bernera crofters were defended by a gentleman whom we all know, and defended successfully.

14,113. *Mr Shaw Stewart.*—Is it not the case that the attraction to a shooting tenant in Balmacaan is the deer forest and the grouse moor,—that having the grouse moor as well as the deer forest tempts the shooting tenant to pay a high rent, and it does not follow that you would get the same rent for the grouse moor without the forest?—Yes, that is the case.

14,114. The one helps the other in the view of a shooting tenant?—Yes. The rent that Mr Martin's predecessor, who simply had the grouse moor, paid was only £250.

14,115. *Mr Donald Macrae, Plockton.*—I should much prefer to have an opportunity of questioning Mr Mackay again; I am very sorry that he is not well. [*The Chairman.*—Mr Mackay's health is such that I cannot ask him to come back.] I am very sorry indeed, but there are one or two questions which I hope your lordship and Mr Mackay will forgive me for putting, all arising, I think, from the statement and from the evidence and cross-examination. I understood Mr Mackay to say that some of the smaller holdings have ceased to be cultivated by the tenants because cultivation is unprofitable?—Yes, that is the case. There are two in Abriachan.

14,116. I should like to ask if there are many in Glen-Urquhart?—I don't know one in Glen-Urquhart; but I may mention that one of the most respectable and hard-working tenants in Glen-Urquhart, who has got a very high place, told me quite recently that the corn never ripens, and that he would have to put it under grass. That man has got about 30 acres.

14,117. So that in point of fact there is not a single

Drumnadrochit.

William Mackay.

crofter tenant in Glen-Urquhart so far as you know who does not cultivate his holding because it does not pay?—No, I don't think so in Glen-Urquhart. Oh, I think by the way there is one away at Drumcore there,—I think he has put it under sheep.

14,118. What is his name?—Maclean.

14,119. Is it because he found that cultivation did not pay?—Well, evidently it is, because he finds that grazing pays better.

14,120. Is he a practical cultivator of the soil?—Yes, he is one of the best farmers in the north of Scotland, or in the south either, for the matter of that.

14,121. Is he the gentleman who is tenant of the farm of Divach?—Yes, and of a large farm in the south too.

14,122. Is he the keeper of the poor-house in Dumbarton?—That is the man.

14,123. Does he spend his time looking after the poor in the poor-house at Dumbarton, or does he spend his time on the croft?—I am not his keeper, I cannot answer the question.

14,124. Does he live on the croft?—No, he does not; his mother lived there till the other day.

14,125. As a matter of fact, this tenant does not live on the holding, and does not cultivate the holding?—It is all under grass.

14,126. An absentee tenant?—Well, he is pretty often there.

14,127. Now might I ask if any of the people who lived in the glen asked or petitioned for that croft when it became vacant?—For that croft?

14,128. For that croft?—I don't think so; I am not aware.

14,129. Has he not two crofts?—He has got his own old croft, and he has got the adjoining one as sub-tenant; I think the principal tenant, a widow, is still living, but I am not very certain. She was living when I last heard of her.

14,130. Was he tenant of Divach at the time when he got this latter croft?—I don't think he was, but I am not quite sure.

14,131. Now there is another point that I would like to ask a question upon with regard to the acres of old arable land in the deer forest of Balmacaan. There has been much dispute about that. Mr Malcolm, Invergarry, gave evidence before a committee of the House of Commons (I think the Colonisation Committee) in the year 1887 if I am not mistaken, and he made a statement there that there were about 3000 acres of old arable land in all the deer forests of Scotland. Might I ask if you agree with that?—I have no idea; I have never gone into the question.

14,132. Did Mr Malcolm apply to this estate for information as to the area of arable land in the Balmacaan forest?—Not to me, but he may have to the factor.

14,133. Can you tell how many acres were given by the estate to Mr Malcolm, and by him to the Colonisation Committee?—No, I do not know whether any return was made. [*The Chairman.*—Did any communication reach you on the matter?—No, my lord.]

14,134. Then I think I heard you make a very direct statement with regard to a place mentioned; I think by Mr Macdougall, in the deer forest—a place called Fasach-nan-Capull?—I made no statement about that; that is a place I cannot identify.

14,135. That is the place where you said there was only one acre?—I did not say there was only one acre; I asked was it not nearer one than ten.

14,136. Might I ask you how many acres of old arable land there are in your opinion at Fasach-nan-Capull?—I cannot tell you, but I have passed the place I have in view very often—although I do not know it by that name,—and it never occurred to me that there were three. I have never measured it, and I have never gone over it.

14,137. If a respectable man, a native of Glen-Urquhart, and a man who is prepared to deposit security for rents, offers to take the old arable land there at eight acres, and to pay a fair rent for it, may I ask if you will consider the application of that man for a holding there?—It is not for me to consider it.

14,138. Would you be surprised to know that the man who now lives nearest to that place is prepared to take it at eight acres?—I should be very much surprised if there were eight acres of arable land there, but, of course, the thing can be measured. I know nothing about it, and neither did the witness who spoke about it.

14,139. Now I should like to ask a question or two with regard to the £8000 odds that have been expended upon the smaller tenants. Could you differentiate a little? We had a good deal of evidence with regard to the condition of the township called Lots. Might I ask how much of that £8000 was spent upon that poor township, which is certainly, so far as the evidence goes, and so far as I can myself ascertain, one of the poorest crofting townships in the Highlands?—I cannot tell you now; I have got the information from the estate books.

14,140. Would you be surprised if you were told that there was nothing whatever expended in improving the condition of the people in Lots?—I don't know that there was very much expended in improving their condition, but the £8000 was spent upon tenants under £30 of rent notwithstanding.

14,141. Are you personally aware that there is a strong desire among the people of the glen for land, more or less?—Well, I have already stated that no one ever spoke to me,—expressed their willingness to have more land, except the Bunloit people.

14,142. Are you aware whether the cottars in Lewiston approached the estate about the year 1888 by petition for land more or less that at the time was in the hands of the estate?—In Lewiston, you will keep in view, they are not crofters.

14,143. They are cottars?—They are cottars, and they have got allotments.

14,144. Some of them?—Well, the bulk of them have. Those who are without allotments asked me in 1887 whether a part of the farm of Kilmore could not be set apart for allotments.

14,145. Who was the tenant before?—The minister.

14,146. Which of them?—Well, Mr Campbell never had it, I think; Major Grant has it now.

14,147. Who had it before these people applied?—Major Grant.

14,148. Had not the parish minister it as a farm, in addition to his glebe?—Oh yes, it has been the parish minister's farm for many ages. [*The Chairman.*—Has he no glebe?—He has a glebe besides. It is a very small farm—only 20 acres I think.]

14,149. In your opinion, which party would be considered by you more entitled to consideration in a matter of this kind,—the parish minister, who had a glebe, or the Lewiston cottars, who had no land at all?—[*The Chairman.*—Mr Mackay is not bound to answer that question.]

14,150. Was it at the time after the parish minister died, and after it was ascertained that his successor would not take it,—was it then that the cottars applied for it?—It was, but Lady Seafield had a desire to retain this for the use of the parish minister.

14,151. Did Lady Seafield vouchsafe a very kind reply to the people through Mr Mackay, solicitor, Inverness, to the effect that it was her ladyship's pleasure to concede the prayer of the petition?—No, she did not. She certainly vouchsafed a very civil reply, and said that she would take the matter into her most serious consideration; and I may go farther and say that I myself expressed my opinion that it would be a good thing to give it to them. However, the higher authorities differed.

Now I will read a letter, a copy of a letter, from Mr Mackay, solicitor, Inverness, to John Macdougall, Borlum Bridge, the correspondent in this case:—

Blairbeg, 6th February 1888.

Dear Sir.—With reference to our meeting two weeks ago, as to the desire of yourself and certain others to get a portion of the Kilmore farm in lots, I laid the matter before Lady Seafield on Wednesday last, and her ladyship agreed to let the field between the plantation and the Lewiston and Kilmore road and east to the road in front of the manse, at Whitsunday 1889

This excludes the portion of the said field immediately in front of the churchyard. The arrangement cannot as yet be made as to the manner in which the field is to be divided, and the parties who are to get lots. Please read this letter to William Cumming and others interested.

Yours faithfully,

WILLIAM MACKAY.

To John Macdougall, Borlum Bridge.

14,152. Is that a copy of the letter sent?—Yes, that is my letter.

14,153. Was it after that that this land referred to was given to Major Grant as an addition to the biggest farm in the glen?—No, Major Grant had that farm for years before that.

14,154. And has it still?—And has it still. But I now recollect that a difficulty arose as to the valuation of the crops upon the land and as to who would pay for them, and some of the applicants were absolutely unable to pay.

14,155. Too poor to be relieved?—Too poor to be relieved, if you like to put it that way.

14,156. Might I ask, generally, a question or two with regard to the home farm, and if you are not in a position to answer detailed questions, then, of course, I have nothing more to say. May I ask if you can go into figures with regard to the home farm management?—No, I cannot.

14,157. And may I ask you as representing the estate here whether I can have an opportunity if I want to-morrow to put questions to Major Grant and to the manager of the farm?—I don't know.

14,158. I have some really relevant and important questions. [*The Chairman.*—We will see about that when it comes up. Meantime it is not for Mr Mackay to say, and I cannot have any bargain made with Mr Mackay or anyone as to our proceedings on any occasion.]

14,159. There was one statement which I understood Mr Mackay to make,—that the shooting of the deer forest was a great benefit to this part of the country,—among other things for this reason, that the small tenants had an outlet for selling their produce to the shooting tenant. Am I right in that?—Yes, that is the case.

14,160. Is there an arrangement, or agreement, or understanding between the shooting tenant and the factor, who has one of the biggest farms in the glen?—For his farm, which you call one of the biggest in the glen, he only pays £40 of rent.

14,161. Oh, I have no doubt his rent is fair. I hope it is, and I wish every rent was fair. But he has a good farm, and is it a fact also that the manager of the home farm has also a farm of his own?—He has got a small place, Delshangie.

14,162. It is a farm?—It is a farm, it is a croft.

14,163. How many farms are larger than that?—I will give you the rent. He has got 36 acres for which he pays £30.

14,164. How much hill grazing?—No hill grazing.

14,165. And has also the late gamekeeper another large farm?—Well, he is dead. He had Kerrowdown near the pier. Of course, it depends on what you call a large farm. He had 52 acres for which he paid £50.

14,166. Now is there an arrangement or an agreement by which, if the shooting tenant requires any farm produce to buy, the home farm supplies him in the first place, the factor's farm thereafter, the home farm manager's farm thereafter, and the farm of the late gamekeeper after that?—Is there such an arrangement?—It is understood that the sporting tenant takes his produce in the first place from the home farm. There is no understanding whatever so far as the other farms are concerned.

14,167. Can you, outside the farmers I have mentioned, mention any farm in the whole estate from which the sporting tenant buys produce?—Yes.

14,168. I should like to hear it?—I don't want to mention those in arrear, but I have had people coming continually to me for the last five years and saying—"Just leave this over till I sell my hay"—even as far up the glen as Polmaily.

14,169. *Mr Shaw Stewart.*—Selling hay to the shooting tenant?—Yes.

14,170. *The Chairman.*—Depending on the shooting tenant to pay their rents?—Yes.

[ADJOURNED.]

FIFTEENTH SITTING.

DRUMNADROCHIT, GLEN-URQUHART, INVERNESS-SHIRE, July 5, 1893.

Present:—

DAVID BRAND, Esq., Advocate, Sheriff of Ayr, and Chairman of the Crofters Commission, *Chairman.*
MICHAEL HUGH SHAW STEWART, Esq., M.P.
ANGUS SUTHERLAND, Esq., M.P.
JAMES NOEL MULLER FORSYTH, Esq.
GEORGE GORDON, Esq.
REV. MALCOLM MACCALLUM.
JOHN MACLEOD, Esq.
HENRY MUNRO, Esq.
WILLIAM MACKENZIE, Esq., *Secretary.*

WILLIAM MACKAY, Solicitor, Inverness (recalled)—*examined.*

14,171. *The Chairman.*—You desire to make an additional statement?—I may explain that I find that the statement which Major Grant intended to make is all embodied in my statement of yesterday, except one or two things. His is a repetition of mine to a very large extent, but I wish to make an addition or two to my statement. There are several items which your lordship wanted which I shall be glad to supply, but I do not remember exactly what they were. At the very outset I wish to refer to an application made in 1887, by cottars in Lewiston, for allotments on the farm of Kilmore sometime occupied by the minister. Your lordship will remember that I yesterday stated that in 1887 I recommended that the allotments should be granted. Major Grant yesterday was sitting at some little distance from me, and was unable to let me know then that my recommendation had been finally agreed to by the estate authorities some months ago, and that it would be given effect to at Whitsunday next. I was not aware of that yesterday. So that the letter of mine read yesterday has been given effect to.

14,172. What is the extension granted?—The bulk of the farm of Kilmore is to be divided among cottars in Lewiston in village allotments.

14,173. Is it arable land?—Arable.

14,174. And on the average how much is each to get?—About 2½ acres. Your lordship will find on going through the glen that a great many small allotments are at Lewiston already; in fact, the allotment system has been in force since the end of last century.

14,175. And have they agreed to this?—We do not know yet to what tenants these subjects are to be given, but the lands will be given to the most deserving cottars.

14,176. And how many are to get allotments?—I think there are about six or seven who applied.

14,177. Are all these to get allotments?—I think so, if they be able to take them. There are about 28 acres in the farm altogether, and, as I have said, we do not say we will give them the whole of it, but we will certainly give the bulk of it.

14,178. What is the next matter?—Your lordship wanted certain information from me yesterday, some figures, I don't remember exactly what they were.

Drumnadrochit.

William Mackay.

14,179. I wanted to examine you about the deer forest, but you said Major Grant knew more about it, and I was going to take him over that matter?—Very well, my lord. I understand I gave all the information as to the extent of the deer forest.

14,180. *Mr Sutherland.*—Have you any additional information to what you gave us yesterday about the deer forest?—Except the expenditure of Mr Martin.

14,181. About the deer forest?—No, I have not.

14,182. *The Chairman.*—The information which I mainly desire—but perhaps Major Grant is better able to give it me—is beginning with the estate as a whole, and then proceeding to particulars and the areas into which the different portions of land are divided. Now you gave me so much of that, but not the whole?—Well, Major Grant is not at present able to give any more than I gave yesterday.

14,183. Will you be able to give any more?—No, but I can send in a statement.

14,184. Please do that—a signed statement, please?—I should like your lordship to tell me exactly what you want.

14,185. You have given us so much, but not the whole information. The total area of the estate?—I have given that already.

14,183. The area under deer?—I have given that also.

14,187. The area under what may be called large farms?—Yes. The arable and grazing?—Yes.

14,188. The area under crofts, arable, and grazing, and the area under plantation?—I have given that.

14,189. I am not sure that you did?—I gave the area under wood.

14,190. Area under water and waste. I don't know whether you have that here. It is an important element on some estates, but I don't know what it may be here?—Oh yes, it is here also.

14,191. Then the rent of the deer forest, I think we have got that?—Yes.

14,192. The names of the large farmers, with the rent of each?—Yes.

14,193. I mean by 'large farms' farms above £30 of rent?—Yes.

14,194. The total rent payable by the crofters, and, with regard to the deer forest, the expectation at the beginning of each season of what the amount of sport is to be, the number of stags?—Well, there is a limit; I suppose I had better mention the limit.

14,195. Yes, the limit. Then I am anxious to get something of the history of the deer forest; perhaps Major Grant can give us that now?—Are you disinclined to be examined, Major Grant?—[*Major Grant.*—Not at all, but I have just to repeat the same information.]

14,196. Well, I want this, Mr Mackay. We begin with the total area of the forest, the origin of the forest, with its total area, then the additions made from time to time?—I can give you that in a few minutes.

14,197. Very well. The extent of these additions, and where they were taken from?—I am afraid we will have to write a separate statement as to deer forest.

14,198. Containing the formation of the forest, the additions made from time to time, the farms or other subjects from which these additions were taken, and the rent or estimated yearly value of each?—Yes.

14,199. Then I would like also the number of cottars on the estate?—I think I gave that yesterday.

14,200. Perhaps you have given us it?—Yes, I gave 108 cottars.

14,201. Just so. Passing from these matters, you gave us the expenditure on the estate from 1852 to 1893; can you give the rental for that period?—Yes, to 1892 I think it was. Do you wish it every year? I can give it every year.

14,202. Every year. Then I think you mentioned a rent of £628?—That was the value put upon the grazings taken from the farms to make the forest.

14,203. Upon the whole of the grazings?—Upon the whole of the grazings.

14,204. How is that rent arrived at?—Well, it was valued at the time; I think Mr George G. Mackay was the valuator, whom your lordship has no doubt heard of.

14,205. Was that the sum added to the rent of the deer forest to make the total rent of the enlarged deer forest?—That was the total rent of the whole lands converted into deer forest, including the original forest.

14,206. Then how do these figures compare with the rents of the lands before they were afforested?—I can give you that.

14,207. *Mr Macleod.*—I cannot see how he can give that.—Of course I can; our books are exceedingly well kept.

14,208. What I want to arrive at is this. The £628 was not a rent,—it was a valuation?—Yes.

14,209. And it was a valuation made for the proprietor?—Oh no, for the tenants as well; there were two parties to the bargain.

14,210. But it came out in evidence yesterday that there was a particular addition made to the forest from the grazings of the township of Bunloit, Wester and Easter?—There was no addition made to the forest from the grazings of Easter Bunloit.

14,211. Was not there?—Well, from Bunloit; it came out in evidence that, when rearranging the rents of these tenants, a man had his rent increased?—No, I don't think so.

14,212. Instead of being decreased?—I don't think so. There was a readjustment, as I mentioned, of all the holdings on the estate at that time, and if his rent was increased he got more land. Between 1855 and 1860 the whole estate was surveyed, and the holdings to a great extent readjusted. Every one who lost an acre of grazing that went into the forest got a reduction of rent for it.

14,213. *Mr Maccallum.*—Did the farmers get a reduction of £628?—I will send you a statement about that,—I think they did, amounting to £626, 2s. £628 is the amount that was returned for the valuation roll, putting £2 on it.

14,214. *Mr Macleod.*—But you cannot tell us exactly how that valuation was arrived at?—Not just now, but I think I will in this statement of mine. My impression is that neither Major Grant nor I can tell exactly,—he is new to the estate, and I am not very old,—my impression is that the place was valued by Mr George Mackay.

14,215. *The Chairman.*—Is that an independent valuation made by a skilled man?—Quite an independent valuation.

14,216. It was accepted by the estate?—Accepted by the estate and by the tenants. As a matter of fact, the whole estate was valued by Mr Mackay,—every holding.

14,217. And that was a part of the proceeding?—Yes.

14,218. *Mr Sutherland.*—May I ask if that is the Mr Mackay who had to do with the Rosehall estate?—That is the gentleman. He was the tenant of Divach at the time.

14,219. *Mr Macleod.*—Would you be able to supply this information,—whether that £626 odds represents the difference between the old rents of those tenants who had their grazings curtailed or entirely taken away, and the new?—Well, I will give you a short statement giving the rents of the lands before the afforestment, and the rents after, so that you may see the difference.

14,220. *The Chairman.*—Do you wish to say anything more?—Nothing more.

14,221. I think I have mentioned the principal things I wanted to get from you?—The only thing I would add, not to interrupt you, my lord, is this, that according to his bank book, which I have seen, Mr Bradley Martin spends on an average £10,000 a year in this district, including the town of Inverness.

14,222. That includes the rent?—That includes the rent, of course, the £3100 of rent. The whole of the sum I refer to, I may say, is spent in Inverness and Glen-Urquhart, every penny of it; it covers nothing from the South.

14,223. You mean that he buys locally?—He buys locally, but principally in Inverness.

Drumnadrochit. William Mackay.

14,224. I suppose there are no places of purchase here?—Not many. Of course, that includes workmen about him, and the hay, &c.

14,225. Could you give me an idea how much he spends per annum in wages?—Perhaps Major Grant can help you?—Unfortunately Major Grant has not made out a statement, but we will give you this expenditure under the various heads.

14,226. When does his lease expire?—I wrote a new lease for him last year, for three years. There is this season and the next to run.

14,227. *Mr Maccallum.*—Will the statement show how much of the expenditure goes to the crofters?—[*The Chairman.*—We will be able to judge from the nature of the expenditure whether the crofters will benefit]. We would like to know how much is purchased from crofters, as compared with what he gets from the large farmers and the home farm?—We will endeavour to give you that. The home farm, I may mention frankly, as I said yesterday, supplies the shooting tenants as far as it can, but it is a small farm for such an estate, and the bulk of the supplies are bought from outside. With respect to an insinuation made yesterday that after the home farm the factor's farm came, I spoke to the Major this morning, and asked about that. Major Grant said 'well, I will tell 'you this, I was the last man last year who sold hay, 'because he would not give me enough. He went to 'the other farmers and the crofters before he took mine.'

14,228. *Mr Sutherland.*—The statement was, if I remember rightly, that an agreement was entered into, and you did not deny it?—I did. I said it was only in reference to the home farm that he was to take his supplies; every shooting tenant does that, you know.

14,229. *The Chairman.*—I understand Mr Mackay's answer to be a denial of the insinuation?—The second insinuation? It was insinuated that there was an arrangement by which after getting supplies as far as possible from the home farm, the shooting tenant was next to get them from the factor's farm, then from the manager's farm, and after that from the late gamekeeper's farm. I say that the statement about his going from the one to the other is absolutely untrue.

14,230. *Mr Sutherland.*—With regard to the expenditure, you say you derived your knowledge from the bank book. But does Mr Martin not pay any other accounts which may pass through the bank book?—Not from the north.

14,231. You see it would be difficult for us to contrast the figures unless you could also give us a statement of the expenditure of the crofters?—What do you mean by that?

14,232. Whatever they expend on household expenses and otherwise.—Of course, I cannot go to every crofter's fireside and ask how much it costs him to live through the year.

14,233. *Mr Munro.*—I suppose that the shooting tenant spends the £10,000 mainly in the gratification of his own pleasure?—I have no doubt if he did not like it he would not spend it.

14,234. Does he spend any of it in improvements or other useful work?—Well, he is very generous.—I do not think, my lord, that that is a subject that we have any right to go into.

14,235. *The Chairman.*—I doubt the propriety of pursuing this farther.—I should prefer personally not to go into it farther.

14,236. *Mr Sutherland.*—You volunteered a statement as to the expenditure of a gentleman who is in the occupation of this land; and the proper comparison would be the expenditure of the people from whom this land was taken?—I cannot give you that.

14,237. *Mr Maccallum.*—You volunteered the statement of the expenditure yourself?—Oh yes.

14,238. You were not asked to give it?—I volunteered it.

14,239. *Mr Macleod.*—We are entitled to know how you make it up.

14,240. *Mr Munro.*—I take it that your object in making the statement was to show that it is an advantage to the estate to have that expenditure?—That there is a lot of money spent in the district that otherwise would not be spent in it; that is my sole object.

Drumnadrochit. William Mackay.

14,241. But I wish to say that there is not much of that £10,000 spent in permanent improvements or other productive labour; it is principally spent on luxuries?—Well, it is a very good thing to spend money on luxuries; somebody benefits.

14,242. *Mr Macleod.*—The people do not benefit by these luxuries; they have no luxuries to sell?—Oh, they have, you would be surprised.

14,243. *The Chairman.*—Does any commissioner desire that Major Grant should be examined, or are we satisfied with the information afforded by Mr Mackay; or does Major Grant desire to be examined himself?

14,244. *Major Grant.*—Mr Mackay's statement is really the same as mine; we compared notes, and my statement is contained in his.

14,245. *Witness.*—This is really Major Grant's statement as well as mine; I have given you the whole of it.

14,246. *Mr Sutherland.*—I have only to remark, my lord, on the inconvenience of being referred yesterday, when Mr Mackay was under examination, to Major Grant for certain information, and of, therefore, postponing questions on that account.

14,247. *Witness.*—It was only at the very outset that I referred to him.

14,248. *The Chairman.*—Do you desire Major Grant to be examined, Mr Sutherland.

14,249. *Mr Sutherland.*—Oh no, I have no desire.

14,250. *Mr Donald Macrae, Plockton.*—Might I be allowed to ask the witness one or two questions?—Mr Mackay has made an absolute denial. He said that a certain insinuation was absolutely untrue. I would like Mr Mackay to state, apart from the insinuation to which he refers, in order that that point may be thoroughly cleared, is it a fact that there is an agreement between the estate and the shooting tenant, that the shooting tenant shall buy and will buy the farm produce from the home farm? Is that absolutely true or absolutely untrue?—I admitted, my lord.

14,251. That it is absolutely true?—Don't put words into my mouth, Mr Macrae; I know how to answer. [*The Chairman.*—You must allow the witness to answer.] The lease provides, my lord, that the shooting tenant shall take his provisions, or whatever farm produce he requires from the home farm at current prices. You will find that provision in every shooting lease where there is a home farm at all.

14,252. Would Mr Mackay now give us the names of the lands that have been in the occupation of tenants at one time, but that have within the last sixteen years been added to the home farm?—Within the last sixteen years?

14,253. Sixty?—Well, Balmacaan, the upper Balmacaan lands, were added to the home farm. These were all. But the farm of Clunebeg, which was for many years in the hands of Mr Mitchell, a non-resident tenant—Mr Mitchell, C.E., Inverness—is now in the proprietor's hands.

14,254. Is there an estate regulation against the letting of lands on this property to absentee tenants?—I do not think so, but I will put in a copy of the regulations.

14,254*a*. *Mr Sutherland.*—But surely you know if there is?—I don't think there is, but I should prefer to refer to the regulations themselves.

14,255. *The Chairman.*—A witness is always entitled, when a question is put bearing on a document, to refer to that document?—These are the estate regulations. (*Hands in document.*)

14,256. *Mr Donald Macrae.*—Has the estate in any case within your knowledge given the preference to an absentee tenant over a native tenant living in the glen, in the matter of letting land?—The estate has never in my knowledge given preference to an absentee tenant.

14,257. Did the tenant of Divach, who is also governor of the poorhouse I think in Dumbarton, get the preference over any native in regard to the croft on

Drumnadrochit.

William Mackay.

the hill there a few years ago?—He was selected as the tenant of that farm, but he is a native of the glen; his forefathers have been here for hundreds of years, and he has got a house in the glen in which his mother was living at the time.

14,258. Is he a pluralist farmer?—He has got his own original croft, and a sub-tenancy of another croft near it; and he has the farm of Divach.

14,259. And he has farms elsewhere in the country?—He has got a farm, I understand, in Dumbartonshire.

14,260. And he is an absentee farmer?—No, he goes from place to place.

14,261. He is still governor of this institution in Dumbarton?—I really cannot tell you; I don't know much about his private affairs.

14,262. What time of the year does he occupy this farm?—I cannot tell you, but he is there pretty often.

14,263. Does he occupy it two months in the year?—I cannot tell you.

14,264. Does he occupy it one month in the year?—I cannot tell you.

14,265. I should like to ask some questions with regard to the home farm. I should like to ask the names of the tenants who sell any produce or who have within the last five years sold any produce direct to Mr Bradley Martin?—I gave you a reason yesterday for not divulging the names of the tenants with whom I had to do, and I am not going to do it.

14,266. Will you give the names privately to the Royal Commission?—Yes, I will give a list privately, on condition that it is not to be published, my lord. [*The Chairman.*—That is giving it privately.]

14,267. Very privately. Will you consent to my seeing that list?—No. I am perfectly willing that all the commissioners should see it, but no outsider.

14,268. Is the home farm worked to a profit?—No, I believe it is not.

14,269. How much does the proprietor lose by it every year?—Well, she loses so much that if you are willing to give a very good rent for it, she will let it to you.

14,270. My lord, I should like to know how much the proprietrix has lost by this home farm each year?—I must decline to answer that question. [*The Chairman.*—I don't think the witness is bound to answer that question at all.]

14,271. There is a portion, my lord, of that farm, the portion that was taken from the people, that certainly was worked to a handsome profit to the proprietrix during the time these people had it. And our contention is that the same portion, and more, could be worked to a profit so far as the proprietrix is concerned.

14,272. *The Chairman.*—But, Mr Macrae, you did not lay the basis for your question on that footing. You simply asked him the general question whether the home farm was being worked to a profit, and he declined to answer that question, as I think he is quite within his right in doing. [*Witness*] I said it was not worked to a profit, but I must decline to give the loss, or to give any particulars.

14,273. I must say I don't think you are bound to disclose any particulars with regard to Lady Seafield's private expenditure.

14,274. *Mr Donald Macrae.*—Might I ask whether the portion called Balmacaan, to which we have been referring, and which has been taken from the people, has been worked to a profit since the people were evicted?—That portion has been amalgamated with the home farm for the last thirty years, or for the last twenty-five years, and it is impossible now to separate the profits of one field from another.

14,275. Was that land to which I refer, worked to a profit to the proprietrix during the time the people had it as tenants?—Oh, but it could not have been worked to the benefit of the proprietrix if the people had it you know.

14,276. Was that land used to a profit to the proprietrix during that time?—Do you mean did she get any rents?

14,277. Yes?—Well, she got rent occasionally, but a good deal of arrears had to be struck off.

14,278. You mentioned that there were eight tenants. Could you tell us whether they were all in arrear?—I cannot tell you.

14,279. Would you be surprised to know that the majority of them were not a penny in arrear?—Well, I cannot speak about that particular time, but I know that in 1853 almost every tenant in Glen-Urquhart was in arrear.

14,280. How many years since they were evicted has the home farm been worked to a profit?—I cannot tell you, but I know that I was consulted with in the last two months, as to letting the farm.

14,281. Has it been worked at all to a profit any year since the people were evicted?—It has certainly, but there has been very great depression, you know, within the last few years. It used to be worked to a profit.

14,282. Was the rent of that farm reduced to what the estate considered a fair rent at the time the others were reduced?—Yes.

14,283. How many years back is it since that farm has showed the last profit?—I cannot tell you.

14,284. Will you undertake to send in a statement bearing on that question?—I don't think so; I don't think I will.

14,285. Well, I am very much disappointed, my lord, at the answers which Mr Mackay has given, and I am also very much disappointed that the manager of the home farm is not there to give information; because a very direct statement is made before the Royal Commission here that this deer forest is a great blessing to the people in this particular respect, that the shooting tenant buys produce from these tenants; and now we are refused to get the names of the tenants from whom the produce is bought.

14,286. *The Chairman.*—Did you send any notice to Mr Garland that you wished to examine him?

14,287. *Mr Donald Macrae.*—I gave notice to Mr Mackay last night before the Royal Commission here that I should like it very much. [*Witness.*—I never heard it, my lord.]

14,288. *The Chairman.*—Mr Macrae stated he would like to ask some questions about the home farm.

14,289. *Mr Donald Macrae.*—Regarding the management of the home farm, and I asked Mr Mackay if I would have an opportunity of examining the manager, and of getting certain information, and he said he would undertake that it would be given.

14,290. *Mr Shaw Stewart.*—I never heard you say anything about the manager of the home farm.

14,291. *Mr Donald Macrae.*—Perhaps I did not mention him by name, but I said I would like to have an opportunity of asking him questions.

14,292. *Witness.*—I did not even hear that.

14,293. *The Chairman.*—Oh yes, I heard that.—Very well, my lord.

14,294. *Mr Donald Macrae.*—Well, I must say, my lord, that I am very much disappointed with regard to this matter. I think we are entitled to ask for it.

14,295. *The Chairman.*—If you wish to obtain farther information which the Commission deems relevant, you are at perfect liberty, as on any other occasion, to ask the attendance of such witnesses as you think can best give that information.

14,296. *Mr Donald Macrae.*—Well, I am entirely in the hands of the Royal Commission in this matter; but here a direct statement has been made that the deer forest is a great benefit to the glen, because, among other things, the farm produce of the tenants of the glen is bought by the shooting tenant; and here by the witness for the estate we are told that we shall not be supplied with the name of one single individual who sells his produce to the shooting tenant?—I did not say so; I declined to supply it publicly, but I have undertaken to supply his lordship with a statement for the private use of the commissioners.

14,297. But I want to point out that Mr Mackay totally objects to my seeing the names of any such?—Certainly; you have no right to see it.

14,298. I am under the painful necessity of asking Mr Mackay this question in conclusion. I am sorry

to have to ask the question.—[*The Chairman.*—What is the question?]—I shall give the question this moment. Is it the fact that the farm manager sells some of the farm produce of the home farm to a tenant here and there in the glen, and binds himself that within a certain time he will buy it back from them with a profit; and does it happen thus that there is an appearance in some transactions that produce is bought from native tenants, when actually and really there is nothing but a transfer of produce from the home farm nominally?—I don't believe that is the fact, and I can certainly say that Lady Seafield is not aware of that fact, if it is a fact. [*The Chairman.*—Have you heard of it before?—I never heard of it before.]

14,299. Well, so far as we are concerned, we are boycotted in regard to this information.—I am very sorry to say we are practically boycotted, and I cannot ask any further questions.

14,300. *The Chairman.*—Do you wish to examine Major Grant?

14,301. *Mr Donald Macrae.*—If he undertakes to give evidence with regard to the home farm,—to speak with the knowledge that the manager of a home farm ought to possess.

14,302. *Major Grant.*—I decline to give any undertaking.

14,303. *Mr Shaw Stewart.*—I must say I think, since this charge is brought here, that the gentleman who has just spoken ought to have given the manager of the home farm notice that he was going to bring this question forward, because this is a very serious charge that he has made. I think he should have given notice before he brought forward such a charge as he has now made.

14,304. *Mr Donald Macrae.*—My lord, I have been taken quite as much by surprise as any member of the Royal Commission could have been. I was told here yesterday that Mr Mackay was not to be here at all to-day.

14,305. *Witness.*—Are you sorry to see me here?

14,306. *Mr Donald Macrae.*—I am very glad to see that Mr Mackay is better; I am delighted that he is able to be here.

14,307. *The Chairman.*—I rather imagine Mr Mackay did not intend to appear again to-day. *Witness.*—That is the case, but my experience here yesterday has benefited me so much that I have been able to come back.

14,308. *Mr Donald Macrae.*—I had thought one of the delegates from the glen would be under examination when I came in, and I find that the Royal Commission are still investigating matters that were before them yesterday. I certainly thought that Major Grant and the manager of the home farm would have been here to give evidence to-day, after the remarks I made yesterday when Mr Mackay declined to answer any questions with regard to the home farm.

14,309. *The Chairman.*—Mr Macrae, what is your foundation for that charge—the charge implied in your question to Mr Mackay?

14,310. *Mr Donald Macrae.*—Am I under examination, my lord?

14,311. *The Chairman.*—No, no, you can answer or not, just as you please.

14,312. *Mr Donald Macrae.*—I am refused an answer to the questions I have put, and while I am not under examination as a delegate am I going to stand to be examined as if I were? I undertake to give the Royal Commission every assistance, but I refuse to answer questions while I am refused answers to my questions.

14,313. *The Chairman.*—I must ask Major Grant the question. Do you refuse to be examined about the home farm, Major Grant?

14,314. *Major Grant.*—Yes, my lord, I do.

14,315. *The Chairman.*—You do?

14,316. *Major Grant.*—Yes. It is a private matter. I refuse to answer any incompetent questions.

14,317. *The Chairman.*—The question of competency of evidence, of course, rests with the Commissioners; but do you refuse to be examined upon any matter with regard to the home farm?

14,318. *Major Grant.*—Well, I think it has been answered already. Drumnadrochit.

14,319. *The Chairman.*—That is another thing, but are you willing to put yourself under examination with regard to all relevant questions. William Mackay.

14,320. *Mr Mackay.*—My lord, I will undertake this, that an account for the last year will be sent to your lordship, showing whether there was a profit or not.

14,321. *The Chairman.*—That is another matter. Are you willing to be examined and give an answer to all relevant questions with regard to the home farm?

14,322. *Major Grant.*—Yes, my lord, I would rather not, because I consider it is a private matter of Lady Seafield's.

14,323. *The Chairman.*—It is not what you consider, but what the Commission consider admissible evidence. Now, are you willing to answer all admissible and relevant questions?

14,324. *Major Grant.*—No, my lord.

14,325. *The Chairman.*—You are not?

14,326. *Major Grant.*—I beg pardon; I have misunderstood the question.

14,327. *The Chairman.*—Are you willing to answer all admissible questions?

14,328. *Major Grant.*—Yes, my lord.

14,329. *The Chairman.*—Kindly stand forward.

MAJOR WILLIAM GRANT, Factor for the Countess Dowager of Seafield (70)—*examined.* William Grant.

14,330. *The Chairman.*—How long have you been factor on this estate?—For nineteen years.

14,331. When you came to the estate, was the deer forest in existence?—Oh, yes, all except the grazing of Drumclune, which was added to it after I came—I think the year I came.

14,332. Can you tell me what the rent of the forest was in the year you came?—Not without reference to papers. [*Mr Mackay.*—The statement that I have undertaken to produce, my lord, will show that.]

14,333. Very well. Now in what year was Drumclune added?—In 1872, I think.

14,334. Can you tell me what addition was made to the rent then? or perhaps that will appear in the statement?—That will be in the statement. The sheep were taken over from Drumclune at valuation.

14,335. Now some questions have been asked with regard to the home farm. What is the extent of the home farm?—Well, we will get that from the paper that is promised. But let me ask this; the home farm, I understand, is in the hands of the proprietrix?—Yes.

14,336. Is there any agreement with regard to the furnishing of supplies by the home farm to the shooting tenant?—The lease expresses it.

14,337 The lease sets forth the obligation?—That the home farm will supply him as far as its proceeds will allow; and then Mr Martin gets the home farm manager to buy in from the country to supply the deficiency.

14,338. Where does he buy in?—From the farmers round about.

14,339. Does he buy any from crofters?—Yes. I paid a crofter the day before yesterday for 303 dozen eggs for Mr Martin.

14,340. 303 dozen eggs from a crofter?—Yes, John Cumming, Balnaglack,—I think that is the name. Or James Cumming, it may be.

14,341. Has Mr Bradley Martin any dealings with the crofters direct?—No, all through the home farm.

14,342. Now do any transactions so far as you know take place of the nature indicated by Mr Macrae's question?—No, my lord, as far as I know, I do not think so; the accounts are audited every year by the Commissioner.

14,343. Have you ever heard of such a transaction?—Never.

14,344. That is to say, a kind of fictitious transfer by the home farm to the crofter, and then a re-sale by the crofter to the home farm on behalf of the shooting

Drumnadrochit.

William Grant.

tenant?—I never heard that. I am sure I must have heard of it if anything of the kind had happened.

14,345. If it exists, you have no knowledge of it?—No knowledge of it whatever.

14,346. The manager of the home farm is Mr Garland?—Yes.

14,347. Is he here to-day?—I don't think so; he is working. [*Mr Garland.*—Yes, I am here.]

14,348. Would you stand up, if you please. You are quite willing to be examined, I suppose?

14,349. *Mr Garland.*—Oh, I am not prepared, but Mr Mackay is here representing me, and he has all my books and all the returns I keep.

14,350. *The Chairman.*—I am very glad you are here, however. [*To witness*]. What rent does James Cumming pay?—I think he pays £12, he has two small places.

14,351. You mentioned a transaction in eggs. Does the home farm get other produce than that from the crofters?—This is merely for the gamekeepers department,—for feeding pheasants.

14,352. But, of course, that was paid for by Mr Bradley Martin?—Yes, that was paid by me on his behalf. I keep a bank account for my payments on his behalf.

14,353. Are all payments made through you?—To the gamekeepers,—not the coals and the like of that for the cover shooting which he pays himself.

14,354. Are many of these payments through you made to crofters?—I pay merchants and others, but I pay also the home farm. Just the other day I gave a cheque to Mr Garland for hay, £35, that he bought from a farmer.

14,355. But suppose produce is obtained from crofters, how are they paid? Who pays them?—Mr Garland. He has a statement of accounts which he hands in to me every time that Mr Martin is here, showing full details, and all that appears in the home farm accounts, and that is audited by the Commissioner.

14,356. Who is the Commissioner?—Mr Logan of Edinburgh,

14,357. *Mr Shaw Stewart.*—You heard the question put by Mr Macrae, I suppose? At any rate, as regards the 300 dozen of eggs, it is not very likely that they would be sold previously to Mr Cumming before they were sold by him to you?—No, I do not think so. Very likely he has been gathering them up from other people.

14,358. They did not originate from the home farm, at any rate?—Not from the home farm at all.

14,359. You mentioned something about covert shooting. Does the shooting tenant come here in winter?—He comes here about the 8th of August, and generally stays on till the month of February or March.

14,360. So that he is here not only through the stalking season, but there is a certain amount of expenditure about the house through the whole autumn and winter?—Yes.

14,361. As a rule?—Oh, yes.

14,362. *Mr Sutherland.*—I wish to ask you one question, Major Grant. The manager has quite his own discretion as to whom he shall buy from outside the home farm?—Certainly, he could buy from whom he likes.

14,363. And you do not interfere in any way with his discretion?—None whatever.

14,364. He buys from whom he likes?—From whom he likes.

14,365. Now then with regard to the 3636 eggs that one man provided, they are supplied by the country round about?—Round about as far as this man can gather them; he could not have that number himself, of course.

14,366. Then as to the price obtained for them?—7d. a dozen.

14,367. How does that compare with the prices they could get for them in Glasgow or Edinburgh?—I don't know.

14,368. Have you any reason to suppose that they get a bigger figure for them than they would by sending them to Glasgow or Edinburgh?—I don't know what the price is in big towns, but 7d. a dozen is considered a very good price here.

Drumnadrochit.

William Grant.

14,369. But you could not say exactly what profit it is to them to sell them here rather than send them away?—No. Of course, it is less trouble to sell them here. [*Mr Mackay.*—They are not bound to sell them here. *Witness.*—Oh, no.]

14,370. Then, with regard to the deer forest, you stated the time when Drumclune was added to the forest?—Yes.

14,371. What forest was in existence in 1872?—All except the Drumclune grazings.

14,372. And what was the year of the formation of it for the first time?—1857 I think it was, 1857 or 1858.

14,373. And what was the extent of it at first?—The first afforested was Glencoilty.

14,374. What was first made into forest?—Glencoilty grazing, and the high lands of Lochletter and Shewglie; a year or two afterwards Rusgich was added, which had been in Mr Mitchell's hands.

14,375. And when was the last addition made to it?—1871 I think, 1871 or 1872. I remember that the sheep were down here that were taken over at valuation; a great number of them died, I remember.

14,376. You heard the estimate made as to the probable number of sheep that used to be carried. Have you anything to say as to that?—An old man who was well acquainted with the forest told me it carried 8000.

14,377. So that substantially the figure given is correct?—8000 or thereabout.

14,378. *Mr Munro.*—You allowed to-day that the home farm was carried on at a considerable loss. Now will not that loss be an item falling to be deducted from the gross rental of the deer forest?—Certainly; it will come off the income of the estate.

14,379. The gross rental of the forest is over £3000, and Mr Mackay has promised to furnish a statement showing what the net rent is which her ladyship receives after deducting the value of grazings, wages, and so on, also the loss on the Balmacaan farm.—Well, I have myself been farming at a loss lately,—a considerable loss, and the farm of Kilmore, which her ladyship has now sanctioned to be broken up in lots, I lost £100 by in the last six years.

14,380. But you admit that this item of loss on Balmacaan farm must necessarily fall to be deducted?—Oh, certainly, from the revenue of the estate.

14,381. *Mr Maccallum.*—With regard to the grazings incorporated into the deer forest, were the sheep taken over at valuation in every case?—I don't know what was done, I know the Rusgich were, I saw the accounts, and I suppose the rest were also. Rusgich was, and Drumclune, but I can't say what was done with the others.

14,382. Could you provide the exact figures as to the number of sheep taken over at valuation?—I don't know, it is in my office. [*Mr Mackay.*—I think that is rather a good suggestion, my lord; I will try to get that]. It may be in the estate office at Cullen.

14,383. It is desirable that we should have the exact number taken over?—Oh, certainly.

14,384. *Mr Macleod.*—As to this announcement that was made by Mr Mackay to-day about the proposed extension of grazing for these. [*Mr Mackay.*—No, no; new allotments] new allotments, have you had any communication from Lady Seafield?—I arranged it last March, when my accounts were examined by the Commissioner; I said I wished to throw up this farm, as I was losing money by it. Then she said you had better give it to the people; break it up as far as it will go among the Lewiston householders. That would give about 2½ acres to each.

14,385. *Mr Sutherland.*—Are you in a position to state the conditions upon which you are to give that land to the cottars?—No, I am not. There may be crops to be taken over at valuation,—first and second year's crops,—and unexhausted manure, and things of that kind.

14,386. *The Chairman.*—This expression of willing-

ness on Lady Seafield's part to assign this land to the Lewiston crofters was made in March last?—March last. But, then, of course, I said it could not take effect until next year.

14,387. *Mr Maccallum.*—And the application was made in 1887?—In 1887; but we kept it on, hoping probably the minister would take it.

14,388. And it was in your occupation from that time till now?—Till now.

14,389. *Mr Donald Macrae.*—I understood the Major to say that quite recently he bought 3636 eggs from the tenant.—I did not say I bought them; I paid for them.

14,390. Paid for them. Is the gentleman to whom payment was made James Cumming, general and provision merchant?—I don't know whether he has a shop, but he has some little bits of land.

14,391. Is he a general and provision merchant?—I have not been near his house for years.

14,392. Would Major Grant be surprised to know that this 'tenant' to whom he paid is a general and provision merchant who sells eggs just as he sells butter or yellow cotton?—Well, I suppose he must pay the tenants round about him for the eggs; he would not get them for nothing.

14,393. *The Chairman.*—Is he a crofter under the Act of Parliament?—Yes.

14,394. Not under lease?—Oh, yes, he is under lease; they are all under lease.

WILLIAM GARLAND, Manager of Balmacaan Home Farm [about 60]—*examined.*

14,395. *The Chairman.*—How long have you been manager of the home farm?—For twenty-two years.

14,396. That farm is in the hands of the proprietrix?—Yes.

14,397. Mr Macrae, do you wish to examine this witness?—*Mr Macrae.*—No, I leave him entirely in your Royal Commissioners' hands.

14,398. You heard the question put by Mr Macrae as to the transactions between you and the crofters?—Yes, I heard the false statement.

14,399. Is there any foundation in fact for the insinuation contained in that question?—Well, I was not prepared to be examined to-day, my lord; I depended on Mr Mackay and Major Grant. [*Mr Mackay.*—Is there any foundation?]—No foundation.

14,400. *Mr Macrae.*—Will Mr Garland give the names of the parties from whom he buys produce?—I have got nothing to do with it, sir.

14,401. I think, my lord, the factor stated that it was Mr Garland who made the transactions.—Yes, that is all right.

14,402. *The Chairman.*—You are asked to give the names of those from whom you buy produce. It is my duty to tell you you are not bound to give these names unless you choose.—Oh, I can do it easily, if I had got time; if I was made aware of it I could do it easily. [*Mr Mackay.*—You could get them from your books?—*Witness.* Easily that. *Mr Mackay.*—I have undertaken to send in a statement privately.]

14,403. Will that satisfy you, Mr Macrae?—[*Mr Macrae.*—Perfectly satisfied.]

14,404. *Mr Sutherland.*—I just want to ask you this question, Mr Garland. You have heard what Major Grant said, with regard to purchasing supplies for the shooting tenant outside the home farm. You have an absolute discretion in that matter?—Yes.

14,405. You can buy from whom you like?—From whom I like outside.

14,406. And you exercise your own discretion?—Yes.

14,407. And no person is responsible for what is done in outside purchase, but you?—Nobody.

14,408. *Mr Munro.*—I think I overheard you remark that you heard some false statements made here to-day. By whom were these false statements made?—Some gentleman round here.

14,409. What are the false statements you refer to?—*Witness* to *Mr Mackay.* What was that again, Mr Mackay?—[*Mr Mackay.*—Do you mean the question that was put to me by Mr Macrae.]

14,410. *The Chairman.*—(*Question No.* 14,298 *read over twice to witness*). Is there any foundation for that statement?—Untrue, my lord. There is a merchant at Milton to whom I give my surplus produce at a very nominal price, and when the family comes to Balmacaan House, I take stuff from him at double or it may be three times the price in the quiet season when he buys from me. I am not getting money from the merchant for what I give him in the slack season, I balance with him at the end. That is all the statement.

14,411. *Mr Munro.*—You say you sell this produce to the merchant at a nominal price?—The price is low at the time.

14,412. What do you mean by a nominal price?—Of course, the country rates are very small,—say eggs may be worth 5d. or 6d. in the quiet season when he takes my surplus, but they may be worth 18d. or 20d. at the time the family is there.

14,413. Do you mean to say that you sell eggs at 5d. or 6d. a dozen, and buy the same eggs back again at 1s. 6d.?—Not the same eggs; but I buy eggs, or whatever I require, and balance things at the end of the season.

14,414. *Mr Gordon.*—It appears to amount to this simply, that you sell your surplus produce at the time being, and do not get paid for it at the time, and when you have occasion to buy back, there is a contra account, and the balance of money is paid?—That is so.

14,415. *Mr Munro.*—But, of course, you are getting the market value for the thing you sell?—Their market value at the time, but I would rather prefer money.

14,416. *Mr Maccallum.*—Do you actually buy back what you sell to the tenants?—Not at all.

14,417. It is not the same thing you buy back?—It cannot be.

14,418. *Mr Donald Macrae.*—Your lordship might ask this witness perhaps, did he ever sell anything but eggs, that he bought back again.

14,419. *The Chairman.*—You see he did not buy eggs back, Mr Macrae. He sold eggs or whatever he had to sell at the current prices, and he said he balanced up with the man at the end of the year.

14,420. *Mr Donald Macrae.*—Did he sell hay and buy it back again?

14,421. *The Chairman.*—You hear the question?—Untrue, my lord.

14,422. *Mr Shaw Stewart.*—Mr Chairman, I should very much like in view of what has passed, to ask Mr Macrae one or two questions, with your permission.

14,423. *The Chairman.*—Are you willing to be examined, Mr Macrae?

14,424. *Mr Donald Macrae.*—Certainly not.

14,425. *Mr Shaw Stewart.*—Is it not in our power to put him into the witness-box.

14,426. *The Chairman.*—Yes, we are entitled under the remit to call for information from any quarter.

14,427. *Mr Shaw Stewart.*—I beg to ask that Mr Macrae be examined.

14,428. *The Chairman.*—Would you kindly step forward, Mr Macrae?

14,429 *Mr Donald Macrae.*—Would your lordship allow me notice?

14,430. *The Chairman.*—No, I think that is not necessary; we are dealing with a matter with which you are perfectly familiar.

14,431. *Mr Donald Macrae.*—I certainly would be better prepared after notice to answer the question. I know what the question is.

DONALD MACRAE, 'Balallan,' Plockton—*examined.*

14,432. *Mr Shaw Stewart.*—I should like to ask if the insinuation you threw into your question to Mr Mackay was of your own knowledge, or merely from hearsay?—Oh, from hearsay.

Drumnadrochit. Donald Macrae.

14,433. What you picked up in the neighbourhood?—In the glen.

14,434. How long have you been in the glen?—Since Friday.

14,435. You are not a native of the glen?—No.

14,436. Have you been in the glen before?—Yes.

14,437. On business connected with the Commission?—No.

14,438. Are you paid for your services in collecting evidence?—Yes, just as Mr Mackay is paid by the landlord party for collecting evidence, exactly in the same position. Except that he is paid by the landlord party, and I am paid by the people, by subscriptions openly acknowledged in the public prints.

14,439. How do you mean that Mr Mackay is paid for collecting evidence?—He is factor and law agent for this property; he is agent for this property, and factor for a neighbouring one.

14,440. Yes, but he is paid as law agent and factor?—Exactly so, and I am paid as agent and factor for the Land Law Reform Association of Edinburgh and London.

14,441. Have you any other duties than collecting evidence for this Commission in your capacity as agent?—I collect evidence; I assist in collecting evidence; I assist in summarising the evidence; I assist particularly in disabusing the minds of the people, where that is necessary, of false notions, erroneous notions they may have with regard to the powers and functions of this Royal Commission; I assist them also in undergoing examination, and, generally, I assist in equipping them for putting their information in an intelligent manner before the Royal Commission.

14,442. Allow me to say that I think you ought to be very careful what insinuations you bring into your questions against a man's private character?—I made no insinuation; I meant no insinuation. May I be allowed to make a full answer with regard to the statement of Mr Shaw Stewart? My answer is this. I should be very sorry to make any insinuation against any honourable gentleman. I had this repeated to me at second-hand, possibly at third-hand, in the glen. I was very anxious yesterday evening and expressed my desire and anxiety to examine him, to hear examined the manager of the home farm, with the view to bringing out particularly this point, that the home farm does not pay the landlord, while when the people had a particular portion of it, it did pay to that extent. That was particularly what I had in view. Then, I was told that the factor would not give evidence, that the farm manager would not give evidence.

14,443. *Mr Mackay.*—No, I beg your pardon; I deny that, my lord.

14,444. *Witness.*—Mr Mackay refused to answer questions.

14,445. *Mr Mackay.*—I refused to answer a certain question.

14,446. *Witness.*—I was under the painful necessity of putting certain questions, but I meant no insinuations. If such insinuation appears to the members of the Commission to be contained in my questions, I most sincerely withdraw it.

14,447. *Mr Mackay.*—And apologise.

14,448. *Witness.*—Oh, certainly, I would; but I have nothing to apologise for; I think that for bringing out the truth I ought to be complimented, rather than have to apologise.

14,449. *The Chairman.*—You are satisfied there is no foundation for the insinuation contained in your question?—Perfectly.

14,450. *Mr Sutherland.*—With regard to the question of insinuation, it is a matter of opinion, no doubt; but do you think there is any insinuation contained in a question such as attributes the failure of the crofter system to the indolence of the people?—I think it is not only an insinuation, but a vile reflection upon the character of the noblest race on the face of the earth.

14,451. And are not you aware, as a matter of fact, that such insinuations have been made frequently before us?—Perfectly.

14,452. Against a whole race of people?—A whole race.

14,453. *Mr Macleod.*—Is it a fact that you have done what you could to facilitate the work of this Commission?—Most decidedly, sir, and I believe that unless I had appeared in this glen within the last five days I believe that two delegates would not have appeared before your Royal Commission to give evidence.

14,454. Is it a fact that you found this hearsay evidence with regard to those sales of produce very widespread in the district?—Very widespread, and one farmer told me that he was losing heavily year by year, and that he never got a single ounce bought off his farm by the estate. And he pointed out particularly that if the produce of the home farm would fail, there were other farms in reserve behind the home farm, and that he was going to the wall, and that he never had an opportunity of selling an ounce of his produce.

14,455. And was the object of your question to settle this matter one way or the other?—To settle it finally. I found fault, I severely censured those who approached me with this and who had not the moral courage themselves to come before the Royal Commission to state what they were stating to me in private; and I felt bound in the interests of truth ultimately to put the question, with a view to having it finally settled.

14,456. *Mr Munro.*—I suppose I may take it that your sole object in coming to the glen is to assist the Commission?—Most decidedly, and I may mention that last Saturday I went to this Bunloit district of three townships. There was not the remotest possibility that any of them would have come before the Royal Commission, with the exception of a landless cottar, one Donald Mackintosh,—there is not the remotest probability that one of these tenants would have come before the Royal Commission; and at last I infused,—I managed on Saturday night at 9 o'clock to infuse courage into them by telling them that if they would stand shoulder to shoulder and come in a body as delegates on an equal level they would be heard; and it was by getting them in a body,—they had not the courage to appoint delegates, but when I told them that if they came in a body Sheriff Brand would be very glad to see them I found that whether rightly or wrongly they were afraid of coming, but in a body they had less fear.

14,457. I take it that you found considerable difficulty in inducing them to come forward and give evidence?—Extreme difficulty. I mention this case as a case where no delegate would have come at all unless I had been there, and unless I had encouraged them to come in a body.

14,458. To what cause do you attribute that difficulty?—To years and ages of tyranny and oppression; most decidedly.

14,459. That is a system of intimidation?—I think that in this glen in particular a grievous mistake from the moral point of view,—I think a grievous mistake was comitted in the year 1887, when these people were induced to sign leases, instead of being encouraged, as the tenants were in other parts of the country, to demand their rights as conferred upon them by the Crofters Act. This had a most prejudicial effect in this glen, in my humble opinion.

14,460. *The Chairman.*—We are getting away from the point which you were brought here to speak to.

14,461. *Mr Gordon.*—May I ask this one question.—Did you find any strong evidence of poverty in this Bunloit place when you went there?—In this glen?

14,462. Yes.—I think this township of Lots.

14,463. I am asking about Bunloit?—Exactly so. I think that place is one of the poorest places I have ever visited. There are places on the west coast where poverty is more apparent, but in those places you have more courage and more manliness; here keeping in view the moral aspect of the case, and the material position of the people, I think they are as poor a people as I can see within the bounds of the country.

14,464. Do you mean poor in spirit, or poor in purse?—Poor in body and poor in soul.

14,465. Did you find material discontent?—Strong

Drumnadrochit. Donald Macrae.

discontent, strong discontent, sir,—very strong, and especially with regard to these leases. They feel sorely and they feel keenly that instead of being under the Imperial laws they are under the laws of the estate.

14,466. But you should know that the leases,—the Chairman will put me right if I am wrong,—the leases given in 1887 would not prevent them from coming under the Crofters Act if they chose?—Mr Charles Murray of Lochcarron repudiated and cast to winds every legal document by which the people on his property were bound, and he made feuars and leaseholders welcome to the benefits of the Crofters Act if they chose.

14,467. I merely state a question as to what you have said. They can come back to the Crofters Commission if they choose, irrespective of their leases, if they were not under lease at the date of the Act?—I did not try to question them with regard to the terms of their leases; but they feel.

14,468. But you are quite entitled to go back and question them yet?—I mean to do it. I mean to visit the glen pretty frequently after this.

14,469. *Mr Mackay.*—Do you know any tenant in Glen-Urquhart who was induced against his own will to sign a lease?—No.

14,470. You do not?—No.

14,471. Are you aware that if the crofters in Glen-Urquhart were simply under the Crofters Act they would not be entitled to any assistance whatever from the proprietor?—They are not entitled.

14,472. Answer my question; are you aware of that?—I am aware; and I am aware that they are not entitled to any assistance as they are,—to no assistance whatever except what the estate is bound to confer by the lease.

14,473. Exactly?—They would be in exactly the same position.

14,474. Are you aware then, I will put it this way, that since 1887 as before, that tenants building houses are supplied with timber, slate, windows, and other material by the proprietor?—Before the leases?

14,475. Since 1887, since the leases were entered into?—Exactly so.

14,476. Are you aware of that?—Exactly so.

14,477. Are you aware of that?—I am aware not only of that, but I am aware also that these houses,—not only the timber but the houses themselves,—become the property of the proprietor at the end of the lease.

14,478. You don't know that?—I saw the leases.

14,479. You don't know that?—I saw the leases. [*The Chairman.*—He has given his answer.]

14,480. Are you aware that they would not be entitled to such assistance from the proprietor if they had been simply under the Crofters Act?—I know that they believed.

14,481. Never mind what they believed; I want to know from your own personal knowledge, are you aware that if they were simply under the Act they would not be entitled to such assistance from the proprietor?—I know that and I know more. I know that if they were under the Act they would have security of tenure, and be as independent as the proprietor, and their improvements would be their own,—any improvements they made would be their own for all time coming, and they could will their tenant-right.

14,482. They can will their tenant-rights now?—I am not aware of that.

14,483. I know Glen-Urquhart very much better than you do; I know the people of Glen-Urquhart, I am one of themselves, and I am proud to say they are the most independent people I have ever met.

14,484. *The Chairman.*—We are a little away from the main point, but I put this question to you. Is it your belief from the investigations you have made, that the crofters with whom you have conferred would prefer to be under the Act rather than under the leases?—Most decidedly, they would prefer being under the Crofters Act.

DONALD MACKINTOSH, Cattle Dealer, Bunloit (40). (Examined in Gaelic through an Interpreter.

Drumnadrochit. Donald Mackintosh.

14,485. *The Chairman.*—Which Bunloit are you in, Wester or Easter?—Well, I cannot speak the English, my lord.

14,486. Your examination may not take very long, would you kindly begin in English?—I would rather have the Gaelic, my lord.

14,487. *Mr Donald Macrae.*—He has very little to say, my lord.

14,488. *The Chairman.*—I was going to see if I could not abbreviate the matter and save time. Tell us your age in English at any rate?—40.

14,489. I suppose you were here yesterday?—Yes.

14,490. And you heard the evidence?—No, I did not give my evidence yesterday.

14,491. But you were present in the school here?—Yes.

14,492. And you heard what the other witnesses said?—Yes.

14,493. Do you agree with their evidence?—Oh, yes.

14,494. Have you any addition to make; is there any additional statement you would like to make, or may we take your evidence as agreeing with what we heard yesterday from the crofters?—I agree with it, but I am not in the same list; I have only half an acre altogether.

14,495. Are you a cottar?—Yes.

14,496. What rent do you pay?—10s.

14,497. Well, I think you said, Mr Macrae, he has very little to say.

14,498. *Mr Donald Macrae.*—His uncle was evicted from Balmacaan, and he knows places in the deer forest that would suit him immensely well.

14,499. *The Chairman.*—Oh, yes, we have heard a good deal of evidence yesterday, you know, and we are going to look at it.

14,500. *Mr Donald Macrae.*—He may mention some places that were not mentioned.

14,501. *The Chairman.*—Is there anything particular that you wish to tell us about the deer forest?—I have nothing to say except what Mr Macdougall said yesterday.

14,502. That is what I thought; I think we may take you as simply concurring in the evidence given by Mr Macdougall, and keep in view that we are all of us going to see the place ourselves, and will be very glad to meet any of you and receive any explanations on the ground which you think it desirable to afford. Would you be prepared to take land, if suitable land could be got, and be put into the position of a crofter?—Yes.

14,503. Arable land and grazing?—Yes.

14,504. And could you pay a fair rent for such a holding?—Oh, yes.

14,505. Without any assistance?—Oh, I would try.

14,506. You could build a house and steading and proceed to stock and work the land?—Oh, yes.

14,507. You would undertake all that risk?—Yes, I would.

14,508. And you would look to being able to pay rent without assistance from outside?—Yes, I would try to do that.

14,509. And do you think you could?—Oh, yes.

14,510. *Mr Shaw Stewart.*—Is it a long time since you wanted land in the forest? Have you wished for land in the forest for a long time past?—I was not speaking about the forest.

14,511. Is there not land in the forest?—There is some good land.

14,512. But how long is it since you wanted some land there? For how long have you wished to have some land there?—I did not have any desire to get land from the forest since the forest was formed.

14,513. Do you want to get it there now or do you not?—Yes, if the forest is broken down, I would be glad to get part of it.

14,514. I want to know this; how long have you

Drumnadrochit.

Donald Mackintosh.

made up your mind that you would like to take up land in the forest? How long is it since you first made up your mind to take the land in the forest?—Ever since I heard that the forest was to be broken down to be occupied.

14,515. Will you tell me how long you have heard that; for a few weeks past, since a few weeks ago?—I heard it a considerable time before that.

14,515*a*. Last year?—I believe I did.

14,516. Before last year?—I do not remember very well just now.

14,517. Who told you the forest would be broken down?—Oh, none.

14,518. How did you get the idea, who put the idea into your head?—Oh, we are seeing things.

14,519. It is what you see in the newspapers, and until you saw this, until the newspapers put it into your head, you had not any idea of asking for land in the forest?—I was asking land in other parts of the estate.

14,520. In what parts?—I was asking land in Bunloit opposite where I am, and I was also asking land in Divach.

14,521. Arable?—Yes.

14,522. Not pasture?—No, pasture forbye the arable.

14,523. You wanted both arable and pasture?—Yes.

14,524. Which do you want most, arable or pasture?—I would like to have them together.

14,525. You say you asked for this land; whom did you ask for it?—Major Grant.

14,525*a*. When did you ask him?—About four years.

14,526. Four years since?—Yes.

14,527. And what did he tell you?—He told me that he would see about it.

14,528. I suppose he told you there was a difficulty of finding it?—But I did not get it.

14,529. Do you know of any arable land, that is not in occupation at present, that you would like to take up?—No.

14,530. You don't. There is no land in the neighbourhood?—No.

14,531. That is not in occupation?—Not in the meantime.

14,531*a*. And, therefore, if you had any arable land given you, it would have to be somebody else's?—Yes, unless we got a bit of the forest.

14,532. Now, I want to know, did you have a meeting the other day about asking for land in the forest in Bunloit?—I was at the meeting.

14,533.—Did Mr Macrae, on the part of the Land League, tell you that if you all spoke up together you would probably destroy the forest?—Oh, well, very little Mr Macrae said, but they were bound to keep the meeting except Mr Macrae was going there at all.

14,534. *The Chairman.*—I did not catch your answer.

14,535. [*The Interpreter*].—They were to hold the meeting, I think he means, whether Mr Macrae went there or not, but Mr Macrae was there.

14,536. *Mr Shaw Stewart.*—Did Mr Macrae take a leading part in addressing the meeting?—Yes.

14,537. And did he advise you to tell the same story, and ask for the land in the forest, and that you would probably get it if you did?—Is that the kind of thing he said?—First, they had their own opinions.

14,537*a*. But did he address you in that form?—He spoke, in a manner, in that way about the forest.

14,538. *Mr Sutherland.*—You were asked a question with regard to applying for the deer forest, and you were asked also who put the idea into your head. May I ask you if it was not the presence of the forest itself that put the idea into your head?—If others were getting portions of the forest it would be as necessary for me to get it as any other.

14,539. But was it the presence of the forest itself that made you think of getting it,—the fact that the land was devoted to rearing deer that before had been in the possession of people?—Ay, it was long since it was in my head that I should like to get some land. I was very much confined in the place I was in, and required to get land.

Drumnadrochit.

Donald Mackintosh.

14,540. In fact, it was in your head since ever the deer forest was made?—Yes, I should have a part of it before now.

14,541. And it was no man from outside that put the idea into your head?—No, no.

14,542. *Mr William Mackay, agent for the Countess Dowager of Seafield.*—The land which you applied for in Divach, four or five years ago, was the farm of Divach?—Yes, sir.

14,542*a*. You made an offer for the whole farm?—Yes.

14,543. Do you remember what rent you offered?—I did not offer a rent at all.

14,544. Well, do you know what the rent is, including the cottage?—The cottage following is it?

14,545. Yes.—£120.

14,546. And that is the farm that you offered for?—Yes.

14,547. *The Chairman.*—What rent were you willing to give?—Any rent they would get from another man.

14,548. You were willing to enter into competition for the land?—Yes.

14,549. And you would have given £120?—Yes.

14,550. You were quite able to pay that?—Oh, well, I would try if I could get it.

14,550*a*. *Mr Donald Macrae.*—Your lordship might ask him if his father was in the same place before, and his grandfather.

14,551. *The Chairman.*—Which place?

14,552. *Mr Donald Macrae.*—That place that he applied for—Divach

14,553. *The Chairman.*—Was your father in Divach?—Yes, and my grandfather before.

14,554. What rent did he pay?—£60.

14,555. And your grandfather, what rent did he pay?—I think it was £60.

14,556. *Mr Donald Macrae.*—Is all the land that your father and grandfather had in the farm of Divach to-day?—No, nor the half of it.

14,557. What has been done with the rest of it?—Just spread with deer.

14,558. *The Chairman.*—Is it farm or forest?—Forest, they had just to make it forest.

14,559. *Mr Donald Macrae.*—Who built the house that you live in in Lots?—My father.

14,560. Did he get any assistance?—Not a penny.

14,560*a*. And if you would get a holding in the forest, do you know a suitable place in the forest? Have you a suitable place in your eye?—Oh, yes, Glencoiltie will do me fine.

14,561. Would you be able to build a house there?—Yes.

14,562. And steadings?—Yes.

14,563. And stock it?—Yes, and stock it.

14,564. And would you be willing to pay any rent that an independent body of men would fix as a fair rent?—Yes.

14,565. I come now to the meeting. I am sorry to have to refer to the matter, but I must refer to it at very considerable length, my lord. When I went to the district of Bunloit on Saturday, on whom did I make straight?—Me.

14,566. Was your name in before the Royal Commission before this?—Yes.

14,567. Was the name of any other person from that quarter in before the Royal Commission?—No, not one.

14,568. But I told you not to tell them at all who I was?—Yes.

14,569. Did I enter into conversation with anybody before the meeting?—No one.

14,570. Did I speak to you the whole time?—Yes.

14,571. Did the meeting meet in the school before I went in, or did I drag them after me?—Oh, you were going in behind them, the most of them were all in before we went in at all.

14,571*a*. And you and I went in together?—Yes.

14,572. Did I tell you not to tell who I was?—Yes.

Drumnadrochit.

Donald Mackintosh.

14,573. Was it they that spoke first, or was it I?—They; they spoke first.

14,574. Did I say a word until the last man of them had the last word about their grievances?—No.

14,575. Can you give me the name of the first man that spoke?—Ewen Mackintosh.

14,576. He was the chairman?—Yes.

14,577. Do you remember what he said?—Oh, well, I cannot mind. [*The Chairman.*—He cannot recollect.]

14,578. I will ask you this. Did he say that in 1859 or about that time, the hill-grazing was taken from him and made into a forest?—Yes, he said so.

14,579. Did he mention the number of sheep he had before then?—Yes.

14,580. What was it?—60, I think, or 100; I am not very sure.

14,581. *The Chairman.*—Looking to what has come out, you are quite entitled to ask him as to the share you took in the proceedings, but I can hardly allow hearsay evidence as to what passed in the meeting generally.

14,582. *Mr Macrae.*—I want to show that the whole evidence of their grievances came out at the meeting before I spoke.

14,583. *The Chairman.*—You must take that generally.

14,584. *Mr Macrae.*—Did one of them say that he had 150 sheep before then, and that he has only 10 now?—I think so.

14,585. Did they speak about the deer doing damage to their crop?—Yes.

14,586. Did one of them say that he saw, two nights before then, 15 stags eating his corn?—Yes.

14,587. Did I offer to speak, or was I asked to speak?—You were asked to speak.

14,588. What did they ask me? Tell us what they said in Gaelic now?—That, if Mr Macrae could tell them a better manner of telling the story than they themselves were telling, they would be glad to hear him speak.

14,589. And what did I tell them to do; what way did I put before them for putting forward their case? They asked my advice, and what advice did I give?—There is nothing better for them to get than the pasture for their cattle.

14,590. What did I ask them to do?

14,591. *The Chairman.*—What did Mr Macrae advise you to do?

14,592. *Mr Macrae.*—As a meeting?—Just to go on with the meeting as they were asking.

14,593. What is the next step I told them? They told their grievances themselves; what was the next step I wanted them to take? I want your answer without suggesting anything. I told them the Royal Commission was to sit on Tuesday.

14,594. *The Chairman.*—Are you able to answer the question?—Yes, but I do not mind of it.

14,595. *Mr Macrae.*—Did I ask each township to appoint two men, and that one of them would speak and that the other would say he concurred?—Oh, yes, that is right.

14,596. Did they begin to appoint the delegates then?—Yes.

14,597. And did I walk out as soon as they began to appoint the delegates?—Yes.

14,598. *The Chairman.*—I think that is quite enough.

14,599. *Mr Shaw Stewart.*—How was it they came to ask Mr Macrae to give them his advice if they did not know who he was?—They did not know at the beginning, but they knew towards the end of the meeting who he was.

Duncan Grant.

DUNCAN GRANT, Mason, Lewiston (43).
(Examined in Gaelic through an Interpreter.)

14,600. *The Chairman.*—Did you hear the evidence of Macdougall?—Yes.

14,601. And do you concur in that evidence?—Yes, I agree with what he said with regard to the lands he spoke about, but that is not the place I am going to speak about.

Drumnadrochit.

14,602. What land do you wish to speak about?—I am sent here to speak for the cottars at Lewiston.

Duncan Grant.

14,603. Well, we will be glad to hear what you have to say.—I have a letter signed by twenty; I have it here.

14,604. What is the representation you are to make to us?—There are thirty-five cottars in Lewiston, and this letter is signed by twenty.

14,605. Let me see the letter.—(*Document produced*). That is simply a list of names on the back of the secretary's intimation. What do you wish to say on their and your own behalf?—We wish to say that we are confined in that place; we have no land except a garden, the most of us.

14,606. Anything more?—Several of us have small crofts, but none except four have enough to keep a cow all the year round.

14,607. Anything more?—The best croft in the township is in the occupancy of Mr Mackay as he himself told you.

14,608. *Mr William Mackay.*—I always thought it was the worst, my lord.

14,609. *The Chairman.*—That is always the opinion a crofter has.

14,610. *Mr Sutherland.*—Do you know any suitable land on which you could get additional holdings?—Plenty of it.

14,611. Where is it?—Kilmore would suit the place, it adjoins my end of the township, and Kilmore would be suitable.

14,612. Did you hear what Mr Mackay said here to-day about the intention of dividing the land among them?—I was not in.

14,613. Well, Mr Mackay intimated that about 28 acres of land was to be divided among the people there.

14,614. *The Chairman.*—What Mr Mackay said was that Lady Seafield has communicated her willingness to allocate to each of the Lewiston crofters.

14,615. *Mr William Mackay.*—To certain cottars, my lord.

14,616. *The Chairman.*—To certain cottars in Lewiston,—do you include this man?

14,617. *Mr William Mackay.*—I don't know, my lord; I do not know the names of the cottars.

14,618. *The Chairman.*—To certain cottars in Lewiston—whether you are included or not I cannot say—additional arable land, from the farm of Kilmore.—That is but a small portion for each that is wanting land in Lewiston.

14,619. That is a matter of opinion.

14,620. *Mr Sutherland.*—Would you yourself, or any of those whom you represent, be willing to come bodily out of Lewiston, and take a new holding, if such land could be got?—Some of those for whom I speak would be quite willing to do that to-morrow, but I built a house, a goodish house, which I would not like to leave, and on that account I myself would prefer to stay in the village.

14,621. *Mr Macleod.*—Do you know of any other land, that you think might be made available for those twenty, but the Kilmore farm?—Yes, plenty.

14,622. Where?—Clunebeg there, beside us.

14,623. Who is it occupied by now?—It is now added to Balmacaan.

14,624. The home farm?—Yes.

14,625. Is there any other land?—There is the one half of the farm of Borlum; Macleod, who was the tenant of Borlum, told me he would be glad to give it up if he got compensation.

14,626. Is it a sheep farm or an arable farm?—He cultivates it when it won't yield grass for sheep. [*Mr Mackay.*—It is an arable farm.]

14,627. Do you know of any other lands?—There is no land near unless they were to leave Lewiston, but there is plenty of land in the forest, and also in the place from which they were sent at Balmacaan.

14,628. *Mr Mackay.*—You are a mason, are not you?—Yes.

14,629. And you work always at your trade?—Yes.

Drumnadrochit.

John Chisholm.

JOHN CHISHOLM, Labourer, Lewiston (42).
(Examined in Gaelic through an Interpreter.)

14,630. *The Chairman.*—I suppose you can speak English?—Gaelic better.

14,631. You heard the evidence of Duncan Grant?—Yes.

14,632. And do you concur in his evidence?—Yes.

14,633. Have you any addition to make to it?—No.

14,634. Well, I have no further questions.

John Macleod.

JOHN MACLEOD, Merchant, Invermoriston (40)—*examined.*

14,635. *The Chairman.*—What is your age?—With your lordship's permission I would deliver an address, a very short address, in my own way.

14,636. Can you tell us your age?—40 years. Of course, I meant to bring that out in the address. I will bring out the result of my age in the address, which will be very brief.

14,637. Are you the proprietor of Glenmoriston estate?—No, my lord.

14,638. Do you carry on business as a merchant?—Yes, my lord.

14,639. Well, have you a written paper?—I will deliver it from memory, with your lordship's permisson.

14,640. Very well?—Lord Brand, and ladies and gentlemen.

14,641. Well, I am not Lord Brand, to begin with?—Sheriff Brand, ladies and gentlemen, at your request I now stand forth to speak. Yes, to speak with mingled feelings of pain, sorrow, and delight, on behalf of myself and my family, and also on behalf of my poor and desparately oppressed and shamefully trodden-down countrymen. But, perhaps, you will allow me to preface what evidence I have to submit this day by particularising, in the first instance, my own pinched and straitened circumstances and the persecution which, during those years, I have experienced at the hands of Mr Grant of Glenmoriston and the Dowager Mrs Grant of Glenmoriston and their flunkeys, and all through no fault of mine. My name, which I have already submitted to this Commission, is John Macleod, age 40 years, merchant, and son to John Alexander Macleod, son to Finlay Macleod, son to John Macleod, son to Roderick Macleod, who was son to John Macleod of Raasay, and chief of the clan Macleod. I choose to make this statement in order to prove the fallacy of the oft-repeated presumption on the part of Mr Macleod of Dunvegan in designating himself under the name and appellation of Macleod of Macleod, which, in truth, does not belong to him. That title belongs to, and is the hereditary property of my late father's family, and, as such, we have no thought or intention of selling our birth-right for a mess of pottage.

Another very remarkable and most peculiar feature in this case is when Mr Macleod of Dunvegan was giving evidence before this Commission in the Island of Skye, some eight or nine weeks ago, where, in speaking upon the subject of the various landed properties sold there in his and in his predecessor's time, Mr Macleod, no doubt, thought discretion to be the best part of valour when he would have observed such complete and conservative silence in regard to the Raasay estates.

But to proceed with the question of tyranny, in regard to the estate of Glenmoriston, I should here mention that the Glenmoriston family and myself got on together tolerably well indeed until shortly after the arrival in the glen of their present low, mean, and mischievous factor, and the rapscallion satellites from Strathspey, who very quickly began a crusade of the most unprincipled, underhand, artful, and pernicious character in the frequent attempts to turn the inhabitants of the land adrift, and usurp their place and position in the glen. They have tried that same game very hard against myself, and I should very likely never come to know about it at the time but for the injudicious mental proclivity of Charlie Stewart, the Glenmoriston forester. That was an attempt to usurp my home, and place a business in the glen, in which they did not succeed, however. And when they failed in that game they then prevailed upon the proprietor to run an opposition against me, the putting up of which premises cost the estate something between £30 and £40 sterling. Those premises are now occupied as a public reading-room and library at Invermoriston. I should not have thought much about that opposition provided, however, that the busines transactions in the glen from year to year were sufficiently capable of keeping two shops going, which it never was, and is not now. I have been frequently hampered and exasperated by the Glenmoriston factor and his underlings, so very much so indeed, that I feel certain that nothing but the fear and wrath of an Almighty God prevented me from committing that which would cause the ears of every person upon the Glenmoriston estate to tingle. I had been advised to set fire to the timber woods upon the estate, with the view of bringing the proprietor to a proper knowledge of my grievances and to enlighten his mind as to the iniquity and the amount of prejudice and ill-feeling that has gone out against him and his unprincipled officials. But, my lord, I would never consent to advice of that sort, for I am not ashamed to own that I am a God-fearing man and a peaceable and law-abiding subject of our noble and most illustrious sovereign, Queen Victoria.

Drumnadrochit.

John Macleod.

Those systematic and pernicious and underhand dealings, on the part of the Glenmoriston officials, have been carried on for the past series of years, the which culminated in the most strenuous endeavour to have me perforced and scundered out of my native parish by the pitting against me of such mighty, violent, and tyrannical measures sufficient to exasperate and madden the most pious and patient-minded individual. In calling your lordship's attention to the last clause of the sentence just cited, I wish to draw your lordship's attention chiefly in regard to the cursed trouble and annoyance which, during these two years referred to, I have been compelled to undergo at the hands of James Bruce, who is, in my firm opinion, employed as a tool by the laird of Glenmoriston and his factor for the express purpose of bringing about my destruction and ruin. A man who hides himself under the ecclesiastical cloak of religion, yea, and that too with the evident concurrence of the parish ministers of Urquhart and Glenmoriston. I have had, on more than one occasion, my wife suddenly pitched into a most dangerous and critical state of health, which occasioned myself and my family long weeks of domestic trouble, sorrow, and anxiety. But, my lord, I am determined to make Mr Grant of Glenmoriston to smart for all this mischief and trouble yet, by compelling him, with all my influence, to make him liquidate all these accounts incurred in this manner. I was on various occasions forced to intrude myself into the presence and privacy of Mr Grant of Glenmoriston for the purpose of obtaining protection through him, and I am sorry to say that, on all these occasions, I invariably found that representative of a noble line of chieftains to be as stubbornly austre, stubborn, and obdurate as the rich man mentioned in the parable. I have had recourse likewise unto the local and chief constables, and unto the county council clerks—Messrs Anderson and Shaw—for the purpose of bringing this, my grievance, before the County Council board for adjustment. But, these county clerks, they prefer to follow out their own self-willed and ambiguous authority by completely ignoring and throwing my letter and complaint aside.

But now, in proceeding to speak in regard to the tyrannical and agrarian iniquities inflicted upon the poor and desperately oppressed and shamefully trodden-down countrymen, I wish to draw your lordship's attention to the enormous extent of arable and pasture lands that has been converted into deer forests and rabbit-warrens, to the no small discomfort and poverty of a patriotic, peaceable, and law-abiding people. And, as a consequence of this, I need only ins'ance to your lordship that, although within about three or four weeks ago when four meetings were duly notified and convened in the parish, yet there should not be found at these meetings one man who possessed the moral courage to stand forth and signify his willingness to come forward to give evidence before this Commission for the emancipa-

tion of himself and his family from state bondage; owing, no doubt, to the scandalous iniquities and pernicious bye-laws of landlord and factor. I might here mention the names of some of the places in my parish that have been converted and appropriated in this fashion, viz., the arable land of Baile-'n-uillt, and the hill pasture and grazing lands of Achnaconeran, which extends between the hamlet of the latter name and Alltsaigh. Some spell it 'S a y' which is incorrect. Again, I instance part of the lands of Alltsigh at the east end of the parish.

14,642. *Mr Gordon.*—Another Alltsaigh?—The same Burn so to speak, but this is a hamlet at the foot.

14,643. Lower down?—Yes, together with those of Talamh-mhicheil (I am spelling the place names in English character here), Rhu-na-strone, and Fasaig lands, in its near vicinity; all of which lands were at one time kept in cultivation, and successfully brought under the power and operation of the cas-chrom and the primitive highland plough. Then comes the land of Factoryfield, which has been utilised for some years past as a rabbit-warren; but which, with Baile-'n-uilt already referred to, has been recently reclaimed within the past twelve months, in consequence no doubt of the anticipated visit of this and the Commission of 1886. I now direct your attention to the arable and pasture lands of Levishey, distant about 1½ miles west from the Invermoriston hotel, and which virtually forms part of the Invermoriston forest. Then come the lands of Upper and Lower Blairie upon the one side, with those of Tomnagharabham and Blair-nay-cuilcean upon the west side of Blairie burn, all of which lands I should say, not with certainty, lie at an altitude of 100 or 150 feet above the level of the sea. About two miles west from this place may be seen the arable and pasture lands of Coir'-iar-airidh, which forms part of the Dundreggan shooting ground, and about which one of the poets had a song so very sweetly in his own native tongue, one of which, with your lordship's permission, I will recite one stanza in Gaelic.

14,446. *The Chairman.*—Oh, certainly.

Mo rùn Coir'-iar-airidh 'sam biodh an liath-chearc
Gu stùrdail, fiat, air feadh nan tom;
'San coire rùnach 'sam biodh na h-ùbhlan
Am faight an driùchd 'ruith air 'n t-shiucar phronn.
Bithidh muighe 's càbag ann La-Fheill-Martainn
A's crodh ga'n dàir ann mu na chrò
'Sa Righ is airde cuir buaidh a's gràs
Air an linn a dh' fhag thu aig Hànah Dhonn.

Witness.—I, for one, should delight to see the day when the prayer of these beautiful words would be literally enjoyed in the glen.

14,645. Some of us would like to hear that in English if you could give it?—I am not quite prepared, my lord, to give you a perfect translation of this. I could do it, but I am sorry to say that I must not commit myself by giving the promise of doing it so very quickly.

14,646. *Mr Sutherland.*—You may hand it in perhaps.—Perhaps, Mr Mackenzie, the Secretary, would undertake to do it.

14,647. *The Chairman.*—Go on with your paper in the meantime?—I now instance the arable lands of Dundreggan, Inverwick, and Aonach, comprising probably about 200 acres in all. The former two farms and part of the latter are virtually the deer forest, the tenants who occupied those farms having been evicted some fourteen or fifteen years ago, and quite within my own recollection; together with several others both at the foot and the upper end of the glen. After the last place mentioned and lying at the north-west of it, opens up an immense prairie or plain, about three miles in length, and averaging, I should say, between half-a-mile and three quarters of a mile in width, which comprises hundreds of acres of arable land, and which was tenanted some sixty years ago by a happy, shrewd, and industrious class of Highlanders, but which Highlanders were evicted from their homes and holdings in the time of Mr Grant, who was factor for the then Glenmoriston. That was the present proprietor's grandfather.

14,648. *Mr Gordon.*—About sixty years ago?—Yes. Of course, I am not giving these statements for certain,—the date, I mean. I am going back as far as I have been informed by others, because it was before my day. The name of the plain which I have referred to is Coirre-Dho.

14,649. Is that in Ceanna-Chnoc?—Yes.

14,650. That is away up to the top of the forest?—Yes, that is at the west end of Beul-ath-Do at the foot of the river Doe, extending from the river Doe to Craskie. At Coirre-Dho there can be seen a great many ruins of the old dwellings in a perfectly demolished state, and the plain itself, looking to the traveller, looks a perfect wilderness. There would be nothing there to break the monotony of the dead but the noise of the deer or perhaps the bird of the Coire-Dho when he gets upon his wings. I might here now instance a few names of those persons who have been evicted, both within my own recollection and previous thereto. I might mention the first to begin with was Macrae, who was farmer of the crofter field down at Alltsigh, at the east end of the parish; also Peter Maclaren, at the upper end of the glen.

14,651. Is that in Glenmoriston?—Balnadrum or Balnacarn, either of the two names; of course, as a rule, there has been only one Maclaren in the glen, he was always addressed as Peter Maclaren.

14,652. *Mr Shaw Stewart.*—Are you speaking of a living man?—I am speaking as a living man.

14,653. I see you are living, but I wish to know?—I speak both of the living and the dead.

14,654. I wish to know which of them is Maclaren?—Maclaren, he is a living man, unless he has gone within the last four hours.

14,655. And Macrae?—I cannot say for certain about Macrae; I presume he has gone to the majority. Then comes Donald Macdonald, Inverwick; he has gone over to the majority, but left a representative behind him who is come up to the years of manhood, and who, perhaps, will be shortly hence doing as others did before him, entering the blessed bonds of matrimony. But, my lord, it would appear to me that the law of matrimony is a prohibited thing in our parish, for when a young man marries either a lady in the glen or a lady outside his parish, he must,—lo and behold,—quit; there is no further connection between him and the glen. Not even so, but the filial tie between parent and child must be broken up. Is it not a hard thing, gentlemen,—I speak through the chairman, through Sheriff Brand,—is it not a hard thing, gentlemen, that in a highland parish and amongst Highlanders, a patriotic, a peaceable, and a law-abiding people, that we should be contemned and trodden down under foot in such a manner? I say it is a disgrace to the community, and I cannot help getting a little excited over this as a Highlander.

14,656. I beg your pardon, but you have not told us how marriages are prohibited in the glen.—I will adduce myself as an illustration in this case. If I have attained to years,—well,—suitable for entering into marriage for a working man,—but for a capitalist, of course, he can enter marriage you know at any time he likes after 16,—is not that the case?

14,657. You have not told us how marriage is prohibited.—I am just bringing that about. But a working man, on the other hand, he perhaps will be 23 or 25 or 28 or perhaps 30 summers he may allow over his head before he can enter into these blessed bonds. Why?—Simply, because he has not capital to sustain himself and the partner of his affections.

14,658. *The Chairman.*—Have you finished your paper?—The next thing after the last given—I have given you Maclaren, have I not?

14,659. Oh, yes.—Down to Macdonald, Inverwick. After this comes a living man, Peter Macdonald, Levishey, who was virtually turned out of his holding, and which holding now is converted into what I maintain is part of the Invermoriston forest.

14,660. *The Chairman.*—Have you any other name?—The next name which I instance, and which puts the blood of a Highlander—

14,661. Give us the name first.—To the proper heat, Allan Ferguson, a man who, I am sorry to say, died of

Drumnadrochit.

John Macleod.

starvation in the very centre of a Christian land and among the Christian people, simply, because he would not put his hand to his hat or raise it up for an upstart in the form of a factor.

14,662. Have you any more in your paper, Mr Macleod? We are anxious to get on with the business you know.—Well, that is Ferguson; the next one which comes is Hunter. I put these down briefly, but there are more which I might perhaps recollect on before the meeting is dismissed.

14,663. *Mr Gordon.*—What is Mr Hunter's first name?—Andrew Hunter. Would you please give the names as you have them?

14,664. *The Chairman.*—Macrae, farmer.—Macrae, farmer; that is Alexander Macrae, Alltsigh.

14,665. Peter Maclaren, Balnacarn; Donald Macdonald, Inverwick; Peter Macdonald, Levishey; Allan Ferguson, whose place you did not mention.—Allan Ferguson, Dundreggan.

14,666—And Andrew Hunter, what is his place?—Inverness, in the meantime.

14,667. Yes, but what was the local place?—Invermoriston. And with that you may include my name, because there has been a very strenuous attempt to evict me out.

14,668. You mean your own name?—My own name, but, as a Highlander, I defy Glenmoriston, and I defy his factor or anyone else to turn me out.

14,669. Does that conclude your paper?—That concludes my paper; I am open now for any examination.

14,670. *Mr Munro.*—What is your occupation?—My occupation has been very limited of late. From my earliest infancy I have been brought up to the profession of a country merchant. I am not ashamed to own it; I think it is a very respectable trade.

14,671. *Mr Shaw Stewart.*—I don't understand; you say country merchant, do you mean a general merchant?—Yes.

14,672. And you have no special acquaintance with the cultivation of land?—Would you put the question again?

14,673. Have you any special knowledge of the cultivation of land?—I have a good superficial knowledge.

14,674. Superficial knowledge?—Yes.

14,675. Because you tell us of hundreds of acres of arable land, and it is rather important to know whether you are an authority upon what is arable land.—Well, sir.

14,676. You have only a superficial knowledge?—I think I gave you a very clear statement now. Take a square mile now, how many acres are in that?

14,677. Oh, yes, I don't dispute your ability to count.—But you must understand I had the permission of these places, and, as a consequence, I am not going to give you a certified statement. It is certain so far as I have given but not thoroughly limited you know.

14,678. I understand perfectly; I don't doubt your capacity to judge of the quantity of the land, but I only wish to find out how far you are reliable as an authority on the quality of the land, because there is a great difference between arable land and land that is not arable?—Well, I will answer that by giving you a very good one in return. Any man may judge an English cow, but I always prefer a Highlander for a Highland cow, and, certainly, a Highlander for the statement you find of land.

14,679. Your knowledge of the cultivation of land, I think you said, is superficial?—Yes, because the land is of different value around there, because it is not of the same quality.

14,680. Thank you, that is all I wanted to know.

14,681. *Mr H. V. Maccallum.*—Do you occupy the same premises as your father did?—I do.

14,682. At the same rent as he paid?—I do.

14,683. How much rent have you paid for the last three years?—How much rent did I pay?

14,684. For the last three years?—May I ask, my lord, if he has been informed that I was in arrear?

14,685. *The Chairman.*—No, you may not ask. Answer the question.—Yes, would you put it again please.

Drumnadrochit.

John Macleod.

14,686. How much rent have you paid during the last three years? I put the question myself, Mr Macleod.—How much rent?

14,687. Yes.—Well, I am sorry to say that I cannot give you a decided answer as to that, insomuch that—

14,688. Have you paid any?—Certainly, but not directly, not directly, because with and through the proprietor's authority I made improvements. It is a very small cabin I occupy.

14,689. You mean you are keeping the rent against the improvements; is that what you mean?—Yes. I made improvements with the proprietor's authority, but as I am now to say and state, putting it very graphically, I took Glenmoriston to be a gentleman of honour, and I took him at his word, but he was saying afterwards—I don't think he would do so directly of himself—but evil counsel takes the best of men astray.

CHARLES MACDONALD, Farmer, Knocknangeal, Inverness, and Baile-nan-carn, Glenmoriston (64)—*examined.*

Charles Macdonald.

14,690. *The Chairman.*—What rent do you pay for the farm of Baile-nan-carn?—£70.

14,691. Are you under a nineteen year's lease?—Yes.

14,692. When does it expire?—Well, I have only run three years.

14,693. What is it you wish to say?—I just wish to say very little. I consider the land is more adapted for grazing than cropping. The first year I went there I took the crop, but the result was that I lost the whole of it, for after it was cut the flood came and destroyed it. I remember seeing some of the fields under the river halfway. I don't believe that any one can depend on cropping in Glenmoriston. The grazing is the only support with us; when I saw that, I put my farm under grass, altogether, because it is no use to be labouring on crops.

14,694. May I ask, were you requested to come here, or do you come here of your own motive?—I came here just.

14,695. Were you requested to come?—No, I never saw anyone till I saw Mr Burgess here yesterday.

14,696. Did he ask you to come?—Oh, no, he never did.

14,697. Did he speak about your coming?—No.

14,698. Did anybody?—Not as far as I am aware of; I only spoke incidentally to Mr Burgess of it.

14,699. *Mr Sutherland.*—Are you the farmer of Baile-nan-carn?—Yes.

14,700. What is the height of the farm above the level of the sea?—I daresay the arable land will be close to 400 feet, but I am not exactly sure.

14,701. You are quite right; 423 feet it is marked on the map. Is all the land you put under cultivation about that level; does any of it ascend much higher than that?—I believe not.

14,702. It is almost all on the same level, is it?—Well, not exactly on the same level.

14,703. But it does not fall a hundred feet, does it?—Oh, I don't think so.

14,704. And are you aware of the height at which cultivation is carried on successfully in this neighbourhood?—But it is a different climate here.

14,705. What is the difference in the climate?—A great deal. Frost is very heavy yonder, and rain is heavy.

14,706. Then do you get good weather at all?—Oh, yes, very good weather.

14,707. You get your share of the good weather that is going?—Yes.

14,708. And you get your share of the bad weather that is going?—Yes, perhaps more than other people would get sometimes.

14,709. On the same level?—Yes.

14,710. And in the same latitude?—Yes, it is a wet climate in winter time.

14,711. Is it wetter than places further west that are

under cultivation?—No, I do not believe it; I believe that Kintail is worse.

14,712. And yet successful cultivation is carried on there at 400 feet? Is it not within your knowledge that that is the case?—I do not think it would be very successful; grazing is the only thing to the west from Invermoriston.

14,713. Is there not land cultivated farther up the glen than Baile-nan-carn?—Oh, yes.

14,714. Successfully?—Well, there is no complaint.

14,715. They have not let the land out of cultivation?—But there are lots of crofters there, and they told me that they did not make a boll of meal for the last three years.

14,716. But they cultivate the land and they pay a rent for it?—They do their best, but they have some sheep up; unless they had that I do not believe they could do very well.

14,717. You said you thought it was very fit for grazing.—I said so.

14,718. And the amount of arable land necessary would be the proportion of arable land that would carry through the grazing?—Well, you know it is no use to be working arable land unless it pays.

14,719. But if that could be found, you believe that small grazing farms could be carried on successfully there?—I do not know, it is according to the time altogether; you will make good and bad perhaps. Last year we lost money, and, if this weather continue, we may still.

14,720. But there is nothing essentially different in in the climate and circumstances of Glenmoriston from what is applicable to the rest of the country taking it over all?—Oh, no, there is a far better climate here than Glenmoriston.

14,721. Of course, the climate varies every mile, for that matter?—Yes.

14,722. Then, with regard to the floods taking away the corn crops.—Well.

14,723. Did they carry them away every year?—Oh no, I cannot say that.

14,724. You have just good years and bad years with regard to that like everywhere else?—You must watch. Perhaps they will go and perhaps not; you must watch yourself.

14,725. You must do that whether the land is good, bad, or indifferent?—And in winter time, although you put your land in good order, the river will come out and perhaps carry away all the substance.

14,726. In England that happens very often?—Well, well, I believe it may.

14,727. And in the Lowlands of Scotland.—Yes.

14,728. And in Strathspey.—Perhaps.

14,729. So that Glenmoriston is not peculiar in that respect, is it?—Well, you know all the arable land in Glenmoriston is on the level near the river, and when the river comes very rapidly it will go over most of it.

14,730. As a matter of fact in all Highland glens the best land is on the river bank?—Yes.

14,731. So that it is in the same category as other glens?—There were some patches of old land, perhaps, in the high hills, but you would not get anyone to go there to live now.

14,732. Higher than the hills here?—I do not know, perhaps they were as high.

14,733. How do these people go there; did they go of their own free will?—In the old time they used to go.

14,734. Of their own free will?—Yes.

14,735. Was it because they could not get lower land to cultivate?—No, they took their stock up to the higher glens, and left the low land to go into grass for the wintering.

14,736. You mean to tell me that of their own free will, they chose the high ground rather than the low ground?—At some time of the year, perhaps in July and August.

14,737. But you are talking just now of out-pasture; I am talking now of places for homes and settlements?—Oh, there were no settlements in that time, but only for a while in the old time. I never saw any of it, but I was told of it.

14,738. You made the general statement that, in your opinion, Glenmoriston was better fitted for grazing than agriculture.—I say that. Drumnadrochit.

14,739. Well, I am wishing to know upon what grounds you make that statement. You have stated one, that the climate was bad, and another, that it was subject to flooding?—Yes. Charles Macdonald.

14,740. But you make the general admission, for all that, that it is just subject to the same conditions as other Highland glens?—I do not know that.

14,741. Is it worse?—I believe it is, and Strathglass is pretty bad.

14,742. But, in the face of all that, there you see land cultivated higher up than yours?—I am sure of that, I am quite sure of that.

14,743. *Mr Macleod.*—Have you always been a farmer?—For a good long time.

14,744. Have you been for more than this lease?—Yes.

14,745. Just for this lease?—For the last twenty or twenty-five years.

14,746. You have had a farm?—Yes.

14,747. How many years did you continue cropping this particular farm?—Only one year, I got it from the tenant going out.

14,748. As a matter of fact you never cropped this piece of ground yourself at all?—No.

14,749. You had made up your mind that it would not do before you went into the place?—Well, I made up my mind it would be more expensive to me than I would like; I thought I would be better with grazing.

14,750. That was your view?—That was my view.

14,751. But, of course, you think it does suit as grazing?—I think it is doing pertty well as things go; we must winter our stock you know, and take them down to the low country.

14,752. Is the whole of the glen being grazed at the present time?—Well, a good deal; of course, the whole of it is being grazed, deer forest and all.

14,753. There is a portion of it a deer forest is there?—Of the glen?

14,754. Yes?—Yes.

14,755. Is it a large portion of it?—Oh, yes, pretty large.

14,756. Is it the larger proportion?—I would say so.

14,757. Is it the better portion of the glen?—Well, perhaps there is some better, and perhaps there is some worse, but the higher ground in general is in the deer forest.

14,758. The higher ground?—The higher hills.

14,759. But there is low ground as well?—Oh, well, there is not much low ground.

14,760. In the deer forest area?—No, of course, there is always a low ground; the ground when you come to the lodge, is lower than the high.

14,761. That is certainly true?—But it is not very low for all that.

14,762. But I want you to give us some information, seeing you have tendered yourself, if there is any comparison to be made between what is under deer forest and what is being grazed?—I daresay there is fully as good land under deer, perhaps fully better, than of grazing in some parts, but not other parts perhaps.

14,763. I think that there was a brother of yours, Mr Macdonald, examined before the Napier Commission at Inverness?—Very likely.

14,764. The late Mr Duncan Macdonald?—I believe he was.

14,765. He expressed certain views there as to the deterioration of the land due to large sheep farms,—that is, very large sheep farms; he did not refer to moderate sized grazings, but to the very large farms?—I don't remember very well.

14,766. Admitting that he did express that view, would you be inclined to agree with him?—Well, I cannot say, I could not tell you. Oh, well, I think a moderate farm might do as well as a big one. Unless you have a living it is no use; what is the use of putting a man on two or three acres?—You are just

Drumnadrochit. Charles Macdonald.

going to starve him; you would make him twenty per cent. worse than he was before.

14,767. It would depend on whether he had any land before?—If you are going to do that better give them 20 acres and a 100 sheep. They cannot live under that. Give them that at a fair rent, and try to make them better.

14,768. You think they would manage that way?—I think so.

14,769. Your own farm, I take it, is a moderate sized farm?—Not very big.

14,770. It is £70, I think you said, of rent?—Yes.

14,771. And on the same occasion your brother referred to deer forests, and expressed very strong opinions as to their formation in this particular glen, and his belief that it was to the detriment of the community. Have you got any views yourself on that subject?—No, I told you I was very much against deer forests two years ago, but I have changed my mind. I saw clearly stock is not paying, and if you are going to put the ground now under sheep where is the wintering for them?—And they cannot live yonder without wintering. And then, you know, you would spoil the whole country; you will take down the property to nothing. Perhaps where they are getting £1000 for deer forest they would not get perhaps more than £600 for sheep; that would make a big difference for the country. I was entirely, a few years, against deer forests, but I see stock is not paying now.

14,772. On account of your having to find wintering for them elsewhere?—Well, you know, too, low ground is taken up very much by sheep; between fencing and sheep, the low ground is taken up very much, and perhaps the high level as well; but the land is not paying to work it very well.

14,773. May I ask whether you are cultivating your own farm at the present time, or rather working it to a profit?—I am working the low farm; I am keeping it on to winter.

14,774. May I ask if you are working it to a profit?—'Deed no, I am telling you that, and far from it.

14,775. You would not be prepared to take this year, or very recent years, as a fair average of your experience during the last twenty or twenty-five years?—I would be very glad with this year, it is very well promising; with pasture there is nothing better than an ordinary dry year.

14,776. You would not be prepared to say that you have been working to a loss all these years?—That is what I have been doing for the last two or three, but I cannot say always that I have been losing.

14,777. Then the view you take is, that, on account of the bad price there is for stock, and the high rent that can be obtained for land as a deer forest, that it ought to be let as a deer forest?—Well, unless the people are pressed to get the land, you know. I think,—it is my own opinion,—that you cannot put the land to better advantage than the way it is in the meantime, unless there be a change in the price of stock.

14,778. Your brother's view was that, even supposing the proprietor got a higher rent than he would get for it as a grazing subject, that the community did not benefit to the same extent when there was a deer forest as when there was a small grazing farm; what is your view?—Well, it is my view in the meantime that there is no way to put the land better than what it is in the meantime, at all events as regards the high hills, whatever you do with low land. That is my opinion.

14,779. *The Chairman.*—The view which your brother expressed is this. Mr Macdonald:—'The ewe 'hoggs were wintered at home fifty years ago. Now, 'however, the hoggs (wedder) must be wintered in the 'low country.' Do you agree with him?—I believe that is quite right.

14,780. 'The extent of land is the same now as it 'was fifty years ago on another farm in this district';—by this district I suppose he means the Inverness district;—'there was a mixed ewe and wedder stock 'of 1800 wintered at home,'—that must be a narrower district than the Inverness district, what farm is your brother talking about here?—Baile-nan-carn, I was born there myself.

Drumnadrochit. Charles Macdonald.

'To-day, however, this same land'—some land that your brother knows about—'which maintained 1800 'can maintain only 1500 head, and that only during 'summer. The hoggs have to be sent away for 'wintering. There are farms in the district the soil 'of which has deteriorated to an even greater extent 'than that of the above.' That is a quotation, and then he goes on—'At the time the hills were cleared 'of cattle and horses to be put exclusively under deer, 'there is evidence that the pastures were vastly richer 'then than they are now. I am of opinion that the 'change from mixed farming to exclusive sheep farming accounts for this.'—Do you agree with that?—There may be something in that; and another thing, a crop is not so valuable now as it was sixty years ago, because you could buy a boll of meal at one time for 50s.

14,781. *Mr Macleod.*—But you will admit that there is a very much higher price got for cattle to-day than sixty years ago?—Well, it was a poor place then, you know.

14,782. *Mr Maccallum.*—How was the farm that you have now occupied before you took it; was it of the same size that it is now, occupied by one man?—Yes.

14,783. And do you know whether it was ever occupied by crofters or small tenants?—Well, I believe there were two or three people in it at one time a good many years ago.

14,784. You think there were two or three?—Perhaps four at one time.

14,785. But you are quite familiar with the place, and I suppose you could give some decided opinion on the point as to the number of holdings that now constitute this one?—I know there were three or four people in it. I heard that. I cannot tell that I remember.

14,786. Are the ruins or remains of these houses there still?—There are plenty ruins of houses there, byres and what not.

14,787. Showing that it was occupied by small tenants?—Oh, undoubtedly, I have no doubt but there was some of that.

14,788. And do you know how they removed from the place?—Well, I cannot tell you very well. I do not think Glenmoriston would change any tenant as long as he paid his rent; at least I never heard of it.

14,789. Then you do not know the cause of their removal?—Not exactly, I am not sure of it. I heard causes, but I cannot be sure.

14,790. Did you hear anything about the cause of their removal? is there no tradition about it in the glen?—There may be a little of that; I do not know it, but there may be a little.

14,791. *The Chairman.*—Tell us shortly what is the tradition?—Perhaps big tenants were anxious to get the place, and perhaps they would put the small tenants into a less place.

14,792. *Mr Maccallum.*—You think that a probable explanation?—Ay.

14,793. Of course, these small tenants cultivated the arable land?—That is more than I can say; very likely.

14,794. But don't you know whether or not?—I am sure they did that all over the country at one time.

14,795. There is evidence of that?—Yes.

14,796. And then after it was consolidated into one farm it was still cultivated?—Yes.

14,797. For how many years?—I cannot say.

14,798. It only ceased to be cultivated when it came into your possession?—It was cultivated then, when I got it.

14,799. But you ceased. The reason you gave up cultivating was that you thought it would not pay?—I thought I would be better with the grazing, and I may work it yet.

14,800. But you did not give it a trial?—I understand fine what a subject I had; it won't work with me at all.

14,801. But people cultivated it before and paid rent?—That is the position; if you can get a better place than you have you would take it, and if I could cultivate it I would work it.

14,802. Are you resident in Glenmoriston?—No; sometimes I may be there, and sometimes in the low country.

14,803. Has that anything to do with your not cultivating it?—No; if you will pay me, I will do anything that will pay.

14,804. There is no suggestion of my paying you at all.—I am not going to work the land to please everyone.

14,805. But you admit that you are not resident, and it would not be so convenient for you to cultivate it being not resident?—Why not, why not?

14,806. Though you are not there to work it?—I will put a man there to work it.

14,807. I point out this: you are not there to supervise the cultivation?—Many a thing I do to-day without being in every corner.

14,808. But, being resident there, would you not be in a better position to cultivate it than a man away in Inverness?—No, I would make it pay better than any man, the way I do it.

14,809. I am putting the thing in an impersonal way. Would you not be in a better position to cultivate it to profit than—being a non-resident?—I would buy the meal in Inverness far cheaper and with far less bother.

14,810. You don't follow the question. I want to know whether you would be in a better position to cultivate it to profit if you were resident in the farm?—I would see the work going on.

14,811. And is not that very important that you should see the work going on?—Yes, certainly.

14,812. And a non-resident farmer is in a very different position that way, not being able to see the work going on?—I don't know, if he has a good man at the head of it.

14,813. If he has a good man resident, that requires two?—A good man, and give him the whole charge and put him over it.

14,814. And is not it likely that, if it was let to a man who would reside there, he would cultivate some of the land?—Very likely.

14,815. Does not the arable land deteriorate if it is not cultivated? when arable land is not cultivated does it deteriorate or not?—It is gaining ground when you leave it out, it is gaining strength and making body,

14,816. Is the pasture getting better?—Yes.

14,817. It is better of being left out?—Yes, you can put it down; my place is better to-day than the first year I put it down.

14,818. And you do not approve of cultivating arable land?—Every man according to his own place.

14,819. But does not land go under fog if it is left long out of cultivation?—Some does, and some does not so bad.

14,820. But you will find that it will not prove so good for pasture if it is allowed long out of cultivation.—Oh, but I daresay there are some places very apt to do so, but there are other places not.

14,821. *Mr Munro.*—You have told us that you are a native of Glenmoriston?—Yes.

14,822. How far does your memory carry you back?—Perhaps about fifty years.

14,823. Do you remember the time when there were no deer forests in Glenmoriston?—I do not know but I do, but I could not be exactly sure; it is my opinion that I mind to see stock in Ceanna-chnoc.

14,824. How was the land occupied before it was converted into a forest?—It was under sheep,—the hills.

14,825. Are there not evidences at the present time to show that it was occupied by a considerable number of small tenants?—Well, I will tell you this, since I remember they are all there yet, except two places, and they are let to a tenant.

14,826. You do not mean surely to tell us that there are as many acres of cultivated land in Glenmoriston to-day as there were fifty years ago?—I believe it is, except the place I am talking about.

14,827. I suppose you will be prepared to admit that your brother, the late Mr Duncan Macdonald, was recognised as an authority upon the land question generally, and also as to the whole of Glenmoriston?—I know that he was there, but I never paid much notice to him.

14,828. But you know that he was a man who paid very considerable attention to the whole question as regards Glenmoriston?—Oh, yes, he was that.

14,829. If I told you that the question was put to him before the Lord Napier Commission whether there were evidences of the glen having been possessed by small tenants before, and he replied in the affirmative, would you be prepared to accept his statement as correct?—My statement is that I do not know a place on the glen, but it is carried on the same way as it was fifty years ago, except two places that is, Inverwick is not ploughed, and Dundreggan is not ploughed.

14,830. *Mr Sutherland.*—Was he older or younger than you, your brother?—He was younger than me.

14,831. *Mr Munro.*—Levishie was ploughed, I remember it myself. In addition to the farm of Balnacarn, which you have in Glenmoriston, you have farms elsewhere?—Yes.

14,832. How many?—One or two.

14,833. How many?—Two.

14,834. Kindly name the two?—Knock-nan-gael and Culcabock.

14,835. What portion of your time do you spend in Glenmoriston?—I intend to spend more of it. I intend to spend my life there if I am spared.

14,836. I suppose you will be prepared to admit that residence on any subject must give a distinct advantage to the cultivation of that farm? Surely a man that is resident is worth something for the making of a profit on the farm?—Well, it is trying to do that we are, make profit if we can, and sometimes losses.

14,837. In addition to your farming operations, do you conduct a large business in Inverness?—Well, I am out of that now.

14,838. Could you tell us what effect the displacing of sheep farms and their conversion into deer forests has had upon the letting of wintering in the low parts of the country? I put that question to you because I know you are a good authority in that matter.—I know that wintering is very dear.

14,839. What effect has it had upon the letting of wintering; has it depreciated the letting value of wintering in the low parts?—Not a bit, how can that be done and the most of the people keeping stock?

14,840. Would you be prepared to acknowledge that your brother, Mr Duncan Macdonald, was a good authority on that subject?—Yes, but that time is passed, and things have altered now.

14,841. What you wish to convey is this, that up to 1882 deer forests had a depreciating effect upon the letting-value of wintering upon the low lands, but that since then the condition of things has changed?—Very much. I believe before they commenced themselves to get sheep on the low ground that they were suffering a little. That is since they commenced themselves wintering.

14,842. There must be less demand for wintering now than some years ago?—There was a great demand for the last two or three years.

14,843. But surely the displacing of a considerable number of sheep must have had a very serious effect upon the letting-value of the low parts of the country?—I do not think so, because I think we have as many sheep as ever we had, and how can you say that?

14,844. Had you as many sheep in Glenmoriston as ever you had?—No, but we have the low ground, and they are making up the double and perhaps more.

14,845. *Mr Sutherland.*—But, why had the tenants of the low farms to begin keeping sheep themselves?—Because they thought it would pay them better.

14,846. Is it not because Glenmoriston was converted into a deer forest?—No, I do not think so, because these

Drumnadrochit. Charles Macdonald.

were paying pretty well, but I believe they are getting so numerous, there is no such demand.

14,847. *Mr Munro.*—Surely the more numerous the sheep farms the greater the demand must be for wintering?—Certainly.

14,848. That is an admission of the whole case?—That is what I am at. It is a big difference between this time and fifty years ago; there is no connection at all in the time.

14,849. *Mr Gordon.*—The reason why wintering is dearer now is that more sheep are kept on the arable farms than five or six years ago?—Certainly.

14,850. Is there any difficulty of a man with wintering getting it let?—Not as far as I know.

14,851. There is plenty demand for the wintering?—Plenty demand.

14,852. What sort of stock do you keep upon Baile-nan-Carn; is it a breeding stock; can you winter your hoggs?—A little of both.

14,853. Can you winter your hoggs?—Not one of them, not even the two-year olds.

14,854. Is it a place that you could, as a practical man, recommend being broken up into four holdings of £20 apiece?—I would not like to be one of the four crofters.

14,855. Do you know the place called Coire-Dho?—Yes.

14,856. Would that be a good place for sheep?—Oh, yes, I believe so; I believe sheep would do there.

14,857. Good summering?—Yes, very good summering.

14,858. Can you winter there?—Well, you cannot winter young sheep there.

14,859. You would have to take the hoggs down?—Oh, yes.

14,860. Do you know the general height of Coire-Dho?—I cannot tell you.

14,861. Do you know the height of Loch Cluanie?—No.

14,862. Well, it is about 640 or 650 feet.—Well, I would say that.

14,863. That is the lowest part of the deer forest that would come down to Loch Cluanie?—Yes.

14,864. Is there any other part of the forest lower?—It may be lower at Ceanna-chnoc.

14,865. At the mouth of the river?—Yes.

14,866. But the bulk of the forest is higher than that?—Oh, yes.

14,867. Do you know the ruins up in Coire-Dho; they are about a mile and a half above Coire-Dho?—I was there at one time, but it is a long time.

14,868. That is about as low a part as in the deer forest, is it not?—Yes, in that direction.

14,869. Well, at that point the height is 800 feet.—You will not get one to-day that will possibly live there.

14,870. Do you think if that ground was put under sheep, it would be readily let as a sheep farm?—I daresay it may let, but at what, that is the thing. I know no man would take a sheep farm at the present time except at a very low rent.

14,871. Do you happen to know what the rates are in that quarter just now, the public burdens? Do you mind how much they are in the £?—No, I do not know; I forget them now.

14,872. Supposing that this forest, now let at £3000 a year, or £2000 odds, was done away with and put under sheep, what would, in your opinion, be the reduction in the rent?—What do you mean?

14,873. Between a forest and a sheep farm?—Oh, there will be over a thousand pounds I think, or perhaps twelve or fifteen hundred.

14,874. What do you think it would be worth for a sheep farm, roughly?—If you mention the district to me.

14,875. The forest that Lord Tweedmouth has there.—That is Tomchraskie and Ceanna-chnoc.

14,876. The top of these places; he has not the lodge I think?—I do not know, but it would be quite dear at £600 for a sheep farmer.

14,877. Do you happen to know what Lord Tweedmouth's rent for the deer forest is?—No, I do not. Drumnadrochit. Charles Macdonald.

14,878. We will get that by-and-by, but it would make a considerable difference to the rates?—It would make a considerable difference to many a thing.

14,879. If they did away with the forest?—Ay.

14,880. If you lost that extra rental?—Of course, if the country was in the position that they were too scarce of stock or anything of that I would not object to have a crofter put in the deer forest, but when there is plenty stock, otherwise, I do not say they should do it.

14,881. But so far you know the country would you recommend sheep being put on and deer put off?—Well, I hardly can do that meantime; at one time I was very anxious to get the deer forest done away with, but I have changed my views when I saw the sheep were doing so bad and under value for them. I considered the property would be ruined.

14,882. The sheep farmer would be ruined if he had it?—I considered the property would be ruined if you put them under sheep at the present time.

14,883. *The Chairman.*—Is there a larger stock of sheep in the country at this time than has ever been before, would you say?—I cannot say that exactly. I am not sure, but I think there is a good heavy lot of stock in the country this year.

14,884. And much demand for low ground wintering?—As far as I know, but I believe there is; indeed the sheep are not paying well for the last two or three years, and very likely there are some of the low farmers try to get out of them, and they get more for the wintering than they are able to get out of the sheep. I heard some of them talking about that.

14,885. You carried on business for many years, I understand, as a butcher in Inverness?—Yes.

14,886. And you are now settled as a farmer in Glenmoriston?—Yes, between Glenmoriston and down here.

14,887. *Mr John Macleod*, Invermoriston.—During your sixty-four years, may I ask about what length of time you have been absent out of Glenmoriston?—Oh, a long time; but I was back and forward.

14,888. I do not mean an occasional visit.—[*The Chairman.*—How long have you been out of Glenmoriston except as a visitor?—Thirty-three years.]

14,889. Now, might I ask you by what authority you came to the conclusion that the lands of Glenmoriston were not fit for arable cultivation?—I did not say but the land was fit, but I said the climate was not very suitable.

14,890. Seeing that you have been simply an absentee from the parish.—[*The Chairman.*—He says he did not say the lands were unsuitable, but the climate is unsuitable.]

14,891. Might I ask Mr Macdonald now, in regard to the produce of the lands, have not you seen as good potatoes raised throughout the parish of Glenmoriston as you have seen even down at Glen-Urquhart here, or even Inverness?—Some years I might see good potatoes there, but you could not depend. They are looking very well indeed, but one night of frost will just make them useless.

14,892. You must understand they cannot always depend at Glen-Urquhart even?—Oh, yes, I do not think Glen-Urquhart ever missed potatoes, whatever failed. Look you to Temple Pier.

14,893. Now, in regard to the cereal crops, is it not a fact that you have seen as good corn crops in Glenmoriston, at Invermoriston, Tomchraskie, Achalean, and Inverwick, as you have seen in any part of the east country?—That may be some years, but what shape you will be in some other years?

14,894. Retracing your memory eight years back, what sort of crop had they down in the east country,—well to put it brief, about Inverness,—if I recollect it was eight years ago?—I do not remember; perhaps a short one.

14,895. Retrace your memory further back, fourteen years ago; what like was the crop then?—I cannot remember.

14,896. Was it the fault of the land, or the crofter, or the farmer?—All what I said about it was this that there is no living for a poor man for a few acres of land unless he gets grazing along with it. Unless he gets 20 or 15 acres and about 100 sheep, how can you expect a family to live? It may keep them going, labouring at it, but they must have something to fall back upon.

14,897. Do you admit the fact that there is ample land throughout the length and breadth of the parish of Glenmoriston capable of fixing families in a comfortable and very respectable position?—Where are you to put them?

14,898. *The Chairman.*—The question is, is there ample land, in your judgment, within the length and breadth of Glenmoriston capable of settling families on a comfortable footing? That is the question.—Well, if you will break down leases you may get at the land there; but it is a cold district, and I could not expect that they would thrive very well without getting the hill there.

14,899. He says if you break down leases there is land to be got, but the hill must go with it?—That is all my opinion.

14,900. *Mr Macleod*, Invermoriston.—Would Mr Macdonald answer this question now. Who is the present tenant for Easter Inverwick, once occupied by the late Mr Donald Macdonell, a very respectable member of the family?

14,901. [*The Chairman.*—Well, never mind his family].—*Witness.*—He is taken away; it is no use to be saying anything about him now. I suppose the sportsmen had that place ever since the tenant of Inverwick.

14,902. You have answered that fairly. Now, in your own unbiassed judgment which, think you, would be more Christian and better for the nation, looking to the defence of our country in the first place?—[*The Chairman.*—What is the question please?]

14,903. Which, think you, is the best to have the land divided among a patriotic, peaceable, and law-abiding people for their comfort, don't you see, and for the defence of our nation, than for the rearing and cultivation of deer, rabbits, and such?—I will say this if you will make them comfortable give them such as will keep them alive, and I will be glad to keep them in it. But to put a poor man into a farm, to a corner of land, what is he going to do there? It it just to starve him, and make him ten times worse than he is.

14,904. Might I put this question? I am sorry to put it, but to bring out the evidence clearly I wish to put it. You say that you came down here without being asked by anyone. Now, may I ask if you came here chiefly on your own behalf or chiefly through sincerity for the benefit of your countrymen at Glenmoriston?—I was at Inverness whatever, and I followed my neighbour, Allan Macdonald, Baltombuy. I came along with him; I got a grand chance along with him.

14,905. Had you any selfish object in view in coming?—[*The Chairman.*—I don't allow that question.]

14,906. I will put it in this general way; if he could be kind enough to say in what interest he appears. I do not mean to insinuate anything at all, with regard to his motives, if he would kindly state in whose interest he appears?—I only came and gave my opinion, my own idea of the way the glens might be worked.

14,907. In whose interest are you giving your own ideas?—In my own, as well as others.

14,908. It is for your own interest?—Yes, certainly, for my own interest.

14,909. *Mr Sutherland.*—I am very sorry to interrupt you, but this is an elucidation of a point which I did not make very clear before. You state that you allowed your farm at Baile-nan-Carn to go out of cultivation, but that it was cultivated by the tenant who was there before you. Now, can you tell whether the tenant who was there before you had a low farm?—I don't think so.

14,910. So then you would be influenced, Mr Macdonald, in letting the farm of Baile-nan-Carn out of cultivation by the fact that you had a low lying farm that you could get your wintering on? Were you influenced by that consideration?—I would not take Baile-nan-Carn at all unless I had wintering for it.

14,911. Would you tell me if you were influenced in letting this farm out of cultivation, by the fact that you had a low lying farm?—I let out the farm in grazing hoping it would pay me better.

14,912. If you had not had the low farm, would you have let it out of cultivation?—I do not think it is safe for any one to have a sheep farm unless he had a low ground.

14,913. Do you think you would have allowed your farm to go out of cultivation if you had not had a low farm?—Perhaps not.

ALLAN CAMERON, Crofter, Dundreggan, Glenmoriston (44)—*examined.*

14,914. *The Chairman.*—What rent do you pay?—£6, 15s.

14,915. You are under lease I suppose?—Yes.

14,916. When was the lease entered into?—About six or seven years ago. I don't know the exact year.

14,917. What had your rent been before that lease?—The same.

14,918. How many leasehold crofters are in Dundreggan?—There are four crofters.

14,919. What stock have you got?—Well, I and another crofter are about the smallest. I have got 40 sheep and 2 cows and some stirks.

14,920. How many acres arable have you?—It is considered about five acres.

14,921. Have you a horse?—Yes.

14,922. Are you anxious to obtain additional land?—No, I don't want any more.

14,923. You want no more land?—No more land, I only want to get plenty work.

14,924. Who requested you to come forward?—I came of my own accord.

14,925. I am not suggesting that anybody forced you to come, but did anybody suggest to you to come?—No, none. We have been considering it for some time back, and a few of us came here to see the Royal Commission, because it is here it was to be held.

14,926. And you came here to say that you wished no more land?—I wish no more land than the land I have got in Glenmoriston.

14,927. What extent of grazing have you?—My share of the grazing is to carry 40 sheep.

14,928. You have a share of the grazing along with the other crofters of Dundreggan?—Yes.

14,929. Have they each about the same number of sheep?—Some are higher and some lower, but none lower than me except one.

14,930. What is the largest number held by any Dundreggan crofter?—There are two crofters about the same, as far as I know, Widow Grant, and one Lachlan Sinclair.

14,931. How many have they?—They will be having about the double of that.

14,932. They have about 80 sheep?—Yes.

14,933. Each?—Yes.

14,934. *Mr Forsyth.*—Then you come here as wishing to state that you are on the whole satisfied with your present position?—Yes.

14,935. Is that what you want to say?—Yes, regarding land.

14,936. Have you any idea that your condition could be improved by additional grazing?—Well, I can't see it, sir, because I am central in the place, and I have got that grazing extending over to another proprietor's march.

14,937. Do you find any difficulty in working your arable land successfully there?—Yes, we do; very commonly. We are very unfortunate with frost sometimes when the crop is in good ear, and sometimes with floods again.

Drumnadrochit.

Allan Cameron.

14,938. Between frost and floods you have difficulty with the crops?—Yes.

14,939. Have you difficulty in securing them when there is no frost?—Yes, such as last year we had a great difficulty in getting it secured.

14,940. That is owing to the weather?—Owing to the wet weather.

14,941. Do you find then that your existing holding is the best size to assist you in getting a living in Glenmoriston?—No, it does not keep me living; I only count it as a home and only get my work from the shooting tenants.

14,942. Then you think that you would prefer your present situation to a large holding, say such as 20 acres of arable which we have heard spoken of as a self-supporting holding, with corresponding grazing?—I am more content with how I am situated.

14,943. How do you get your living otherwise? How do you make up the deficiency?—I always in the season attend as a gillie with the shooting tenant.

14,944. You find that suits you better?—Yes.

14,945. You get wages during the shooting season?—Yes.

14,946. And you find with that that you can make a fair living?—Just a fair living, and something of a home I have.

14,947. Then you look upon your holding as a home that gives you a certain amount of produce for the support of your family?—I have no family, but for all, I have quite enough to get from the holding what will supply the cattle; and I don't get that sometimes, because I generally have to get hay and potatoes and such like from Glen-Urquhart.

14,948. *Mr Sutherland.*—When did you send in your name as a witness to be examined here?—It was this morning that we thought of it.

14,949. Had you a meeting of the tenants there at which you were appointed to represent them?—No.

14,950. You are here on your own initiative entirely?—Yes, in my own interest, and for the district.

14,951. Speaking only for yourself?—Yes.

14,952. Then you say that you depend on the shooting tenant for the greater part of your livelihood?—Yes.

14,953. Then you will be in favour of maintaining the shooting tenant in his present position?—Yes.

14,954. You said that last year you had great difficulty in securing your crop?—Yes.

14,955. Was that the case, do you know, all over the country?—All over the country; all over the glen.

14,956. Not only over Glenmoriston, but over every other part of the country as well as the harvest was late and wet?—Yes.

14,957. Can you give me any other instance of any year when you were under so great destitution?—The year before, the very same.

14,958. And was the bad harvest general all over the country the same?—Yes, it got very much damaged with the flood.

14,959. Are you aware whether your neighbours are of the same opinion as you are with regard to not desiring more land?—I can't say, but so far as is known to me from my crofter neighbours I did not hear any complaint.

14,960. And do you cultivate the land you have now?—Yes.

14,961. Every year?—Every year.

14,962. Why do you cultivate it seeing it is so bad?—Well, we can have nothing at all unless we cultivate it. Some years we get a little, and other years we are deprived of it through misfortune.

14,963. Do you make great losses through the washing away of your crops?—Sometimes.

14,964. You would be very sorry to want the croft?—Oh, yes, I would not live without it, only I find it is a home.

14,965. Do you think you would be better off if you had more land?—I am not meaning or wishing to have more.

14,966. You are not yourself personally?—Not myself personally.

14,967. But you speak for yourself only?—Only for myself.

Drumnadrochit.

Allan Cameron.

14,968. *Mr Maccallum.*—How long have you been in your present holding?—From my birth I may say.

14,969. And had you a lease of it from the beginning, since you got possession of it?—I can't say from the beginning; during my father's time I did not own it.

14,970. Had he a lease of it?—Yes, and his forefathers were there, and I am there now on the same site.

14,971. Did they hold the land on lease or were they tenants from year to year?—I can't say.

14,972. Can you tell us the exact date of your present lease?—I think it is about seven years.

14,973. Was it after the passing of the Crofters Act do you know?—I don't remember; no, I think it was before that; not to make it sure.

14,974. You did not pay much attention then to the Act, and to the rights that it conferred upon small holders?—No, because I thought I had myself such like as the holdings they were granting at the time.

14,975. But there are some benefits conferred by the Act such as security of tenure for instance?—We did not count to that.

14,976. You did not pay any attention to that?—No, I did not pay much attention to that.

14,977. Or to the Act at all or the privileges conferred by it?—No.

14,978. And you don't know whether this lease was entered into before or after the passing of the Act?—I can't say for certain.

14,979. Now would you take more land if it were offered to you on fair conditions?—Well, in my present position if I was to take that it would injure my neighbour. I could not get it otherwise.

14,980. But let us suppose land were available, would you think it a benefit to get it?—Well, it did not strike me much to have more land.

14,981. You tell us that you came altogether on your own initiative?—Yes.

14,982. And in your own interest?—Yes, and in the interests of the district.

14,983. Then what had you in view in coming?—Just to hear and see from the Royal Commission partly.

14,984. But didn't you come to give information?—Yes, on account of what I heard Mr Macdonald here say—the last witness, Mr Macdonald, farmer.

14,985. It was after that you thought of it?—Yes, to confirm what he said.

14,986. Did you make up your mind to come before Mr Macdonald's evidence was given?—Oh, yes, we did make up our mind to come before he appeared.

14,987. Before he gave his evidence?—Yes.

14,988. And when exactly did you make up your mind to give evidence?—I can't say; I was not particular; I was not very particular.

14,989. You were not particular about it, but surely you can tell us when you made up your mind on that point?—(No answer.)

14,990. *The Chairman.*—The question is, when did you make up your mind to come here and give evidence?—I have been making up my mind for some time past.

14,991. When did you begin to make it up?—Just yesterday like.

14,992. *Mr Maccallum.*—Are there people in the glen who have not land, I mean cottars who have not any land?—Yes.

14,993. Do you think that you express their mind, that they don't want land?—Oh, no, I don't speak in their behalf at all.

14,994. But simply just for your ownself?—Yes.

14,995. But you think the holding you have is a great benefit to you?—Yes.

14,996. And you would not like to be deprived of it?—No, I would not like to part with it, nor to be without it.

14,997. Then you would not like any interference with the deer forest?—No.

14,998. And the reason is?—Because I get my living from it.

14,999. Do you get employment all the year round?

—Not all the year round, but I get most of the season, —fully through the season,—and some labour about in the spring and summer.

15,000. How long are you engaged in the year taking an average?—Twelve weeks in the season engaged, and sometimes in the summer when there is work.

15,001. And you are afraid that if the deer forests were vacated in any way or holdings granted from them, that twelve weeks' work would be lost to you?—Yes.

15,002. And that is your great reason for objecting to the interference?—Yes, it is because I get my living from it.

15,003. You think though that there is good pasture in the deer forest?—Oh, yes, there is good pasture in parts, and in parts not.

15,004. And the glen is capable of raising good crops?—Well, the glen is just on the run as I have told you already; it is subject to these floods and frosts all over.

15,005. Now can you tell us when you suffered from frost?—Last year greatly; our potatoes were gone entirely.

15,006. The year before that?—The year before that they stood pretty well.

15,007. The potatoes were very good?—Yes.

15,008. And it is only an occasional loss you suffer through frost?—Yes

15,009. But the place is not very high?—Well, it is considered pretty high too, but there are higher places; I am not so high in the glen as others.

15,010. *Mr Munro.*—Did no person suggest you should come here to-day?—No.

15,011. You came here entirely of your own accord?—Yes.

15,012. And you came here to tell us that you were contented with your lot?—Yes.

15,013. Perfectly contented?—Yes.

15,014. It is long since I met a man like you. You say you want no more land yourself?—No, of the the kind I have.

15,015. But I suppose you are prepared to admit that there are many others who do want land?—Oh, yes, there may.

15,016. *Mr Gordon.*—Were your potatoes frosted in 1888, five years ago?—Oh, yes, they were completely.

15,017. Were they frosted in 1885?—I can't remember because they are very commonly spoiled with the frost; very often.

15,018. You don't find that you can grow potatoes with certainty?—No, we can't.

15,019. Your principal reason for wishing to have a croft is not so much for profit as for the convenience of having milk and butter and cheese?—Yes.

15,020. That is to say it is rather for the produce of the cow than for the profit?—Yes; I have had no profit.

15,021. You don't make much profit off it?—No, nothing.

15,022. *The Chairman.*—Did you give in your own name to be examined or did you not?—Not very particular like that; I did not object to doing it.

15,023. Stop now, did you give in your own name for examination, or did you not, yes or no?—Yes, I did upon this point that I have related.

15,024. But generally?—Yes.

15,025. Or was your name given in by Mr Macdonald, Inverness?—Oh, no, sir, no.

15,026. Did you give in your name in writing?—No.

15,027. Then, how did you give it in?—By word.

15,028. I have it here in writing?—Oh, there might be a writing about it.

15,029. There might be writing by whom?—I don't know the name.

15,030. Is it Mr Charles Macdonald of Inverness?—I can't say. [*Mr Sutherland.*—Did you communicate with our Secretary?]

15,031. Do you know Mr Mackenzie here?—No.

15,032. Well, you know him now. Did you give in your name to him?—Yes, I did say that I was to come here.

15,033. When?—Yesterday evening.

15,034. Mr Mackenzie says no, that you did not?—Well, I believe it was sent in to him.

15,035. But I asked him and he says no?—Oh, I did not give it to him.

15,036. Then why do you say you did?—I gave it to him.

15,037. He says you did not and I believe him and not you?—Well, I beg your pardon, I did not give it to him.

15,038. To whom did you give it?—I can't say exactly.

15,039. Then you can't explain how your name reached me?—No.

15,040. I have it here and you answered to the name when called. Is it so that you can't explain how your name reached me? Never mind other people, I am talking to you as to facts which must be within your own knowledge you know. Can you explain how your name reached me or can you not?—(No answer.)

15,041. I should like an answer to that question?—I gave my name to some party that I am not very well acquainted with.

15,042. Who is the 'some party'?—This gentleman (*indicating Mr H. V. Maccallum of the Highland Property Defence Association*).

15,043. Is it Mr Maccallum?—I don't know his name.

15,044. You gave your name to a gentleman whose name you don't know?—Yes, my lord, I don't know his name.

15,045. Were you asked to give in your name?—No, but I may say that I would like to come before your lordship, and to express my own opinion of the holding I have.

15,046. Did you come here to give evidence with the view of preventing other people getting land if land could be legitimately obtained?—No, I did not.

15,047. You are employed as a gillie?—Yes.

15,048. Is that your main source of livelihood?—Yes, partly, for the most of it.

15,049. What wage do you get?—Well, 6s. a day with my pony.

15,050. And some allowances besides, perhaps?—Yes, sometimes.

15,051. How long does that 6s. a day continue usually?—Well, it mostly continues for three months.

15,052. What is the name of the shooting tenant?—Mr Bannatyne.

15,053. How are you employed during the rest of the year?—We get some wood carting to do.

15,054. From whom?—From the proprietor.

15,055. How much of the year are you occupied with that?—Well, we have been more occupied for the recent years than for the last two or three winters; there was not such a demand upon the wood.

15,056. But going back two or three winters, how long were you employed during the slack season?—The whole of winter and part of spring.

15,057. What wage had you on the average for that?—We cannot exactly tell you the average, but we were paid by the ton to drag and cart it.

15,058. What payment do you get per ton?—It is according to the distance we have to cart it.

15,059. What is your average making from that employment?—It would run about 5s. a day.

15,060. How much of winter are you so occupied?—That would be according if the winter was fair; if it was stormy we could not get on with it.

15,061. On the average you would be employed four months?—About four months.

15,062. Continually during that time?—Yes.

15,063. Allowing for weather, of course?—Yes.

15,064. At 5s. a day?—At 5s. a day.

15,065. Then have you not other sources of employment?—Nothing particular, except a day here and there if we were not employed by the shooting tenant.

15,066. What were you doing these odd days, labouring?—Yes, if it was to be got, but it is not easily got.

15,067. You would, of course, take labouring wherever it could be got?—Yes.

15,068. Are you in arrears of rent?—No.

15,069. How long have you been tenant of this holding?—From my birth.

15,070. I think you have said that already.

Drumnadrochit. Allan Cameron.

15,071. *Mr Maccallum.*—You said that no one suggested to you to come to give evidence. Now, will you tell me how did you happen to give your name to a gentleman whom you don't know even by name, in order that you might be brought before the Commission?—Well, it happened we were just talking about it outside, and this gentleman came about and asked if I would like to give any evidence, and I said yes.

15,072. Well, in that way did he not suggest to you that you should give evidence?—No, he did not. [*Mr Munro.*—You suggested it yourself, did you?—Yes.]

15,073. How did you think he would be the means of communicating your name here if you did not know anything about him? How did you make him the medium of communication with this Commission?—I cannot answer that question.

15,074. *The Chairman.*—The question is why did you not come frankly forward yourself to the Secretary and communicate your name as one desirous of giving information?—Well, I don't consider myself to be of very great interest; but I meant to give an account of how I was employed myself and kept up on the place.

15,075. *Mr Maccallum.*—And how did you select Mr Maccallum as your medium of communication?—He happened to be about.

15,076. And did you say that you would be willing to give your name?—He did not force me to give my name.

15,077. But did he suggest to you to give your name?—No.

15,078. And you just gave your name without knowing whether he had any connection with anybody here?—Oh, I did know he had a connection; I had seen him here yesterday.

15,079. Did you know he had any connection with any association?—Yes, I did.

15,080. What did you know about him?—[*The Chairman.*—Answer the question?]—I took him to be a man of business in the Royal Commission.

15,081. Did you know that he was acting as agent for a landlord association?—No, I did not know at the time.

15,082. You were not aware of that at all?—No.

15,083. Or that he was acting in the interests of proprietors?—No.

15,084. Do you really, distinctly, say that?—Yes, I must say I did not know for whom he acted.

15,085. Did he make that known to you?—No.

15,086. He did not make it known to you that he was acting in the interests of proprietors?—No, I don't think he did.

15,087. *Mr H. V. Maccallum.*—My lord, I have a personal explanation to make which it seems to me desirable that I should make at this stage. There is nothing really to hide in this matter at all. The circumstances are these:—When I came here yesterday afternoon I met Mr Burgess, the factor, who said that certain crofters and tenants from Glenmoriston had volunteered certain information. I asked him what was the nature of the information. He told me,—he said in fact that the information was that they really did not wish to move, but as he had an official position in connection with the bank and also as factor, and it might be thought that he had induced these men to come forward in some way or other, he said to me, 'What would you advise me to do,' knowing I represent the Highland Property Defence Association. I said to him 'Well, I think it would be 'better if men would give in their own names themselves' and he said 'Well, I don't know if they have 'got paper or can write it out.' 'Well,' I said, 'that is a 'matter of no moment; get a list of the names and get 'one of them to hand it in to Mr Mackenzie.' That was done and that is all about it.*

14,088. *Mr Munro.*—Did that take place here in Glen-Urquhart?

15,089. *Mr H. V. Maccallum.*—Here in Glen-Urquhart yesterday when I met you, Mr Munro, at the bank.

15,090. *Rev. Mr Maccallum.*—And your course of action was suggested to you by Mr Burgess.

* The list of names was handed in by Mr Charles Macdonald, the preceding witness, and not by Cameron.

15,091. *Mr H. V. Maccallum.*—No, it was not.

15,092. *Rev. Mr Maccallum.*—He took your advice?

15,093. *Mr H. V. Maccallum.*—He took my advice.

15,094. *Rev. Mr Maccallum.*—He asked your advice?

15,095. *Mr H. V. Maccallum*—Yes, but my course of action was not suggested by him.

15,096. *Mr Munro.*—How did the men happen to be here?

15,097. *Mr H. V. Maccallum.*—Because they volunteered this information; they came up of their own accord. I thought it was very nice of them, and I wish others would do the same.

15,098. *Mr Sutherland.*—You said 'we' in your statement, or 'they.' You used the plural number in speaking about the crofters at this place I presume?

15,099. *Mr H. V. Maccallum.*—No, I said that I wished others would do the same throughout the Highlands. I may have said 'we' in reference to myself, because I represent a very important association.

15,100. *Mr Sutherland.*—But I thought you referred to others than this gentleman?

15,101. *Mr H. V. Maccallum.*—Oh, no, I am not referring to him at all.

15,102. *Mr John Macleod,* Glenmoriston.—Might I ask your age?—[*Witness*].—I am not prepared to answer any questions from you.

15,103. *The Chairman.*—His age is 44.

15,104. *Mr John Macleod,* Glenmoriston.—What is your name?

15,105. *The Chairman.* — His name is Allan Cameron.—[*Witness*].—Allan Cameron.

15,106. *Mr John Macleod,* Glenmoriston.—Is that the parental name?—Yes, that I took to myself.

15,107. Is that the parental name?—It has nothing to do with you at all.

15,108. We wish facts here; is that the parental name?—I am not prepared to meet you at all.

15,109. *The Chairman.*—Stop, you must not run away.

15,110. *Mr John Macleod,* Glenmoriston.—You admit that you are a Cameron?—Yes.

15,111. Have you a perfect knowledge regarding the *prestige* and *esprit de corps* of the ancient Camerons?

15,112. *The Chairman.*—I cannot allow that question.

15,113. *Mr John Macleod,* Glenmoriston.—It is a very important question I am bringing about. I am tracing Mr Cameron to one particular point.

15,114. *The Chairman.*—Well, what is the point?

15,115. *Mr John Macleod,* Glenmoriston.—Did you comprehend the force of the first part of the question which I put?

15,116. *The Chairman.*—I must say I don't comprehend it.

15,117. *Mr John Macleod,* Glenmoriston.—Well, Mr Cameron, you said you came here to-day, and that you don't desire to obtain more land?—Yes.

15,118. Now, is it not a fact that, like the Cameronians of old, you would like to be an independent Highlander?

15,119. *The Chairman.*—I can't allow that question, it is not relevant to our present inquiry.

15,120. *Mr John Macleod,* Glenmoriston.—I fear, my lord, that there is something at the back of this which I would like to clear up. [*To witness*].—Is it not a fact that you would not like to be dependent upon anyone?

15,121. *The Chairman.*—We are all dependent on each other you know, more or less.

15,122. *Mr John Macleod,* Glenmoriston.—Now, Mr Cameron, you have failed to answer these questions, but I will put another. To your perfect knowledge, is it not a fact that there are plenty lands, hundreds of acres, throughout the estate of Glenmoriston, as good as what you get down in the parish of Glen-Urquhart here, if it were only distributed on the people to establish them in a comfortable way?—I

Drumnadrochit. Cameron.

know there is not anything of the soil of Glen-Urquhart in Glenmoriston.

15,123. I am perfectly aware of that. Of course, we can't transfer the soil from the one parish to the other; that is not the question at all. But is it not the fact that the land up there—I don't say all—but is it not the fact that the land up there produces as good a crop as the lands down here do?—No.

15,124. Is it not in many cases, now?—No, it does not bring the same produce.

15,125. Would you please specify the places that you mean?—Every place in the glen; it never carries the crop of Glen-Urquhart.

15,126. Are you aware of the fact, or would you be surprised to hear it, that even on the home farm of Invermoriston in my younger days—you know my age—that the farm of Invermoriston was yielding some of the best crops that would defy even the east country here; such is not the case now. [*The Chairman.*—Do you know about that, Cameron?]—No, I am not much acquainted about the low farm of Invermoriston; I live eight miles farther up the glen.

15,127. You say with regard to the frost that it is very prevalent there?—Yes.

15,128. Is it the fact that it comes every year in six?—I did not say so.

15,129. Can you specify the interval between one frost and another?—Yes.

15,130. Between a severe frost and when another severe frost comes? [*The Chairman.*—The interval?]

15,131. Yes, these frosts which he has experienced in his time?—Didn't we experience frost last year?

15,132. That is one year; now retrace your memory back?—About five years before, we would have suffered the same loss.

15,133. That was three years of plenty?—And so forth.

15,134. *The Chairman.*—I cannot allow that line to be pursued any further.

15,135. *Mr John Macleod*, Glenmoriston.—One more question. The question was put to me, when I was up for examination, if I had any knowledge of agriculture. I am simply going to bring this out. Are you aware of the fact that even the influence of frost could be abated by the use of one plough besides another?—No, I am not aware of that.

15,136. *The Chairman.*—I don't follow your question.

15,137. *Mr John Macleod*, Glenmoriston.—Are you aware that the influence of frost could be abated by the use of one plough besides another?—I don't know.

15,138. Can you specify the difference between a high *coulter* plough and a small, what we call a hand plough?—I never used a high *coulter*, I always use a small plough.

15,139. Are your aware of this fact that if you put down your potato seed with a level surface you resist the force of the frost, whereas if you use a high *coulter* into drills the effect of the frost is still greater?

15,140. *The Chairman.*—Can you answer that?—No, I can't.

15,141. I can't answer it either. Now that will do, I cannot allow any more.

15,142. *Mr John Macleod*, Glenmoriston.—Thank you, my lord.

Alexander Macdonald.

ALEXANDER MACDONALD, Crofter, Dalchreichard. (Examined in Gaelic, through an Interpreter.)

15,143. *The Chairman.*—Are you a crofter?—Yes.

15,144. Are you under lease?—Yes.

15,145. What is the date of the lease?—Six or seven years ago.

15,146. What is your rent?—£19.

15,147. Your name has been given in as wishing to give evidence; what is it you desire to tell us about?—We were desirous of coming down.

15,148. For what purpose?—In order that we might see the Commissioners.

15,149. Anything more?—No.

15,150. Then we may abbreviate your examination. I think that will do. Drumnadrochit.

15,151. *Mr Macleod*, Invermoriston.—May I put one question? Alexander Macdonald.

15,152. *The Chairman.*—No, I think it is quite unnecessary.

PETER BURGESS, Factor for Glenmoriston (43)—*examined.* Peter Burgess.

15,153. *The Chairman.*—Have you a written statement, Mr Burgess?—Yes.

15,154. How long have you been factor in Glenmoriston?—Eighteen years.

15,155. Where were you before?—At Invergarry. I was accountant in the Caledonian Bank there.

15,156. Is your statement in your own handwriting?—Yes.

15,157. And signed?—Yes.

15,158. Kindly read it.—Glenmoriston Estate, Inverness-shire. This estate is very rugged and mountainous and ranges from 50 feet above sea-level at its lowest to an altitude of 3634 feet at its highest. The extent is about 75,000 acres, of which about 55,000 acres are deer forest and the remainder sheep grazing and arable land. The number of tenancies has fluctuated but little during the last century. They were in

	£1 to £30 Rent.	£30 to £100.	Over £100.	Total.
1803	37	4	4	45
1893	37	6	2	45

In 1809 the number of holdings on the property was only 40. At present there is but one farm let at a rent of over £200 per annum. The whole of the arable land is still occupied and cultivated to the best advantage. There is but a very small extent of it within the area under deer forest, and that is cultivated and grazed by the keepers. The largest extent of arable land occupied by one tenant farmer is only about 60 acres.

The holdings are principally small and many of them do not produce sufficient grain and provender to maintain the families of the tenants and their stocks. The smaller tenants depend on a livelihood chiefly from acting as gillies and labourers on the estate. For a considerable number of years back many of them have got employment in cutting and carting birchwood during the winter months, but there is scarcely any demand for that kind of timber now, and there is a probability that the labour in connection with it may cease altogether. Should that happen, the smaller tenants will have a great difficulty in making a livelihood in the district. The tendency, therefore, should be, as opportunity arises, to join two and two of the existing small holdings together rather than to increase their number. Indeed, there is no means of increasing the number of small holdings on this property. The whole of the arable land is already occupied, and there is not nearly sufficient of it to winter the stock of sheep presently on the property.

In my opinion a model property should be divided into a few large farms, if the property is adapted for such, but the bulk of the holdings should range from a size which would give employment to a pair of small horses to a size which would require a pair or a pair and a half of ordinary sized horses. The smaller sized holdings should grow on each what would support a family until some of them were able to spread out to other employment. Small crofters and cottars should generally not be more numerous than would enable at least the head of each family to get employment in his own neighbourhood.

For several years back the proprietor has carried out at his own expense the bulk of the permanent improve-

Drumnadrochit.

Peter Burgess.

ments on this property, and I find that the cost of fully equipping a holding with suitable buildings for man and beast, erected of stone and lime and roofed with slates or corrugated iron, equals six to twelve or more years' rent according to the size of the holding; the expense being larger in proportion as the holding becomes smaller.

Some sixteen years ago I consulted a practical sheep farmer who knew the ground intimately in regard to the rent which might be got for the grazings of the deer forests if they were let as sheep runs. He went carefully into calculations in my presence and his estimate was that we could not expect more than £800 or £850. The rents then obtained for sheep farms cannot now be got. I may say that Knockie, the largest sheep farm on the property, is let including arable land at an average of 11d. per acre. Another farm, Achlean, is let at 9d. One crofting township, that of Baltombuy, is let at 8d.; another, Dalchreichard, at 8d.; another, Dundreggan, at 9d., and there is one ordinary sized farm, Balnacarn, which is let so low as 5d. an acre.

15,159. That is grazing?—Grazing and arable included.

15,160. What is the size of the holding can you tell us?—It is a £70 rent, and there would be probably 40 acres of arable in it. The forest ground, on the other hand, is let at an average of 1s. 7d. per acre; and the same under sheep, according to this gentleman's estimate which was very close to my own, would only fetch 3d. per acre. The ground is not well adapted for grouse, and the shooting over it, if under sheep, would not be worth more than the grazing rent, together £1600 or about one third of the sum for which it lets as deer forest. It is clear, therefore, that these lands cannot meantime be turned to better account than they are at present. If put under sheep, the decrease of revenue would mean ruin to the property, as it could not be properly maintained, and it would at the same time be the means of increasing the parish rates by one-fourth.

Having been born and brought up on a croft, and having taken a practical part in all the different kinds of labour in connection with crofting and farming, I may be allowed to say that in my opinion the manner of living in the Highlands has changed so much within the last generation or two that a whole glen or countryside under crofts cannot be made a success in these times. Long ago, off a few acres of arable land and a little outrun, a family did make a living of a kind, no doubt pinched for want of food when the crops failed owing to bad seasons, autumn frosts and other causes. There were very few draper's or baker's or butcher's accounts in those days. From a few fleeces of wool, washed, carded, spun, and dyed at home, and woven by the local handloom weaver, the family clothing was made. That for the male members of the family was made up by an itinerant tailor who was paid in meal or potatoes, and the women made up their own clothing and the men's underclothing. The first pair of shoes I remember having were made by my father—who was not a shoemaker to trade—and when they became worn out and the soles began to come away from them I wept, thinking I would never see another pair. The implements of husbandry were with few exceptions of local make, many of them being made at home. This was the general custom in my early days before the country was opened up by railways. There was no tea seen expect occasionally on Sunday, and no loaf bread except when a stranger visited the place. The food, as a rule, was porridge and milk for breakfast, potatoes and milk, potatoes and herring, or water or whey brose with milk and bread for dinner. The supper varied according to the season of the year from porridge and milk as for breakfast to brose made from cabbage or greens in the autumn, and from turnips in winter, with mashed greens and bread, or turnips and bread, after the brose. Not infrequently the supper consisted of gruel and bread or sowans and bread. Porridge was made from the remains of the greens or of the turnips the following morning for breakfast.

At the present time mostly every article of clothing is *bought* as well as much of the food consumed, and these cannot be paid for out of the profits made from a croft. And the times are not such as to encourage farming even on a larger scale. Produce was seldom lower in price. For the last two seasons cast ewes and shot lambs would scarcely pay their expenses to market; and wethers and other classes of sheep have been very cheap. Wool, which usually paid the rent of a sheep farm a generation ago, sells at less than half what it did then; and I read in the newspapers the other day that potatoes sent to the London market barely paid carriage and charges. In one instance they did not.

Drumnadrochit.

Peter Burg

It is well known that old arable land which has been out of culivation for many years will, even though thin and at a high elevation, give fair crops for two or three years if the seasons are favourable, but the soil very soon becomes exhausted and not remunerative to labour. By a high elevation I do not mean a hard and fast line of so many feet. Land in a dry climate such as Morayshire where the rainfall averages 30 to 40 inches will, if properly treated, continue to yield better crops than the same class of land at a lower level by 200 or 300 feet in our wet climate where the rainfall is 70, 80, and in some cases over 100 inches. In dry seasons the farmyard manure applied does not become pulverised, while in wet seasons the substance is washed out of the soil; yet the crops sometimes obtained would mislead a theorist or one not acquainted with the facts and circumstances. I have seen such soil broken up and limed after being seven or eight years under grass, yield oats weighing 44½ lbs. per bushel; but that soil will not now pay the expense of keeping it in heart and the expense of labour, and it has been under sheep for several years back.

Considering, therefore, the cost of providing buildings and stock, the quality of the soil in the Highlands, the uncertain climate, the low price of farm produce, the extra burden to the ratepayers, the dearth of labour, and the cost of living now as compared with older times, I am firmly of the belief that it would be imprudent to plant crofters, or even small farmers, in isolated corners which were at one time occupied by industrious tenants who had to give way under changed circumstances.

There are many Highland properties for sale from time to time and, if there was any reasonable expectation that a crofting community would be a success, capitalists would very soon discover it and find an outlet for their money in that direction. The law of supply and demand will most effectually regulate the purpose to which land should be applied, whether arable or moorland.

(Signed) P. Burgess, Factor.

Glen-Urquhart,
July 1893.

Glenmoriston Estate.
List of Holdings from 1803 to 1812 inclusive

Year.	Under £30.	£30 to £100.	Over £100.	Total.
1803	37	4	4	45
1804	37	4	4	45
1805	36	4	4	44
1806	37	4	4	45
1807	32	8	4	44
1808	32	8	4	44
1809	31	4	5	40
1810	31	4	5	40
1811	32	6	6	44
1812	32	5	6	43
			Average	43

15,161. *The Chairman.*—You said that there were 55,000 acres of the estate you represent under sheep?—Under deer.

15,162. I thought you said 75,000 under sheep, and 55,000 under deer?—75,000 is the total extent of the property.

15,163. How much is under sheep?—The difference, 20,000, is between sheep and arable land.

15,164. How many farms are on these 20,000 acres, exclusive of crofters under £30 of rent?—Eleven.

15,165. Eleven farmers?—Eleven tenants above £30.

15,166. Just give us their rents?—I find there are eight only, my lord.

15,167. Eight, not eleven, above £30. Now what are the rents of these tenants?—They are as follows:—

Tomchraskie, Peter Fullarton, £50.
Balnancarn, Charles Macdonald, £70.
Torgoyle, Thomas Dott, £30.
Dundreggan and Easter Inverwick, J. F. G. Bannatyne, £55.
Invermoriston, Robert Sinclair, £72.
Mains Farm—in the proprietor's own hands, valued at £31, 7s. 6d.
Aonach, James Macpherson, £200.
Knockie, Lord Lovat, £250.

15,168. You say that the crofts at rents not exceeding £30 are too small?—The large majority of them.

15,169. What is their average size?—About ten acres, taking the average.

15,170. Ten acres arable?—Yes.

15,171. And they have grazing besides I suppose?—The whole of them.

15,172. And they all keep sheep?—Yes.

15,173. And do they keep horses?—Yes, I think the whole of them have at least one horse.

15,174. Would you be in favour, if it could be properly carried out, of consolidating a number of these holdings and giving the consolidated holding to a single tenant?—As a croft became vacant, I would be inclined to add it or join it to its neighbour.

15,175. Now what farms do these holdings march with?—The crofting township of Dalchreichard has five tenants. The rent of one is £10, 1s. 1d., of another £9, 16s. 3d., of another £8, 6s. 11d., and of another £19. I expect the last is two crofts added together.

15,176. What I want to get from you is, which of the farms mainly do the crofting townships march with?—The crofting farms and the large farms are on opposite sides of the river. In fact, the large farms are on the south side of the river, the crofts all on the north.

15,177. Are all the farms above £30 on the opposite side of the river from the crofts?—Only those above £100.

15,178. What river is that?—The river Moriston; and I may say as we are talking of the river that the land is lying very close to the river, which is slow and stagnant, and that accounts, I rather think, for the frost that the tenants complained of.

15,179. What are the bounds of the crofting townships on the other side away from the river; is it forest?—The township of Dundreggan borders the forest on the east side. One forest is on the east side of the township of Dundreggan.

15,180. And what are the other boundaries of the townships?—One £70 farm adjoins Dalchreichard township to the west, and the large farm of £200 is on the opposite side of the river.

15,181. And both the large farms, the one in the hands of Mr Macpherson, and the other in the hands of Lord Lovat, are on the opposite side of the river?—Yes, Mr Macpherson's is; Lord Lovat's is on the south side of Loch Ness.

15,182. It is in a different district?—Yes, right opposite Invermoriston on the south side of Loch Ness, in a different district.

15,183. Have you considered any mode of dealing with crofters who were obliged to leave their holdings in order to make room for consolidation?—No, we had no instance of that.

15,184. You admit you say that it would be a good thing to consolidate a number of these holdings so as to make them large enough?—We have been carrying that out as holdings became vacant.

15,185. By death or otherwise?—By death or the tenant choosing to leave of his own accord; one crofter left for a £50 farm for instance, and the croft was added to his neighbour's.

15,186. But you don't suggest any remedy? I suppose a process of consolidation were carried out, do you suggest any way of disposing of those who are deprived of their holdings?—No, I have not had occasion to consider it.

15,187. But is there not land upon the estate which might be allocated to them?—Not any, the arable land is too little just now for the requirements of the district and has ever been so for the population.

15,188. In your opinion as a skilled man the arable is too small as it is?—That is so, and I see it was so long before my time; in the last Statistical Account it is stated that Glenmoriston never produced sufficient to support the population.

15,189. How is that; has it a backward disposition?—It is a very narrow glen.

15,190. And you say the whole of the available arable is taken up?—It is.

15,191. And there is not enough?—No.

15,192. But might we not take it in this way, that there is improvable land upon which crofters might be settled and turn that land into arable?—I don't think there is; I am sure there is not.

15,193. Has there been any extension of the arable by these large farmers during the last twenty years?—None, the last land that was improved was by the grandfather of the present proprietor, 16 acres of moor at one place, and I am not sure what the extent was in another place. In fact it is attached to a large farm, and I don't know what extent it was, but the other was 16 acres.

15,194. That is the last?—That is the last, and that was certainly before 1848.

15,195. But is this not the case that the crofters have by reclamation extended the area of their arable?—No, they have not, since 1848.

15,196. Not since 1848?—No, there was not improvable land in it for them.

15,197. Would you say that that is not from indisposition to do it, but because the land is not there?—No, it is not, they would be very anxious to do it I have no doubt if the land was there to improve.

15,198. Is the arable land of the crofters' holdings exhausted or is it kept well up?—It is not well up.

15,199. Is it as well up as the farmers?—Not as a rule.

15,200. Do they follow a system of rotation?—Yes, they do, but in some cases where the soil is very thin, which it is in many parts, they leave out a field for a time until it gains heart.

15,201. The crofters do that?—Some of them do. I have seen it done by one at least.

15,202. What is the average altitude of the arable?—I may say that with the exception of the home farm and a small bit attached to the hotel it is all above the 400 feet level, between 400 and 500 feet.

15,203. Has there been land added to the deer forest in your time?—There has been part of the farm of Tomchraskie.

15,204. How much was added from Tomchraskie?—Between 7000 and 8000 acres, if I remember. I think it was stated in a return to Lord Napier's Commission.

15,205. Between 7000 and 8000 acres of grazing?—Of hill ground.

15,206. Hill ground?—Entirely.

15,207. Of what character was it? black hill ground, high land or low ground?—High ground, the low ground was kept for the tenant of Tomchraskie who still has it. 7106 acres as far as I could judge.

15,208. Would the crofters where you are factor be benefited by an extension of their grazing?—Some would, no doubt, if they were to depend on the croft itself for a living, but those of them who depend on outside work prefer the small holding, because they would not have the time to engage in other work if they had the larger holding.

15,209. But apart from that question I suppose I

Drumnadrochit.

Peter Burgess.

may take it that grazing land of some value is obtainable from the forest for that purpose?—Not without destroying the forest.

15,210. Was the forest not a pretty good forest before Tomchraskie was added to it?—I have no doubt it was.

15,211. Then would not the forest be as good as it was before if the Tomchraskie lands were taken from it again?—No doubt, but the addition of the Tomchraskie lands to the forest increases its value very considerably; it was cleared by the tenant of the holding for putting it under deer. It was cleared by the shooting tenant, who rented the grazings.

15,212. But would not the forest be as good as it was before Tomchraskie was added to it if it were taken from it again?—No, Tomchraskie ground adds to the value of the forest.

15,213. Quite, it adds to the value of the forest, but suppose you take away Tomchraskie you would still have as good a forest as before Tomchraskie was added to it?—No doubt.

12,214. Therefore, the forest would not be destroyed?—It would not be destroyed.

15,215. What addition was made to the rent, if you remember, of the forest when Tomchraskie was added?—Tomchraskie was added, as I said, by the shooting tenant, and the whole rent of the farm was £400.

15,216. What rent effeired to the part added to the forest?—The part now let which I may say Glenmoriston gave as a privilege to the present tenant because he was a crofter of his own at £20 or £30 lower rent than he could get from outsiders, yields now £50; well, say £80 would be a fair rent, that would have to be deducted from the £400.

15,217. What is the rent of the forest?—Lord Tweedmouth's rent is £2500.

15,218. And may we take £400 of that as representing the rent of the Tomchraskie portion of it?—No, £320.

15,219. The grazing rent?—The grazing rent.

15,220. And the shooting rent?—The shooting rent is very little; as I said before it is not adapted for grouse.

15,221. But it is adapted for deer?—It is adapted for deer. I think I said in my statement that the shooting rent, as a rule, would average about the same as the grazing rent; but I may say that the £400 or the £320 could not now be got for the farm as a sheep grazing.

15,222. What would you expect to get for it now as a sheep grazing?—I don't think we would get £200.

15,223. Have the crofters on that estate made any application to you for additional land either arable or grazing?—None whatever; one township, Achnanconeran, some years ago, expressed a wish to have their holdings extended, and the tenant of the neighbouring land left it, and at that time we had an opportunity of giving them the 16 acres of arable land which I said were improved by the grandfather of the present proprietor, and some extra outrun. They got that in my time.

15,224. And have there been any applications since?—None.

15,225. Now, how many cottars are there on the estate?—There are about ten cottars of all kinds, paying a rent of £1 to £6, and there are fourteen small cottars who merely pay a nominal rent of 1s. for a house stance, and some of them having a garden pay 5s. I may say that it was since I took charge of the property that I suggested there should be any nominal rent paid.

15,226. Have these people, either the cottars paying a rent such as you mention or these people paying 1s., made application for land?—One did, that is all.

15,227. In your time?—In my time.

15,228. Are they a considerable burden upon the crofters?—No, I don't think so; they are not numerous; the glen is a long one, and they are not numerous considering the length.

15,229. And are they much scattered over the glen?—They are scattered over a distance of nine miles or so.

15,230. Have these cottars paying a rent of £1 to £6 or so, any land?—No, only a garden.

Drumnadrochit.

Peter Burgess.

15,231. And, as a rule, have they stock?—None.

15,232. Have they no stock feeding upon the crofters' ground?—None; no, I don't think there is any now. Some of them are tradesmen; two of them are blacksmiths, one is a tailor, another a shoemaker, and Mr Macleod, merchant, and a few labourers.

15,233. You have no desire, I suppose, to see crofters on the estate leave the place if accommodation could be afforded them?—Not the slightest; we do not wish any of them to leave who can remain; we would wish to get as many as would be required for the proper supply of labour to the district.

15,234. Well, and not only so, but would you not be disposed to keep all tenants there for whom accommodation could be found reasonably?—Quite so, without sacrificing any other interests.

15,235. You are not prepared to make any sacrifice?—Not to a large extent; of course, we have to make a sacrifice with those we have now, we try to retain a certain number and we make a very considerable sacrifice indeed, because the proprietor builds houses now, here and there, and I may say for the houses he builds he will never see any return.

15,236. Has he built all the houses?—He has built within the last few years a number of crofters' houses, and some offices.

15,237. A considerable number?—One here and there, a few, and I suppose it is his intention to continue that without any outlay whatever to the crofter except the carriage of the material. He never asked him to pay a penny of interest upon that outlay.

15,238. What outlay has he made, roughly, say within the last ten years, upon such places?—About £2000, I should say.

15,239. On crofters' buildings, dwelling houses, and steadings?—Between crofters and cottars.

15,240. I mean below the level of farms?—Below the level of farms it averages £200 a year, some years not so much.

15,241. Has he got no interest on all that?—Some cottars pay a rent, that is how the cottars' rents are so high; some of them are up to £6.

15,242. Does the expenditure on the crofters' buildings yield no interest?—No interest. He never charged one penny of interest to a crofter.

15,243. Are these tenants holding under a lease, or are they under the Act?—Under lease.

15,244. The whole of them?—The whole of them with one exception.

15,245. Are the cottars under lease?—Some are and some not.

15,246. And these people paying 1s. how do they stand?—They have no lease, they are all at will.

15,247. You mentioned the names of tenants, Fullarton, Macdonald, Dott, and so forth; are these present or prior tenants?—Present tenants.

15,248. Then none of these farms of the rents you mention are in the proprietor's hands except Mains Farm?—Only the Mains Farm; that is the only farm in his hands.

15,249. And do all these tenants hold under nineteen years' or fifteen years' leases?—Nineteen years' leases.

15,250. *Mr Munro.*—You mentioned that the average rent you derive from deer forest was 1s. 7d. per acre?—That is so.

15,251. Is that calculated upon the gross rental or the net rental?—On the net rental.

15,252. You have made up that calculation by deducting all the burdens that the landlord has to pay in the shape of wages?—The landlord pays no wages; the tenants do that entirely.

15,253. But you have deducted the cost of upholding the forest, and the public burdens?—The tenants pay the public burdens also, that is to say the tenants' part, the proprietor pays one half.

15,254. You get a net rental from it?—A net rental.

15,255. That is different from other deer forests I

think?—No, I think it is the general rule when they are let on lease.

15,256. *Mr Macleod.*—How many large farmers did you say there were?—Eight.

15,257. How many of those are resident?—Five practically; well, I may say that the proprietor is resident, he is a large time of the year there, and he has the home farm in his own hands. The shooting tenant has a £55 holding.

15,258. How many are occupying farmers then, I will put the question in that form?—Four, and four are—

15,259. There for a part of the year?—There for a part of the year, and absent for another part.

15,260. Then with regard to the crofters and cottars that are under lease, are they nineteen years' leases?—Nineteen years' leases.

15,261. Do they expire all at the same time?—No, they don't; so far as I recollect they don't.

15,262. The witness who was examined here to-day was not able to give the date?—So far as I recollect, but I can give the date if it is wished, it was in 1886 or 1887 that they entered into leases.

15,263. They were not under lease before then?—Some were and some not.

15,264. Were the majority under lease?—No, the majority were not under lease.

15,265. Till then?—Till then.

15,266. I was not able to hear you, Mr Burgess, but I think you gave the information to the Chairman as to the crofter townships that march with the deer forest?—I think so.

15,267. You gave that information?—Yes, I did.

15,268. Have you ever considered whether it would be possible to enlarge these crofters' holdings that in your opinion are at the present time too small, by adding to the pasture portion of them rather than consolidating them?—I don't think it is possible to do that without hurting the deer forest.

15,269. Do you think that it would injure the deer forest to a greater degree than it would benefit the tenants?—Very much more, and besides the deer forest is very much more remunerative to the landlord. The deer forest ground is very much more remunerative to the landlord although on the whole it is the highest and most inferior ground.

15,270. That is the position you take up?—That is the position I take up. The farms and crofts are let all under 11d. an acre and the deer forest ground is let at 1s. 7d.

15,271. So that you found your objection to extending your grazings on the fear that a larger rent can be got out of it as a deer forest?—To some extent, yes.

15,272. But to what extent?—To the extent that taking anything from the forest would deteriorate it.

15,273. But it is altogether a question of rent with you, isn't it; that is your position?—To a considerable extent it is.

15,274. But to what extent is it not then?—To this extent that the ground is not asked for, and it could be only given at a sacrifice.

15,275. But that would be again a question of rent?—Yes, it is a question of rent.

15,276. It resolves itself practically into a question of rent?—Yes, it does, and also there is not the slightest doubt that a forest brings a very much larger amount of money into the district, to the tenants of the district, than the land would if under grazing, under sheep grazing.

15,277. You think that the more the deer forest area is increased the greater benefit it is to the smaller tenants?—No, but what I mean is this, the fact of the ground being under deer forest now brings a larger amount of money, circulates a larger amount of money in the district than would be circulated if it were under crofts or under tenants of grazings.

15,278. It circulates a larger amount of money?—Yes, certainly. The tenant of the shooting circulates more money in the district, in the country, than the tenant of the ground would do if it were under sheep.

15,279. But what I am anxious to know is this, would it not be possible to a certain extent to reduce the area of the deer forest, which appears to be a very large area, without materially injuring the shooting?—I don't think it is possible.

15,280. Might I ask the limit of stags?—There is no limit; the only limit now under the lease as far as I remember is that there are no more stags killed during the last year than during the three preceding years.

15,281. What was that?—Well, I can't tell, because it has not come to an end yet, but he may not during the last year of his lease kill more than during the three preceding years.

15,282. Do you know on an average the number of stags that have been killed?—I can't give the exact figures.

15,283. Give us a rough idea?—I have no idea what Lord Tweedmouth killed on his ground since he got it; Mr Bannatyne kills, I think, an average of about eighty, and Lord Tweedmouth, I should say, should kill about the same number if he worked the ground as much as the tenant did.

15,284. We might take it as an average of about 150 stags?—About 160, and Glenmoriston himself kills about 15; that would be 175.

15,285. We might put that down as the average kill of stags?—I should think so.

15,286. *Mr Gordon.*—With regard to that portion of the farm of Tomchraskie that was added to the forest, what kind of land is it?—It is high and dry land.

15,287. Black?—No, it is mostly hilly, there is not much of it flat.

15,288. Black, I said?—Oh! black, yes, black ground.

15,289. Would it be suitable for carrying sheep by itself?—It might carry a few in the summer time, but it would not winter any.

15,290. Would it be suitable for a sheep farm without the lower part of Tomchraskie let to this tenant?—No, it is not suitable for a sheep run without low ground, and there is not low ground enough to winter the stock that is in Glenmoriston now; they have at present to send them away to winter.

15,291. Suppose that the forest of Ceanna-chnoc and Corriedho was put under sheep again, is there a sufficient amount of wintering within the limits of the forest for the stock that the forest would summer?—No, it would not winter any.

15,292. At any rate, you could winter very few?—Very few indeed, if any.

15,293. You would not be able to winter hoggs?—Certainly not.

15,294. Then, as regards the sheep carrying properties of the estate, they have not, at all events as regards wintering, been at all reduced by the letting of this high ground of Tomchraskie?—Not at all.

15,295. *Mr Maccallum.*—You gave some statistics I think of the number of tenancies during the century, and I think you said the number continues very much the same?—Very much the same.

15,296. Can you give the statistics as to population relating to the glen during the century?—I can't, but I am aware as a fact that it is decreasing.

15,297. It is decreasing?—I know it is decreasing.

15,298. And all the forest land was used as grazing in connection with the arable land?—The forest land was no doubt to a very large extent, I don't think the whole of it ever was under sheep. There is some of it I believe would cause more deaths through the rocky nature of the ground than the grazing would be worth, and so far as I can trace there is part of it that was never let as grazing.

15,299. Would you give us the date of the formation of the forest?—Of course, I can't give you the date of the formation of that part I refer to, but there were 19,760 acres or so turned into deer forest previous to 1850, 28,000 acres between 1862 and 1868, and I mentioned already that 7100 acres were added in 1881.

15,300. You cannot give us any idea I suppose as to the number of sheep that were maintained on these

Drumnadrochit.

Peter Burgess.

grazings that were converted into deer forest?—No, I cannot, they were all with the exception of that small piece under deer before I had to do with the property.

15,301. Do you think now that the deer forest if it were again grazed by sheep would fetch a good rent as a grouse moor?—I know it would not, because it is not adapted for grouse; the farther west you go, as a rule, the grouse shooting becomes worse on account of the climate I believe, and the nature of the hills; the ground is not adapted for grouse.

15,302. Is there such a very great difference between this and Glenmoriston?—A very great difference; there is certainly.

15,303. The distance is not very much?—But the difference is great nevertheless.

15,304. And we find that the land here fetches a very high rent as a grouse moor?—I know it does.

15,305. It is very much less in extent than you have, and it fetches £500?—Yes, but it is very much superior ground.

15,306. There is something like 18,000 acres here that fetches a rent of £500 as a grouse moor?—When tenants come to ask me what grouse they expect, "O," they say "surely we should get more than that over such an extent. I mean I would rather have a place where I would get the same number of brace in one third of the area, rather give three times the rent, because I would only have one-third of the walking."

15,307. But, then it is let just now as a deer forest, and, of course, grouse would be a disadvantage; and I suppose grouse are kept down on that account?—Part of it is let as deer forest; but 20,000 acres, except the arable land, is under grouse, whatever grouse it produces.

15,308. I beg your pardon?—What is under sheep now should, of course, have a grouse stock.

15,309. Do you get any rent for that?—Yes, we do. It is not separate, however, from the other; each shooting tenant, with the exception of the proprietor himself, has a piece of grouse moor.

15,310. There are 20,000 acres not included in the forest?—Yes.

15,311. Can you estimate the value of that as a grouse shooting?—It is not in my opinion worth more than £500 although it is the best grouse ground.

15,312. But, then you must remember that the deer forest extends to 55,000 acres?—Yes.

15,313. Surely that would be very much more valuable than the 20,000?—The ground best adapted for grouse is now under sheep and that makes the difference.

15,314. Taking Invermoriston there,—the difference between it and here is very great; the forest of Invermoriston would not it be suitable now as a grouse moor?—No, it would not.

15,315. What do you estimate then the rent that you would get for the whole of your forest as grouse moor?—I think I stated already that it would be about the estimate of the grazing rent which I and the other gentleman I consulted put at about £800.

15,316. What would you consider the sporting value as a grouse moor?—I thought you meant as a grouse moor.

15,317. Yes, I ask now as a grouse moor, you gave £800 as a grazing rent?—Exactly, the grazing rent and the sporting rent would be about the same.

15,318. Oh, yes, £800.?—Yes, or £1600 in all.

15,319. *Mr Sutherland.*—As compared with what?

15,320. *Mr Maccallum.*—What is the rental you get from the forest?—£4600 paid by tenants, and the proprietor has a bit in his own hand which is valued, if I remember right, at £370.

15,321. *The Chairman.*—About £5000?—A little under £5000.

15,322. *Mr Sutherland.*—Would you kindly give me an idea of the forest we have been talking about, is it one forest or two forests?—Two forests and a little bit Mr Grant himself has; two tenants in the meantime.

15,323. Are they all in the county of Inverness?—All in the county of Inverness bordering on Ross-shire.

15,324. The march comes to the Ross-shire boundary?—Yes.

15,325. But none of it goes beyond?—No.

15,326. What are the names of the forests?—North Ceanna-chnoc occupied by Lord Tweedmouth, and South Ceanna-chnoc by Mr Bannatyne who has a bit of Invermoriston forest and Dundreggan and Inverwick. In fact the boundaries have been very often changed, and the names of the forests changed, and the area changed.

15,327. I find it very difficult to follow you. Then there is besides the Invermoriston forest proper?—Invermoriston or Glenmoriston, and Mr Bannatyne has a very large extent of that now.

15,328. I cannot speak so definitely when I don't know the boundaries of the forest, but you have stated the extent of it at 55,000 acres?—Roughly, that is so.

15,329. And of the whole estate as 75,000?—Yes.

15,330. Leaving 20,000 acres between graziers and cultivators of the soil?—Yes.

15,331. Can you give me any idea of the population on the 20,000 acres?—I think it is close on 400.

15,332. And can you give me an idea of the acreage occupied by the eight large farms you have enumerated?—The farm Knockie, I may say that I have no plan of it nor does the ordnance survey show it.

15,333-4. What is your opinion as to the approximate area of it?—5400 acres.

15,335. And the areas of the other farms?—About 4500 acres; Baile-nan-carn 3276; Torgoyle has only about 9 acres of arable; Tomchraskie has about 41 acres of arable and 1200 of pasture.

15,336. We will take it 1200 only?—Oh, I see it is 1200 acres including the arable. Invermoriston, Robert Sinclair has the inn, of course, as well, the area is about 200 acres. Mains Farm about 140 or 148. Mr Bannatyne's besides the forest 187, of that about 57 is arable. Aonach 5092.

15,337. That is about 15,000 acres, and that leaves then about 5000 for the remainder of the population?—Yes, if these figures are right.

15,338. You have got practically an estate of 75,000 acres of which 55,000 are occupied by two persons?—No, by three.

15,339. Who are the three?—Two forests and the proprietor who has a small bit.

15,340. Just so, then you have got 16,000 acres occupied by four resident farmers, or eight farms altogether, and for the remainder of the 400 of population you have a balance of 5000 acres?—Yes.

15,341. That is the distribution of the population of the estate upon the land?—Yes.

15,342. And, in view of these circumstances, don't you see any way of making a more equitable and just distribution of the people upon the soil?—None, considering the qualities of the soil.

15,343. In the interests of the people themselves?—In the interests of the people themselves; so far as I can understand they see themselves that nothing better can be done.

15,344. And they think that the present distribution of the land is right and proper?—That is so, so far as my experience goes.

15,345. Then you said yourself that you would like to see the people on the estate, and you give the reason as being that they would be useful for labour to those who held the land?—Well, for that among other reasons.

15,346. But I rather gathered that that was the principal reason why you would like to see them?—Well, I didn't give any other reason, I said we would require to get that number on.

15,347. That it was a necessity for the beneficial occupation of the land by the others that so many should be left?—It is a necessity to have the labour in the district.

15,348. It is not the welfare of the people who remain that you had in view so much as the welfare of the few who had the land?—Of course, we have the welfare of the people in view and always try to keep them as well as we can in a comfortable position.

15,349. But merely to be adjuncts to the prosperity of others who had already a great deal of land?—Not

at all, we wish to have as many as we can keep on the ground we have in comfort; whether they are really required or not.

15,350. And the distribution I have indicated already is the one that you consider the best for the welfare of the people?—There is no other distribution that I can think of, considering the small extent of arable land on the property.

15,351. That is the 55,000 acres for the three people, the 16,000 for the four people, and the balance of 5000 for all the rest of the people?—Yes; of course I would require to check these figures.

15,352. But they are approximately right?—Yes, I only give them as approximately right.

15,353. Then you stated that certain land was valued for you as being worth 3d. per acre?—No, I did not say so,—yes, that is so.

15,354. What land was that?—That is the whole of the land under deer forest now with the exception of that part added to the forest of Ceanna-chnoc in 1881, the whole.

15,355. Except that part added to the forest of Ceanna-chnoc?—In 1881.

15,356. What would be about the value of the part that was not added to the forest; have you any idea?—You mean the whole of the forest except what was added in 1881?

15,357. No, you said that you had an estimate that certain lands would let as grazings for 3d. per acre?—Yes.

15,358. And what became of that land?—It is under deer now and was under deer at that time.

15,359. Well, possibly my note was wrong, but what I thought was that you said you wanted an estimate made of land that was now in the possession of a grazier to be added?—No, no, what occurred to me was that it might become necessary to put the deer forest under sheep, and I consulted a man who knew every inch of the ground and an excellent sheep farmer, as to what rent we should get for the forest if turned into a sheep grazing or into sheep grazings.

15,360. That is the estimate he gave you?—That is the estimate he gave me.

15,361. Did you concur in that yourself so far as your qualification went?—Very nearly.

15,362. Was your estimate lower or higher than that?—It was slightly lower. He put it between £800 and £850, and I estimated we would scarcely reach £800.

15,363. What sort of grazing had he in view; was it a grazing on a large farm or on a small farm?—The grazings of our deer forest.

15,364. But you were contemplating a change of the land from deer forest to grazing?—Yes.

15,365. What sort of grazing had you in your mind?—Large farms, of course.

15,366. And what your statement comes to is that you cannot let pasture to large farmers at present above 3d. an acre?—That is the estimate for the ground now under deer.

15,367. Quite so, I understand that,—that if it were let to a large farmer you would not get more than 3d. per acre for it?—That is so, and we have some land just now let at 5d.

15,368. And is it just then for you to let your land at 5d. per acre when it is only worth 3d. per acre for grazing purposes?—What land is only worth 3d?

15,369. You say you made an estimate that this land that was added to the forest and which is now in the forest would only be worth if changed into a grazing 3d. per acre?—Yes.

15,370. Then you say that the other land you have rented now as grazing you get 5d. and 6d. an acre for it?—Yes, because it is better grazing land than what is in the forest.

15,371. And what were you getting for it before; you have an idea what the old grazing rents were?—[*Mr Gordon.*—Does the land you speak of include arable land?—Yes, it includes arable and pasture, the old rent as far as I can discover was £674.]

15,372. Your statement is that 3d. per acre cannot be obtained or is the utmost that can be obtained for the land as a grazing?—Yes.

15,373. Then there was a suggestion made that perhaps there was no arable included in that; land that could be made arable or land that had been arable?—In the forest?

15,373*a*. Yes, in this part of it that was only worth 3d. per acre?—There is none there.

15,374. And you stated that in the forest itself all the cultivable land is already cultivated by the gamekeepers?—Yes, cultivated or grazed, there may be a small patch of it grazed.

15,375. Then is that the principle on which you select the localities in which the gamekeepers are placed, that it should have arable land there?—No, it happened that the shepherds and the tenants of the farms occupied these sites when the forests were grazed, and the keepers took up the old sites and the old gardens and the old patches, and are still kept on there.

15,376. As to the shepherds who preceded the gamekeepers, were the localities in which they lived selected with reference to the suitability of them for cultivating land?—I have not the slightest idea; of course, they selected the best localities for convenience and comfort.

15,377. That is to prevent as little walking to their duties as possible?—I have no doubt of it.

15,378. Isn't that a rational arrangement?—I have no doubt it was.

15,379. But the fact that there is arable land there at the present time is no proof is it that all the land in the forest is occupied in that way?—But I am aware as a fact that there never was any more.

15,380. But how do you account for the fact that the gamekeepers are settled down on the very places where the only arable is; is it accident or design?—I have no doubt it is design, because they would select the best site for a house where they could get a small patch of land as well as considering the convenience of the situation.

15,381. But is not the first consideration proximity to the land with which he is to deal as a gamekeeper or as a shepherd?—That is no doubt a consideration.

15,382. Is it not the principal and only consideration?—I don't know; if the house exists it would be taken advantage of in preference to leaving it to be demolished and building another.

15,383. Carrying yourself back to the shepherd, would his residence have been selected from any house being there before?—Oh, I suppose it would have been erected for the convenience of the shepherd.

15,384. No doubt, and the same convenience that attaches to the shepherd would also attach to the gamekeeper?—To a large extent.

15,385. So that the amount of arable in the forest is not determined in any way by the location of the gamekeepers' houses?—No, but it is a fact, nevertheless, that the gamekeepers' houses are where the land was cultivated. There never was land cultivated anywhere else.

15,386. Around the gamekeepers' houses the land was made cultivable?—No, it must have been capable of cultivation before it could be cultivated.

15,387. But wherever they were planted they cultivated land?—I don't think so in every instance.

15,388. Well, not in every instance, possibly, but generally you would admit that that was a very rational way of proceeding. Then you made some remarks as to the food that the people had there?—No, what I said as to the food is what I came through myself. I was not born there; I did not make reference to the food the people used in that district; it is only the food that is consumed by the crofting population a generation ago when I was young myself.

15,389. Were you talking for all the crofters in the Highlands?—No, but I was talking of what I experienced myself.

15,390. But you said you were not born here?—Yes.

15,391. Where did you experience it?—Where I was born.

15,392. Where was that?—Strathspey.

15,393. And that was the food that the people in

Drumnadrochit.

Peter Burgess.

Strathspey ate at that time?—Yes, that was what I ate myself.

15,394. But supposing that were so, you don't mean to imply that provided people were planted there now that is the sort of food they would use?—No, certainly not. I say now the manner of living has changed so much that they could not live upon the same size of holding that they did at that time.

15,395. Because?—Because they have to buy almost everything that they use in the shape of food and clothing.

15,396. The standard of living is higher?—There is no doubt living is more expensive.

15,397. How is that standard of living brought about, have you any indication?—I really can't tell you; of course, as education spread and communication was opened with the south it penetrated the north.

15,398. And is there any possibility of this lessening in the future?—I don't think so.

15,399. And would all the accumulative benefits derived from these improvements not be available to the people if they were put back now?—Which benefits?

15,400. The benefits you have just enumerated, the change from those conditions to the present conditions when you admit the standard is higher?—I am not sure that it is a benefit to them in any way; it is a more expensive way of living certainly.

15,401. But whatever is more expensive to them is just better to them like other people is it not?—I don't think it is, so far as the capability of living in a small holding is concerned. They lived very comfortably at that time with the food they did use, and were quite as healthy as they are now. They lived for certainly, I should say, a very small fraction of what it costs them now.

15,402. But the standard of living you say has been raised?—Well, I don't know whether it is raised or lowered, I think the living was quite as good then as it is now.

15,403. And their means has not increased now?—No.

15,404. Because their holdings are too restricted?—Taking the holdings to be the same, I believe a holding now does not produce what it did then because the soil has become exhausted.

15,405. Therefore, the greater necessity of increasing the holdings?—Certainly.

15,406. So that it is altogether an argument in favour of increasing the holding?—Yes, I think that is most desirable wherever it is possible.

15,407. You indicated as a cure the consolidation of existing holdings. Am I doing you any injustice in supposing that?—No, so far as it is capable of being done without interfering with the present tenants. I said I would never wish to shift a tenant against his will, but when a croft became vacant that it should be added to its neighbour.

15,408. How far would you carry that, Mr Burgess?—Until they came to be the size which I indicated, that would keep a pair of small ponies employed, to a larger size of a pair to a pair and a half.

15,409. But you would keep the area under large holdings as they are now, deer forests included?—I would certainly keep a number of them if so be that it was not convenient to break them up to the size of farm I have stated, and in many cases it is impossible; the farms in many cases are not capable of being broken up, there is no arable for the families to live on.

15,410. But you have heard what the people themselves believe regarding it, when here yesterday and to-day?—Oh, well, of course, I am not talking of that generally.

15,411. What effect would it have then on the population of the estate you administer?—I don't think it is possible so far as that estate is concerned because the arable land in that property never maintained the population.

15,41. Then what you have been indicating refers to other estates but not to your estate?—To Glenmoriston estate I refer, but I say that the Glenmoriston estate never produced grain or food enough for the population of itself.

Drumnadrochit.

Peter Burgess.

15,413. But that would not be a difficulty because you yourself have indicated that the grain comes from another quarter?—No, I did not indicate that.

15,414. I thought that was one of the benefits that you pointed out that modern improvements brought to the people?—No, I never mentioned so.

15,415. But isn't it a fact?—No doubt it is a benefit to them to get their grain more conveniently than they did in the olden times.

15,416. But you cannot help us in any way by pointing out land within these deer forests—for I am not going to mention the grazings but the deer forests—where the purpose for which we were appointed could be carried out?—I don't think there is an inch of ground that could be beneficially taken from the forest now.

15,417. And you can give us no help in that direction?—Not in that direction.

15,418. *Mr Maccallum.*—I wish a correction of the figures I got from you. I now learn that the estimate of £800 for the forest was given before the portion of Tomchraskie was added to the forest?—Yes.

15,419. So that the value of that portion has to be added to the £800?—Yes.

15,420. And the tenant of Tomchraskie got a reduction of £320 when it was added to the forest?—No.

15,421. When the portion was taken?—No, the tenant of Tomchraskie of that time added it to the forest himself; but that tenant has left and the low ground of Tomchraskie, the arable land, and a considerable stretch of hill ground is let to another tenant at £50; however, that is a low rent. I estimate the rent at, at least, £80. A preference was given to a crofter in Glenmoriston to go into that farm.

15,422. Didn't you mention £320 as the value of the grazings?—That was the value of it when it was put under deer, but certainly not the value of it now; it would not fetch anything like that.

15,423. Then that falls to be added to the £800?—The value of the land now has to be added to the £800.

15,424. Which makes £1120?—No, I say it would not fetch more than £200.

15,425. But at the time it was added that was the valuation of it, is not that so?—That was the valuation at that time.

15,426. And that would make £1120, and to that has to be added again the sporting value of £800 of the grouse moor?—Yes. But I say that £1120 is too much; it would not fetch that now.

15,427. Might I just ask you this further question: With what view was the valuation of the forest land made?—With the view of turning it into a sheep run if so be that it would be necessary to do that. I think that one at least of the forests was unlet for one year, and it occurred to myself that if that went on for a term of years we would be under the necessity of trying some other principle.

15,428. It was not with the view of letting it as a sheep farm?—Yes, if nothing better could be done.

15,429. And not with the view of showing that deer forests are more profitable than sheep grazings?—No, certainly not, but with the view of putting it under sheep, with the sole view of putting it under sheep.

15,430. And you had that in view because you found a difficulty in letting the forest?—Well, one forest was unlet for one year.

15,431. And you were afraid you might have to put it under sheep?—Yes.

15,432. *Mr John Macleod*, Glenmoriston.—With your permission I would like to put a question.

15,433. *The Chairman.*—We have had a very exhausting day. [*Mr Macleod.*—Well, I have been at the trouble of coming down from Glenmoriston, a distance of 14 miles, and these questions which I purpose to put to Mr Burgess are very important and

will be the means of bringing out very clear evidence with regard to the estate.]

15,434. *The Chairman.*—I think we have had a very long examination of Mr Burgess and my view is that we don't wish any further information from him. He has been under examination for two hours I suppose.

15,435. *Mr Sutherland.*—Could you give us a copy of the plans of the estate?—Yes.

15,436. *Mr Forsyth.*—We would like to get the marches also?—Yes, I will give it to Mr Watson.

[Adjourned.]

SIXTEENTH SITTING.

GLENSHIEL, July 11, 1893.

Present:—

David Brand, Esq., Advocate, Sheriff of Ayr, and Chairman of the Crofters Commission, *Chairman.*
Michael Hugh Shaw Stewart, Esq., M.P.
Angus Sutherland, Esq., M.P.
James Noel Muller Forsyth, Esq.
George Gordon, Esq.
Rev. Malcolm Maccallum.
William Mackenzie, Esq., *Secretary.*

Alexander Macrae, Crofter, Inverinate, Kintail (44) —*examined.*

15,437. *The Chairman.*—Are you a crofter at Inverinate?—Yes.

15,438. What rent do you pay?—£8, 2s.

15,439. Can you give us an idea of the size of your holding?—Arable land about 3 acres 1 rood.

15,440. 3¼ acres or so. Have you any outrun?—About 2 acres 2 roods and some poles of outrun.

15,441. Have you hill grazing?—Yes, in common.

15,442. What extent of hill grazing?—About 758 acres.

15,443. How many shares in the hill?—Six.

15,444. Have you one share?—One share.

15,445. You have not had your rent dealt with by the Crofters Commission I think?—Yes.

15,446. What was the old rent?—The last rent we were paying was £9, 4s. and it was reduced to £8, 2s. That was for a few years. The rent we were paying about eight years ago was £15.

15,447. How long have you been a crofter at Inverinate?—I have been only a crofter since five years.

15,448. Was your father in the croft before?—My father was in the croft before.

15,449. He was there for many years?—Yes, he was there for his lifetime.

15,450. Have you a written statement?—Well, I was asked by the delegates from the district from the parishes of Glenshiel and Kintail to make a statement on their behalf.

15,451. You are a delegate from the crofters in the parishes of Glenshiel and Kintail?—Yes.

15,452. Appointed at a public meeting?—At a public meeting.

15,453. To represent their views?—Yes.

15,454. Can you give me the date of the public meeting?—This month; on 1st July.

15,455. Appointed at a public meeting held during this July?—Yes.

15,456. Would you read the statement?—I will begin with the farm of Lienassie.

15,457. Is that inside or outside the forest?—Outside the forest, this is under sheep.

15,458. What do you wish to say about it?—I could not say the exact date at which there were crofters on Lienassie, but there must have been crofters on it.

15,459. Allow me to interrupt you. You say there must have been crofters; upon what do you base that belief?—There is a great deal of old arable land.

15,460. And are there the remains of buildings.—Yes, well, not to-day, but there were; the proprietor has improved lands down below where there were buildings.

15,461. Give us your statement about it then?—I could not say more about the low farm of Lienassie, but it is a good farm suitable for crofters' holdings?—

15,462. Do you know the size of the farm?—Well, the acreage I could not say.

15,463. Do you know the rent of it?—Not the exact rent this year, but the rent in former years, since a few years whatever, was about £230. [*Sir Henry Macandrew*, factor for Sir Kenneth Matheson of Lochalsh.—That is the rent.]

15,464. What is the name of the farmer?—Alexander Maclennan.

15,465. Can you give me any idea of its extent?—There is a great deal of improved land, and I would say there would be about 150 acres in all on the farm.

15,466. Of what?—Between land cultivated and old arable.

15,467. Land run out or old arable?—Just so.

15,468. How much of that is land cultivated and how much is old arable?—There are about 120 acres that is cultivated in rotation.

15,469. And you think there are about 30 acres of old arable?—I would think so.

15,470. I understand you to say that land is suitable for crofters?—Oh, yes.

15,471. Does it march with crofters' land?—No, it does not.

15,472. What does it march with?—It marches on the west side with the farm of Ruarach, on the north with Killilan [Cill-Fhaolain], and on the east with the deer forest.

15,473. And there is a fence there I suppose?—Yes.

15,474. On the west?—On the west, Ruarach.

15,475. Well, on the south?—Inchero [Innse-'chrò] and Morvich.

15,476. These are villages are they?—No, deer forest.

15,477. Fenced there also?—Yes, there was a fence put up there some years ago; it is broken down now. The deer forest was part of Lienassie until about eleven or twelve years ago.

15,478. There has been land taken from the farm of Lienassie and incorporated with the forest?—It is made a forest.

15,479. How much was made forest?—Well, the acreage I could not say, but there were two hirsels of sheep. There were two shepherds on it.

15,480. Two shepherds in the part of the farm that is now forest?—Yes.

15,481. Had each of these shepherds a hirsel?—A hirsel.

15,482. Do you know what was the size of each hirsel?—Well, I could not say exactly.

15,483. Do you know the names of the shepherds?—Yes, that were there last.

15,484. What were their names?—One Alexander Maclennan.

15,485. And who was the other one?—Roderick Morrison.

15,486. Now, do you remember the date when these hirsels were taken from the farm and added to the forest?—It was about eleven years ago. [*Sir Henry Macandrew.*—1881 was the year. I can give you the exact acreage if it is for your convenience now.]

15,487. If you please, it would save us again?—[*Sir Henry Macandrew.*—7150 acres.]

15,488. That is the extent afforested?—[*Sir Henry Macandrew.*—Yes.]

15,489. Anything else you wish to say?—That land was formerly in possession of tenants, small tenants.

Glenshiel.
Alexander Macrae.

15,490. Are there indications of old arable on that land?—Well, yes.

15,491. Observe my question; are there indications upon the ground added to the forest showing there is old arable?—Yes, partly on one of the hirsels called Achadh-a'-chuirn.

15,492. What is the name of the other hirsel?—There were so many names on the hirsel that I could not give an exact name.

15,493. You are quite sure about Achadh-a'-chuirn at any rate?—Oh, yes, and formerly the tenants of Inverinate had part of that land.

15,494. Part of this very land added to the forest had formerly been in the hands of the tenants of Inverinate?—Yes, until the beginning of the century.

15,495. How do you happen to know that?—By hearing it. I heard it from my father.

15,496. He was an Inverinate tenant?—He was.

15,497. And did he tell you that at one time he had a right of grazing?—No, he was born in the year 1808, and it was taken from Inverinate before that time.

15,498. Then was his father in the holding?—His father was in the holding.

15,499. Had your grandfather then the right to it?—Yes.

15,500. Do you remember whether your father told you when the right of grazing was lost?—The exact date?

15,501. Well, about the time?—The latter end of the last century.

15,502. Do you wish to tell us anything more?—And part of it added to the farm of Camuslunie, a part of the deer forest.

15,503. A part of land which the tenants of Camuslunie had is now added to the forest?—Just so.

15,504. Was it changed from crofters' hill grazing into forest land?—No, into sheep farms.

15,505. First into sheep and then into forest?—Yes.

15,506. Camuslunie is down the loch a bit?—It is at the head of Loch Long.

15,507. Was it added to the forest in 1881?—Yes.

15,508. And had it been changed from hill grazing, crofters' grazing, into farm about the end of last century?—No, it was forty-one years ago.

15,509. Can you give me the extent of that land?—I could not.

15,510. Is there old arable upon it?—No.

15,511. Is there any indication—I need not ask you; there is no indication of old buildings upon it?—Only one I believe. [*Sir Henry Macandrew.*—A smuggling bothy.]

15,512. Oh, we don't go into that. Do you wish to tell us anything more of Camuslunie?—The people of Camuslunie wish to get this land back.

15,513. I quite understand that, I take that for granted, if it can be got properly and legitimately?—And there was another part of it that was the farm of Keppoch on the north side of Loch Duich. He had part of the deer forest also.

15,514. I will come to that. Does the land taken from Camuslunie and added to the forest march with the crofters' present land at Camuslunie?—Oh, it is far away.

15,515. How far?—They are here, and one of them is to speak upon that subject; he knows about it.

15,516. It is a great pity to call a witness for one single question if you can answer it yourself?—It will be about eight miles I should say.

15,517. And what interposes between the land taken and made forest from Camuslunie and the township of Camuslunie?—There is a small farm, Coillerie, and a part of the Lienassie farm.

15,518. Then did these lands of Coillerie and Lienassie farm at one time form part of crofters' land?—Oh, yes, they were crofters' land, and this part of Lienassie farm they call it Mamag, it is to the north side of Lienassie farm.

15,519. Coillerie is not forest now, I understand you to say?—No.

15,520. It is a farm?—Yes, one tenant has it.

Glenshiel.
Alexander Macrae.

15,521. Do you know the name of the tenant?—Yes, his name is John Renwick.

15,522. Now you were going on to speak about Keppoch?—Well, I said that part of this deer forest was a part of the farm once.

15,523. That is what I thought you were coming to. Keppoch is a farm still I suppose?—It is.

15,524. Who is the tenant of Keppoch farm?—Alexander Maclennan, Lienassie.

15,525. He has got Keppoch also. Part of that farm was made forest, was it?—No, it was taken from it long ago; about the beginning of the century.

15,526. What was done with it?—It was a sheep farm, part of the Lienassie farm.

15,527. Part of the Lienassie farm was taken and made sheep farm belonging to Keppoch farm?—No, part of the Keppoch farm was made a sheep farm, put into the Lienassie farm, and then it was afforested in 1881.

15,528. Part of the Keppoch farm was transferred to the Lienassie farm, and then from the Lienassie farm made part of the forest, is that so?—That is so.

15,529. Now do you remember when that part of Keppoch farm was put into the Lienassie farm?—No, it was the beginning of the century; it would be on to the year 1820.

15,530. Was the same portion that was transferred from Keppoch farm to Lienassie farm, the portion transferred from Lienassie farm to forest? Was it the same land or practically the same land?—The same land as the rest, the same as the land that was taken from Inverinate and from Camuslunie.

15,531. You say that part of the land made from Keppoch farm into Lienassie and from Lienassie into forest was so made in 1881?—Yes.

15,532. And is that land suitable for crofters?—Well, it would be for crofters, for a club farm.

15,533. It is not suitable for cultivation then, I suppose?—Well, three tenants would live very well on the north side of it at Achadh-a'-chuirn. They could keep two cows each.

15,534. Then is that the only portion of it suitable in your judgment for settlement?—Yes.

15,535. But the whole of it is for consideration, I understand you to say, for grazing purposes?—For grazing purposes.

15,536. Sheep grazing?—Sheep grazing,—splendid grazing.

15,537. What kind of sheep?—Cheviot, it would do cheviot, or black-faced still better, it was a cheviot stock that was on it.

15,538. When it was made into forest?—Yes.

15,539. Now you have told us distinctly of Lienassie, Camuslunie, and Coillerie, and Keppoch. Any other farm?—The farm of Killilan.

15,540. Stop a little. I must go back a bit. The land that was taken from Camuslunie and added to forest, had it one hirsel or more than one hirsel?—Two hirsels,—no, one hirsel.

15,541. Then the part of Keppoch farm that was added to Lienassie and then to forest, had it one hirsel or more?—The part that was added to Inverinate, it was a hirsel partly.

15,542. The part added to Inverinate?—The part that belonged to Inverinate.

15,543. Had one hirsel?—Yes, and this part that belonged to the farm of Keppoch.

15,544. It had one hirsel, that is two in all, is that what you mean?—No, these were one hirsel, and then what the Camuslunie people had down to Achadh-a'-chuirn was one hirsel again. Two hirsels in all were made into the deer forest.

15,545. One being Achadah-a'-chuirn, and—?—Yes, and the other was the land that was taken off Keppoch and Inverinate.

15,546. Are there any other farms you would like to mention to us?—Yes, the farm of Killilan.

15,547. Who is the tenant there?—Stephen Brown is the present tenant, and part of it was made a deer forest fifteen years ago.

15,548. That is to say added to the Kintail forest?—Well, Mr Winans had them at one time; he had the two forests, I believe he has the two of them still. On the Killilan farm there were crofters in the beginning of the century.

15,549. Is there old arable there?—Oh, yes.

15,550. Are there any remains of old buildings?—Well, there are old buildings; but they were broken down some years ago and new buildings made.

15,551. Are the remains of old buildings visible?—Not many.

15,552. There are some?—I believe there are some; there is a good while since I was in the way, but there were some.

15,553. Can you tell me the extent of land from Killilan added to forest?—The acreage I could not say, but I could give you the hirsels, as I know that farm well.

15,554. How many hirsels?—Four.

15,555. Had they names?—The hirsels of Mulbuie, Riochan, Coire-each, Carn-na-breabaig.

15,556. Can you give me the stock of each hirsel?—Well, the exact stock I could not give, but I could give the number of hoggs that were wintering.

15,557. How many were wintering?—About 2300; from 2200 to 2400.

15,558. Over these four hirsels?—Yes.

15,559. Do you remember the names of the shepherds?—Oh, yes, those that were there at the time.

15,560. Just give us the names, Mulbuie hirsel?—Albert Renwick.

15,561. The Riochan hirsel?—I don't remember well the name of the Riochan one, I think it was Duncan Macrae.

15,562. Coire-each?—Robert Macrae.

15,563. Carn-na-breabaig?—Donald Macrae.

15,564. The land of all these hirsels was added to forest?—Added to forest.

15,565. Fifteen years ago?—Yes, fifteen years ago.

15,566. Was that in connection with the formation of the Winans forests?—It was Lord Lovat that got it, but he let it to Winans when it was cleared.

15,567. Did Lord Lovat get the land of the whole of these hirsels?—Yes.

15,568. On lease?—On lease.

15,569. And he added it to Winans forest?—Yes.

15,570. And has Lord Lovat got it yet?—Well, it is Winans that has got it just now. I am not very sure who is in the lease.

15,571. All these hirsels were added to—what was the name of the forest?—They call it the Riochan forest.

15,572. Or Killilan forest?—Well, part of it was called Killilan. [*Sir Henry Macandrew.*—Patt and Killilan is the name of the forest.]

15,573. Thank you. I want to know this for my own information for I may be wrong about it. Is that the same forest as the forest into which part of the farm of Lienassie was incorporated?—[*Mr Watson.*—Not the same. The one is called Glomach forest, the first one that was taken off the Lienassie farm; and the other two he is now speaking about were Patt and Killilan.]

15,574. These are the only ones that are mentioned?—[*Mr Watson.*—That is the one he is now speaking about, Patt and Killilan.]

15,575. Any other farm?—[*Witness.*—The low farm of Killilan.]

15,576. Who is the farmer there?—Stephen Brown.

15,577. What do you wish to say about it?—There were small tenants on it at the beginning of the century, until it was cleared about the year 1814 I believe; I don't know the exact date.

15,578. That date is sufficiently specific if it is correct?—There were three tenants at Killilan, one at Fadach, I am not so sure how many at a place called Cragaig.

15,579. Any more?—Carnoch.

15,580. You mentioned one?—Ach-a'-ghairgein.

15,581. But you don't mention it again?—Well, I can say it over again.

15,582. I don't wish you to miss any by reason of the difficulty of the word?—[*Mr Mackenzie.*—Ach-a'-ghairgein].—That spelling would do, but that is not the way I would spell it.

15,583. Is that the word, Sir Henry?—[*Sir Henry Macandrew.*—I don't know.]

15,584. Mr Mackenzie has given me the name. Was there one or more than one there, do you think?—I could not be sure whether it was one or more.

15,585. Then you mentioned these places?—And there was one at Carnach, and one at Daoimhlig, and one or more at Coire-dhomhainn.

15,586. Is that all?—That is all.

15,587. These were all on the low part of the farm of Killilan which is now forest?—No, it is not forest now, it is under sheep that low part of it.

15,588. Are there traces of old arable upon these lands?—Yes.

15,589. Any remains of buildings?—Yes, there are remains of buildings and there are buildings. There are shepherds' houses and there are remains of buildings at this place I called Ach-a'-ghairgein.

15,590. How many shepherd's houses are there there?—There is a shepherd's house at Coire-dhomhainn, there is a shepherd's house at Carnach, there is a shepherd's house at Fadach, and at Killilan also.

15,591. How many hirsels are on that portion of the farm of Killilan?—There are two at Coire-dhomhainn and one at Mulbuie, to the west of Mulbuie.

15,592. Any more?—It is not the Mulbuie hirsel, it is Black-Corrie they call the hirsel.

15,593. There is a hirsel at Black-Corrie with a house at Mulbuie?—Yes.

15,594. Any more?—And there is a house at Carnach.

15,595. Is there a hirsel?—Yes.

15,596. Any more?—And a hirsel at Fadach and two hirsels at Killilan.

15,597. That is seven altogether?—Just so.

15,598. And is that land suitable for settlement, or suitable for hill, or suitable partly for each?—Oh, it is suitable for tenants, every place that I mentioned.

15,599. For settlement?—Yes.

15,600. And some of it for hill?—Oh, certainly for pasture.

15,601. Can you tell us what extent of land would be taken from the farm? suppose that land cut off the farm, how much would the farm lose, or do you not know?—Oh, the whole of it is under sheep; that is the whole farm. That is the part of the farm of Killilan that is not afforested.

15,602. Any other farm you desire to mention?—Well, there are a number of tenants.

15,603. I ought to ask you, there is a farm house I suppose on Killilan?—There is.

15,604. And steading?—And steading.

15,605. And some arable land?—A good many acres.

15,606. Which are at present under crop?—No, very little of it under crop.

15,607. The rest is under grass?—All under grass.

15,608. Could you tell us what sheep stock the farm of Killilan carries altogether?—I could not say the exact number, but I well remember it will be over 3000 at peesent.

15,609. What cattle stock, does it carry?—There is a herd of black cattle; I am not very sure of the number

15,610. With steading accommodation for them, of course, and so forth?—Certainly.

15,611. Now, do you desire to ask our attention to any other farm?—Well, about this farm itself I am not done with it.

15,612. I beg pardon?—The whole people of the country of Kintail and Lochalsh considered it a great hardship when this part of Killilan was cleared, as old Mr Brown was the best man for the country that ever crossed the Grampians.

15,613. This man?—The late Adam Brown.

15,614. It does not sound a Highland name?—Although he was a large farmer and though we would much prefer to see the land under tenants as

Glenshiel. — Alexander Macrae.

formerly, still he was an excellent man to the country. He would buy our lambs, he would buy our wool, he would buy our ewes, and when his manager would come to lift our lambs 'Don't be hard on the poor 'people's lambs on shotting them.' He would buy our wool, and if he would get more for the wool than the buying price he would return half the profit, as he has done. I can tell that as a fact; and our ewes also he would buy them, and it was a great saving for the country. Now we will have to go to Inverness to sell our lambs, and we can't sell them there, there is no demand for lambs now, all the hill farms are cleared; the wedder grounds are cleared for deer, so we consider it a great hardship that we have not a market for our lambs. When there is a bad trade, as there is in the meantime, the low country farmers won't buy them and now what are we to do with our lambs? And if the land was under sheep as it was fifteen years ago and before that, these farmers would buy our lambs, and we consider it a great hardship. That is what I have to say about the farm of Killilan and also for the people of the country. It is a loss to them too.

15,615. Is there a want of land experienced in the district?—Yes, there is.

15,616. Is there a desire on your own part and of those whom you represent to obtain additional land?—Most certainly there is.

15,617. Is this desire for additional land in the shape of grazing land or arable and grazing or both?—Well, for the arable, there is not so much arable in the country, but still we would require some arable land; but the pasture land, it is on the pasture land that we depend.

15,618. You are mainly concerned about it?—Just so.

15,619. Then do you think that if you had additional pasture land you could dispose of your sheep stock?—Well, there would be more demand for our lambs. If the land was under sheep, the hill land—

15,620. There would be more demand?—Certainly, for lambs.

15,621. From what quarter?—For wedders for the hill.

15,622. But from what quarter would the demand come?—From the tenants that had the hill grazing.

15,623. Do you mean farm tenants or crofter tenants?—Well, small tenants, if they had the land they would have to buy wedders like large farmers.

15,624. But suppose the small tenants who had this land were crofters, would the demand for this stock come from them, do you think?—Yes, most certainly, they would have to stock the land the same as large farmers.

15,625. And would buy from you or others?—Yes.

15,626. Now, do you wish to say anything more about the farm of Killilan?—No, but there is a stretch of excellent land, it belongs to the parish of Kintail, called Lougard and Mam.

15,627. We are coming to that. What is the name of that other place you were going to mention?—It is on the east side of Loch Long, they call it Bundalloch [Bun-da-loch]; that is a congested district.

15,628. You represent Bundalloch, do you?—Well, I am authorised to represent it.

15,629. Is there congestion there?—That there is.

15,630. How many tenants are there?—There are twenty tenants that have a bit land that would be plenty for four or five.

15,631. And are there cottars besides?—There are a number.

15,632. How many?—Well, the exact number I could not say, but there are a good many of them.

15,633. In addition?—In addition.

15,634. And they are in need of additional land?—Oh, yes.

15,635. Do you mention any land that is contiguous to them or near them?—No, no, they are on the north side surrounded by Camuslunie and by Keppoch and by Carr.

15,636. What is Carr?—A township.

15,637. Do you indicate any land that would be suitable for them?—Killilan is the place for them.

15,638. Do you account for that congestion in any way; has it just arisen in course of time or was there any pressure brought to bear to produce it?—Most certainly.

15,639. What was that?—Such a fine country as this is, surely the people would not flock together when they had the glens, unless compelled to do so.

15,640. That is very likely so, but are you able to mention any facts connected with the matter?—Well, I know there are people who were gathered down, from the glens, some of them came from Coirre-dhomhainn, and some down from where their forefathers were at Mamag.

15,641. They have been gradually gathered in there?—Yes, and up from Longard and down from the head of Loch Duich here, and from several places.

15,642. Are any tenants of Bundalloch willing to remove if they could get holdings elsewhere?—Oh, yes, there is no mistake about that.

15,643. You were going to mention Longard?—Yes it is a part of the parish of Kintail, and part of it belonged to the farm of Airdantoul in this parish about the latter end of the last century.

15,644. Is Longard a township or a farm or what?—It is a farm, the farm that Mr Robertson, Comar, had; it belongs to the Chisholm. The part of it called Beinn-Fhionnlaidh, the tenant of Airdantoul had it. And part of it belonged to Bundalloch.

15,645. The township of Bundalloch?—Yes, and so it was divided among the township in the lower part for summer grazing.

15,646. What were the names of the townships that had it for summer grazing besides Bundalloch? You say that this land was divided among certain townships?—Yes.

15,647. Including Bundalloch? Besides Bundalloch, can you mention the name of any township that shared the grazing or part of it?—Yes, Dornie, I believe, as I was told.

15,648. I must ask you, told by whom?—Well, there was a man in our township (he is dead and gone now) that knew a good deal of the history of the country, and I was told by him, but I must say in truth that I forgot all about it until it was revived in my memory by going about for evidence to lay before your lordship.

15,649. If you were told by a man who is now dead the evidence is admissible. Now, besides Bundalloch and Dornie, any other townships that had part of this farm of Longard?—I could not say.

15,650. Dornie is down on the side of the water?—Yes, marching with Bundalloch and with Carr.

15,651. How is that land occupied now?—There are sheep on it yet, but it is to be cleared I believe to be turned into a deer forest.

15,652. That is what is being said in the district is it?—Just so.

15,653. Is that part of Comar farm?—Yes, certainly.

15,654. And the statement is going about that it is to be made into forest?—Just so.

15,655. Is the whole of it on The Chisholm estate?—The whole of it on The Chisholm estate.

15,656. Do these townships, Bundalloch, Dornie, Carr, and so forth, or any of them, march with this land?—No.

15,657. None of them march?—No, it is far away.

15,658. What is the nearest point?—The nearest point to Bundalloch of these lands is I would say 11 or 12 miles.

15,659. What is it you propose with regard to that land; how would you invite us to deal with it; suppose it otherwise assignable or open for consideration, what is it you ask us to do; you say it is 11 miles away?—Oh, yes, certainly, but I am quite sure there are people who could be got to go.

14,660. I was asking you, and I thought you were giving your own attention to these congested townships?—Oh, yes, it would do to add it to a township that would work it, but I don't say that people would go there and live on it; I would say it should be added.

15,661. Added to what?—Added to one or two or three of these townships.

15,662. Which townships?—To the township of Bundalloch; they would have to be removed from Bundalloch.

15,663. You don't propose to add land 11 miles away to the town of Bundalloch, but you would flit the township of Bundalloch?—Yes, or a good number of them.

15,664. Is there land suitable for cultivation at this place which would do for tenants transferred from Bundalloch?—There is, I believe, but I was never through it; I saw part of it.

15,665. Are you able to speak upon that point of your own knowledge?—Not of my own knowledge.

15,666. But still you desire to convey to our minds this, that you believe there is such land?—Oh, there is such land.

15,667. You admit, I have no doubt, that there is a difficulty in land being 11 miles away from the people you are considering?—I would not send these people up there as long as there is land nearer them.

15,668. You are putting it that there is no land?—No, I don't admit that there is no land; there is land; there is land for tenants.

15,669. I am speaking of Bundalloch you know?—Yes.

15,670. And you are pointing me to this place 11 miles off. I think I asked you already, you said it would be by transferring some of the tenants of Bundalloch to this place 11 miles away?—Yes, I would send some of them there.

15,671. Now, do you wish to say anything more with regard to this farm of Longard?—No.

15,672. Have you any other farm to bring under our notice?—Well, the township of Dornie is a congested township too.

15,673. It is next to Bundalloch?—It is next to Bundalloch.

15,674. And marches with Carr?—And marches with Carr.

15,675. What would you do with it by way of extending its wings?—Well, I would send a certain number of them up to this beautiful glen up here, Ach-a-ghiurain and Achadh-nan-gart.

15,676. Is that a farm?—It is not in Sir Kenneth Matheson's property, there is plenty of land in Sir Kenneth's estate.

15,677. Where on Sir Kenneth's estate?—The lands of Killilan and Longard and Màm. There is plenty of land for all those I would remove from the townships of Dornie and Bundalloch.

15,678. Is Màm a farm?—It is part of Longard.—[*Sir Henry Macandrew.*—That is Chisholm's property. —*Witness.*—It is.]

15,679. The one runs into the other. I suppose Dornie is as far from Longard as Bundalloch is?—Oh, farther up.

15,680. And how far is Dornie from Killilan?—I would say between four and five miles.

15,681. How far is it from Màm on The Chisholm estate?—It is part of this farm of Longard.

15,682. We have got rather away from the farms; have you any other farm you would wish to mention beside these?—The township of Inverinate is a congested district.

15,683. It is congested is it?—Yes.

15,684. How many crofters are in it?—There are six that have sheep in shares, and five with small lots having the grazing of a cow, but no sheep.

15,685. How many crofters do you think Inverinate would properly accommodate?—Four.

15,686. What would you do with the cottars, would you take them all out together or leave some of them?—There are five cottars besides the five that have the grazing of a cow.

15,687. Six crofters, five cottars with grazing, and five without grazing?—Certainly.

15,688. That is sixteen?—Yes.

15,689. What would you do with them, the cottars without grazing and the cottars with a cow; would you leave them there, or would you transfer them?—Certainly; I would consider it a hardship to take the land from them that have it.

15,690. How would you deal with them?—There is land marching with Inverinate.

15,691. What is the name of that land?—Ruarach.

15,692. That is the farm?—It is.

15,693. With grazing land upon it, of course?—Yes, and there is part of Inverinate added. There are two Inverinates, Easter and Wester, and as the marches were running in the olden times part of Wester Inverinate is added to Easter Inverinate, which was taken from Wester Inverinate about the beginning of the century by Mr Kenneth Mackenzie, the laird of Applecross, that got this estate about that time.

15,694. Part of Wester Inverinate was added to Easter Inverinate?—Yes.

15,695. Of course, you don't propose to take land from Inverinate I suppose?—I would.

15,696. Would you take the land from Wester Inverinate?—From Easter Inverinate.

15,697. And restore it to Wester Inverinate?—And, then, I would take the rest of the people of Inverinate away to Ruarach.

15,698. Are you of opinion, Mr Maclennan, that there is—?—I am a Macrae, my lord.

15,699. I beg your pardon,—that there is sufficient land at Ruarach to relieve adequately the congestion of Inverinate?—Not altogether if we did not get some of Easter Inverinate. Four are plenty for Ruarach.

15,700. But you wish Wester Inverinate to take some from Easter Inverinate, and how do you propose to deal with Easter Inverinate?—The four remaining would require it, but still we would require some place for the other eight.

15,701. I want to know from you what you would do with the poor people in Easter Inverinate, if you are going to take their land?—Oh, plenty of land; but not on the estate I would say if we don't send them to Lienassie.

15,702. Now, do you wish to mention any other farm?—Not more in the parish of Kintail.

15,703. Are you able to speak of any other parish?—Yes.

15,704. Which one?—The parish of Glenshiel.

15,705. Whose property is that, Sir Kenneth's?—No, Sir Allan Mackenzie of Kintail.

15,706. What land in the parish of Glenshiel do you wish to speak about? It seems that there has been some understanding that those representing the estate of Kintail would not require to attend in the morning, and they are not here, therefore, I won't take you just now with regard to the parish of Glenshiel, but continue afterwards, if you would be good enough not to go away?—Yes, my lord.

15,707. Is there anything else you wish to say to us with regard to the Matheson property and the parish of Kintail, or do you think you have mentioned all the material circumstances connected with these farms or with the forest?—Not with the forest, with the forest of Glomach.

15,708. What do you wish to say about the forest of Glomach?—I say that it is a loss to the country that it has been afforested, and I am able to prove it.

15,709. Well, give us your proof?—As I said, there were two shepherds constantly on the farm cleared. There were two men wintering, and they were mostly engaged all the year round. The shooting was let to a shooting tenant every year at Dorusduan, and he would require one or two horses and one or two gillies; the man and a horse would get 30s. a week for two months, and then four shepherds that were on the farm I would say all the year round, and now as it is there are only two gillies on this part afforested, and there is not a penny of their money spent in the country, not a farthing of it. And I think that is a loss to the country.

15,710. What would you do with the forest of Glomach?—Well, I would do this to it. I would send

Glenshiel. — Alexander Macrae.

two or three tenants up to Achadh-à-chuirn, and I would give them the hill grazing.

15,711. You mean to live there?—To live there.

15,712. And you would give them the hill grazing?—Yes.

15,713. Anything more?—And then there is land up in Glen-Affaric again that the people of Kintail had in the olden times for summering their cattle.

15,714. These were the sheilings?—Yes.

15,715. Which of the Kintail tenants had sheilings at Glen-Affaric in days of yore?—The people of Inverinate. There is a place they call it Glen-Gniomhaidh.

15,716. Inverinate had shielings in Glen-Affaric, yes, go on?—The north side of the glen, the people of Inverinate had it.

15,717. Glen ——?—Glen-Grianan, and the south side of it again was added to Inchcro, but that will come on again; it will be examined again for the Glenshiel parish.

15,718. You can give us that again with regard to the parish of Glenshiel, but I want to ask you this question about the parish of Glenshiel. Has not Sir Kenneth Matheson property in the parish of Glenshiel?—Oh, yes, at Airdantoul.

15,719. What land is that, farm land, or what?—Yes, a sheep farm.

15,720. The sheep farm of Airdantoul?—Yes.

15,721. Is there any land there that comes within your view as suitable?—Oh, splendid land. There are about 200 acres I would say, or 150, we will call it 150, fit for cultivation.

15,722. Do you mean old arable?—Old and land under cultivation.

15,723. Which is which, how much of the one and how much of the other?—I would say that there would be close upon 80 or 90 acres.

15,724. Enclosed?—Yes.

15,725. And the rest is old arable?—Yes.

15,726. Is there any other land in the parish of Glenshiel belonging to Sir Kenneth?—The farm of Drudaig, five tenants.

15,727. You mean small tenants?—Yes.

15,728. What rents do they pay?—They have it in common as a club farm; the rent will be—

15,729. Under £30 I suppose?—No, it is above £50 I believe.

15,730. For each?—No, for the whole. [*Sir Henry Macandrew.*—£40 and £10 for the wood.]

15,731. These people belong to the crofter class?—Yes, and then there are sixteen tenants on Wester Achnaturd.

15,732. Is that a club farm?—No, twelve of them have just an acre, barely an acre, and four have up to two acres and the grazing of a cow. They got it nine or en years ago,—nine years ago.

15,733. Do you wish to ask our attention to any other lands in the parish of Glenshiel belonging to Sir Kenneth Matheson, or do you think you have fairly exhausted the matter?—I think that is all the land.

15,734. If there is anything you remember afterwards you can mention it?—Very well.

15,735. Do you carry on any business besides being a crofter?—Yes.

15,736. What is that?—I will be wintering hoggs by contract.

15,737. How many hoggs did you winter last winter?—4000.

15,738. And the winter before?—Not so many, above 3000.

15,739. And the winter before that?—About 3000.

15,740. Now, tell me, where did you winter these hoggs on contract?—I wintered them about Beauly and on to the Black Isle down about Munlochy and near Dingwall.

15,741. Whose land were you on?—Is it the name of the farm you ask?

15,742. Yes?—It was a farm at Beauly called Barnyards, and Balvattie, Kilchrist, and Balvattie, and at Munlochy I had the farm of Colonel Smith, and I had a farm in Ferintosh they call Teanahinch and Drumvournie. I also had Mr Peterkin's farm of Dunglass.

15,743. Whose sheep were these?—From several parties.

15,744. Were they from crofters?—Well, I had hardly 200 from crofters.

15,745. And were the rest from farmers in the district?—Yes, a lot from Mr Maclennan, Lienassie, and from Macrae, Airdantoul, and Mr Brown, farmer, Killilan, and from Mr Logan, farmer, Auchtertyre, Lochalsh.

15,746. And you collect these sheep and see to their safe transference down to the low country, and their safe wintering, and bring them back to the owner?—Some have to send them down.

15,747. However, it is done, and you charge according to your contract?—Yes.

15,748.—*Mr Shaw Stewart.*—With regard to Longard farm, what did the tenants who grazed sheep there in the summer do with their sheep in the winter?—The same as they used to do with them before. They were wintering there every year.

15,749. I am asking you where they wintered them?—At Longard.

15,750. At Longard?—Certainly.

15,751. Will they winter their whole stock?—Yes.

15,752. But did they as a fact?—Yes, and the best sheep in the north of Scotland, that is another thing.

15,753. I don't dispute the value of the sheep, and it is beautiful summer grazing I know, but are you sure that they were able to winter the whole of the stock that they grazed there in summer?—There is hardly any country that can do that.

15,754. But never mind about any other place, just tell me exactly?—Yes, it would winter every hoof but the hoggs.

15,755. Supposing the Bundalloch tenants found their way to a new township, how would they find money to build their houses and to stock their land?—Let them get the chance first.

15,756. Well, but have you no practical answer to give to my question besides that? I am asking you as a practical man?—I am sure there are some of them that would be able to do it, and some not.

15,757. That is just what I wanted to get. How would the inland townships manage about manure for the arable land?—There would not be the least difficulty about it.

15,758. How would they get it?—Manure?

15,759. Yes; from their own stock?—Certainly.

15,760. They would be able to keep enough stock to manure the land sufficiently?—I don't see that they could keep much stock.

15,761. But you think they would be able to keep enough to treat the land properly?—Yes, I am quite sure.

15,762. Are the Inverinate crofters and cottars in great poverty now?—Some of them are, and some not.

15,763. How do they mostly live, I mean what work do they get, fishing or what?—Fishing and working through the country, some of them wintering in the wintertimes, and clipping and working among the sheep through the summer and every kind of work.

15,764. But the fishermen would not wish to inland?—There are plenty of fishermen that woul live very glad to get the chance. d be

15,765. Of living inland and taking up an inland croft?—The fishermen in this country, the most of them, are crofters.

15,766. I know most of them are crofters by the sea. I am speaking of the idea of moving them some distance from the sea?—There is no doubt a good many of them would prefer to be near the sea.

15,767. The most of them would, wouldn't they?—Oh, yes, and a good many of them would go away from the sea too.

15,768. But would not most fishermen prefer to have their homes near the place they get their livelihood from?—I was inquiring of several of them, and their mind to me was, that they would go anywhere in the country if they would get land.

Glenshiel. — Alexander Macrae.

15,769. Give up the fishing, in fact?—Give up the fishing.

15,770. Speaking about wintering generally, should you say that wintering is more difficult to get now than it used to be?—Well I have been going to the low country for the last twenty-six years. Five years ago it was easily got, and six years ago and four years ago very easily got, but for the last two and three years not so easy, and I will tell you the reason why. The price of grain was so low and the price of sheep so high, that the low country farmers have gone in for sheep, and so now when I went first there were not between Invergordon and the town of Inverness three farms on which I would see sheep kept all the year round, and the fact is now that the most of these farms, a good many of the big farmers have sheep. That makes a difference.

15,771. There are a great many more sheep now on what used to be arable land, cultivated land, but that is not a very promising state of things?—Yes.

15,772. For those who wish to take up more sheep on the hills, if there is more sheep on the low grounds?—We have seen as bad times before, and good times coming after.

15,773. But wintering sheep is a pretty profitable business now?—Not at all.

15,774. You don't really mean it is not a profitable business; it is fairly profitable isn't it?—A very bad season last season. Turnips have gone with the frost, it was not a profitable season.

15,775. *Mr Forsyth.*—I want to ask you a little about this Easter and Wester Inverinate. You told me that land had been taken from Wester Inverinate and added to Easter Inverinate in the beginning of this century, didn't you?—Yes.

15,776. And you think that the Wester Inverinate people should have that back again? That the Easter Inverinate people should get what they had before, and the other people be moved, isn't that it?—There are no people on Easter Inverinate.

15,777. I only wanted to get that plain. They lost their land in the beginning of the century, but there are no people?—It is in the hands of the proprietor.

15,778. You gave the impression in your remarks that there were people there, and that you thought the land should be as it were handed back from the one set of people to the other, but you now say that there are none?—Yes.

15,779. *The Chairman.*—I understood that you did.

15,780. *Mr Forsyth.*—It looked that on the evidence and I wished to bring it out.

15,781. *Mr Sutherland.*—I understand you are county councillor for this district?—I am.

15,782. And you have had means of knowing, not only the state of the people, but their opinions also; you have had opportunities that very few possibly would have?—Certainly.

15,783. Then with regard to the distribution of the population here, am I right in supposing that the greater part of the population is distributed round the shores of Loch Duich and Loch Long?—Yes, they are.

15,784. Could you give us any idea of the population?—Yes, I forgot that. In the year 1818 there were 718 above 12 years of age, and in the year 1831 there were 1240, in the parish of Kintail, and the population in 1891 was 588. That is the present population.

15,785. Could you tell me how many families are comprised in the 588, the usual number, I suppose divided by five?—About 100 families.

15,786. Am I right in supposing that these 100 families are within a triangle, two sides of which are Loch Long and Loch Duich, and the other the boundaries of the farms you have indicated?—I don't understand.

15,787. All that population is situated, generally speaking, within Loch Duich and Loch Long on the west, and the boundaries coming down by the river Elchaig and across here to Morvich, is that so?—Yes.

15,788. Those 100 families or probably 130? They have got in their occupation all the land within that circle?—They are just packed together where they are.

Glenshiel. — Alexander Macrae.

15,789. But is all this within this circle in the possession of the people who are scattered round the shore?—No, they have not that circle, the farm of Ruarach is in the hands of a farmer.

15,790. And what more?—The farm of Keppoch.

15,791. Two large farms?—They are not large.

15,792. But they are big; they occupy the half of this circle?—Not at all.

15,793. Is the remainder in the hands of the 100 families we have referred to?—Yes.

15,794. Comparing the area in the occupation of these 100 families with the Glomach forest, is it larger or smaller?—Smaller.

15,795. These 100 families have got less land?—Less land than the deer forest of Glomach.

15,796. And who is the lessee of that?—Mr Winans.

15,797. And has Mr Winans got more than the Glomach forest?—Yes, Killilan.

15,798. Any more than that?—He has Glen-Affaric down to Knockfin.

15,799. And does that exhaust all he has got?—No.

15,800. Am I safe in assuming that he has twenty times as much land as these 100 families?—Fifty times.

15,801. Fifty times as much, and that is the lesson as to the distribution of the land in this locality?—The area of Kintail is 78,000 acres. I would say the crofters of this parish have 5000 acres.

15,802. And it is upon that general consideration you have based your assertion that there is congestion of the population?—Certainly.

15,803. Now you have indicated in your evidence the processes by which these lands became deer forest; the general principle is, isn't it, that they were first of all cleared of the people for the purpose of making sheep farms?—That is so.

15,804. And that afterwards, and in this case pretty recently, the sheep farmers were cleared out and succeeded by the deer forest?—That is so.

15,805. Without going into further details, that is the general process that has been going on?—Yes.

15,806. Have you any idea as to the number of deer that can be supported on a certain piece of ground as compared with the number of sheep? What is the rule here with regard to the acreage that is allowed for feeding a stock sheep?—Well, the farm of Killilan when it was all under sheep I believe was over 20,000 acres.

15,807. And how many sheep were there?—Between 7000 and 8000.

15,808. That is four acres we may say liberally to each sheep. Now, have you any idea how many deer would be in that area?—No.

15,809. You have never had the data have you?—No, I am accustomed to deer, but I could not say.

15,810. Are you aware whether there is any rule as to the number of acres that a deer requires for sustenance?—No, there could not be any rule.

15,811. So you have no idea how many deer could be maintained upon this acreage that kept 20,000 sheep?—No.

15,812. Have you a general idea?—Well, at the time it was tenanted by the late Mr Adam Brown he had the whole farm and the shootings besides, and he was getting £900 for the shooting.

15,813. He was sub-letting the shooting was he?—Certainly, to two shooting tenants, and they would be getting I believe between 30 and 40 deer.

15,814. Killed?—Killed during a season among the sheep.

15,815. But you have not heard that those experts in deer forest matters have got a common rule as to the number of acres required for the maintenance of a stock deer?—No, I could not say.

15,816. You never heard it?—No, Mr Winans' gillies are counting them; surely they should know.

15,817. Are they counting them?—They are trying to do it.

15,818. Now with regard to the pasturage of Loch

Glenshiel. Alexander Macrae.

Longard, you said that it was in the occupation of the people to the best of your knowledge some time ago, as summer grazing?—Oh, yes, it was. It belonged to this country and it was the laird of Gairloch that sold it to The Chisholm. I am not sure which of the Mackenzies of Gairloch, but it was formerly in the possession of the Mackenzies of Kintail.

15,819. And as a matter of fact it is very much nearer the west coast than the east coast, isn't it?—It is.

15,820. The natural distribution of that land would be with the people of the west coast?—Certainly.

15,821. What is the distance from here where we are now sitting to Loch Longard; you said it was 12 miles from the Loch, but we are very much nearer it here are we not?—No.

15,822. I should say so; the map shows that?—I don't know that we are; it is straight on from Bundalloch. By taking a short cut it would be about ten miles from here to the march.

15,823. Then, with regard to the difficulty of using it as a grazing, you have admitted already that it was only a sheiling or the summer outgrazing in olden times?—Oh, no, it was under sheep, and there were shepherds there, and I should have the names of the shepherds that were there in 1818.

15,824. But was it as a sheep farm it was let then?—Yes, certainly.

15,825. But I understand that at one time the tenants of these townships you refer to had it as a sheiling or outgrazing in summer?—Yes, sending their sheep there in summer.

15,826. But supposing it was possible to give to the congested people here these grazings, would the want of contiguity be any obstacle that could not be overcome?—Easily overcome.

15,827. Could it not be used as a club farm entirely for the benefit of these people?—Yes.

15,828. And whatever benefit would accrue there after grazing, they would just get it as well at Bundalloch as if they were there on the ground?—Certainly.

15,829. Then, with regard to the difficulty of wintering, it is at present part of the Comar grazing now?—Yes.

15,830. There is a sheep stock on it now?—Yes, and good sheep.

15,831. You say that except the hoggs they are wintered there now?—Every hoof of them.

15,832. You don't know the ground, I think you said, personally?—No.

15,833. So you are not able to tell us how much of it could be reclaimed and made into arable land?—No.

15,834. We have been over it ourselves and seen it so that we are able to judge. The head waters of Glen-Affaric you have referred to also?—Yes, that is Glen-Grienan down to Alltbeath, and as far as Ath-nam-Muileach.

15,835. You know the land there?—Yes.

15,836. What is your opinion as to its quality?—My opinion of it is that it is about the best in the north of Scotland.

15,837. Do you think any area of it could be made arable down on Athnamuloch?—Well, a few acres, not much.

15,838. Why only a few acres do you consider?—Oh, well, it is so low lying.

15,839. Isn't it better low lying?—Certainly, but it could not be easily drained.

15,840. The difficulty of draining?—Yes.

15,841. But you would have no fear if it could be occupied and drained properly, but crops could grow on it?—Plenty of crops would grow to summer the cattle, and what more would they want.

15,842. But supposing it was going to be made into new settlements altogether, could people be planted there with a prospect of raising crops? Yes, certainly, there is plenty of land at Coulan and at Allt-beath also.

15,843. And have you seen the crops that the keeper there raises?—Certainly, I did, splendid potatoes and good hay. Glenshiel. Alexander Macrae.

15,844. And you think that that is land that could be very profitably occupied by the people down in this congested area that we were talking about?—Certainly.

15,845. And you are of opinion that people could be got who would be perfectly willing and very glad to get the opportunity, do you believe that?—I believe that.

15,846. Then, with regard to the wintering of hoggs, you have had a great deal of experience I understand We have heard before now that one of the reasons why wintering is high is that the farmers in the lowlands, down in the low lying grounds in the east coast, have themselves taken to rearing sheep. Is that within your knowledge?—Yes, that is a fact.

15,847. And you have explained how in your opinion that has come about by the prices of grain having come down?—Yes.

15,848. But has the price of sheep not also come down?—Yes, now, but they are trying to get clear of them as quick as they can.

15,849. But do you not think that the fact that the clearing of the sheep farms and the turning of them into deer forest has necessitated these people raising sheep themselves in the winter?—Certainly, that is the very reason why they did it.

15,850. Because as a matter of fact they were not getting sheep from the Highlands to winter as the Highland pastures were being transferred into deer forest?—Certainly, they would let half their pastures if it was not for themselves raising so many sheep.

15,851. And you never heard yet of deer being sent down to winter grazing?—(No answer.)

15,852. Do you think that what I have mentioned had something to do with the farmers in the lowlands raising sheep themselves?—Oh, yes.

15,853. Do you know anything about the area of the parish of Glenshiel?—I do.

15,854. What is the area of the parish of Glenshiel?—58,000 acres.

15,855. How many acres of that do you know were in the occupation of the native people until the recent extension of grazings?—16 acres until ten years ago, not a tenant paying a farthing of rent to the landlord.

15,856. Do you seriously assert that in the year 1882 there were only 16 acres in the occupation of the native population?—That is a fact. The farm of Airdantoul, the farm of Drudaig, and the farm of Ratagan, and the forest of Cluanie, and the farm of Achadh-nan-gart, and the forest of Inchcro, that was all the number of souls that were paying rent to a landlord in this parish, or that had the grazing of a cow, until the year that I mentioned.

15,857. The Seaforth Highlanders, I understand, were raised here?—A good many of them.

15,858. The great majority of them; and did these men that you know that held all this land ever give any contribution to the army?—Oh, certainly.

15,859. The large farmers?—Oh, the large farmers.

15,860. The deer foresters?—There were none in those days.

15,861. Did Mr Winans come here and shoot when he had this forest?—Never.

15,862. Was he ever near here?—He never showed his face here, never as far as I know. I saw him myself, but it was at Glen-Strathfarrar.

15,863. But, generally speaking, you think that land can be found in this parish and in its neighbourhood within the terms of the inquiry that is remitted to us? You think such land could be got?—Every acre and yard of this parish is fit for small tenants.

15,864. And you believe also that the necessity and the desire to have such land exists on the part of the people?—Certainly, there is.

15,865. And you are quite ready yourself or to get some one to show us the land that is suitable in that respect?—Well, I cannot, there will be plenty able to do it.

Glenshiel.
—
Alexander Macrae.

15,866. *Mr Gordon.*—You say that the people of Bundalloch and Inverinate would move, if they got the chance, to Loch Longard?—I did not say the people of Inverinate; they will get plenty of land near them.

15,867. Who did you say?—Bundalloch and Dornie would go to Killilan and Longard and these places.

15,868. How would they go to Longard; what road would they take in moving their stock?—The way of Carnach.

15,869. They would go past Camuslunie?—Yes.

15,870. And past Carnach?—Yes, and up to the point.

15,871. And follow the old drove road to Longard?—Yes.

15,872. I want to put you right in regard to that distance. You say you think it is about 10 miles?—10 or 12 miles.

15,873. I can tell you it is more than 15 miles; you will agree to that?—Well, I can't say exactly.

15,874. Do you know anybody that would be willing to move from the townships you have mentioned up to that place?—So they tell me.

15,875. Tell us the names of the people who would be willing to move?—Well, several of them told me. They said to me,—they didn't tell me they would be willing to go there, but they told me they would be willing to go anywhere. They did not mention places.

15,876. Would you be willing yourself to take a croft up at Longard?—I need not go up there.

15,877. Possibly, but would you be willing yourself as a common sense man to settle down at Longard in a croft?—I would go there as a tenant having a good share of a club farm there. It is I that would. I don't care for a croft.

15,878. But you would not propose to settle crofters at Longard would you?—Give them the name of small tenants, 'crofters' is a word not known in this country.

15,879. 'Small tenants,' I have no objection; how many acres of arable land could they get?—Well, a crofter, say two or three cows; and they could support two or three cows and a pony on four acres.

15,880. Four acres of arable land?—Yes.

15,881. How many small tenants would you propose to settle on that extent?—On Longard only?

15,882. On Longard and Màm?—I would give it to six.

15,883. What rent do you suppose they would pay?—The area would do for ten.

15,884. I quite acknowledge there is plenty of room for six tenants there; what rent would you suppose these six tenants would pay?—It is not for me to say; I am not going to say a rent.

15,885. Do you say that advisedly, that you won't specify any rent?—Yes, I do; I leave that to other judges, because I don't know what year the rent would be put on it. Maybe it is a good year and maybe a bad year.

15,886. Have you ever been there?—No.

15,887. Therefore, you know nothing about it?—I know plenty about places that I was never in.

15,888. You may know about it in your own mind, but you are not able to instruct us about a place you never saw yourself?—Yes, there are plenty of places that I was never in that I could tell you of.

15,889. Well, I have seen it in different days; have you any idea what like that place is in winter?—Surely it is like other places. I was in higher ground than it in the winter.

15,890. You may, but I don't know if you were ever in much stormier grounds. Now, you talked about Glen-Affaric, and that is a very pretty glen?—Yes, it is.

15,891. You spoke of Glen-Gniomhaidh; do you know the height of the glen?—Do you mean below or above?

15,892. Well, say a mile in breadth in the glen; what height would it be then?—The low part of it.

15,893. You know Caimbàn?—I know Caimban.

15,894. What is the height of Caimbàn?—800 and 900 feet above sea-level.

15,895. It is all that. Well, Caimban is at the foot of Glen-Grianan, you will acknowledge that?—No, it is much higher.

15,896. Where do you put the foot of Glen-Grianan?—It is a number of yards besides feet below Carnban.

Glenshiel.
—
Alexander Macrae.

15,897. Where does the foot of Glen-Grianan end according to your idea?—It is running from the foot of Loch Coulavie.

15,898. Do you say it goes down as far as Alltbeath?—Not so far as Allt-beath.

15,899. Well, do you know the height of Alltbeath?—I could not say exactly.

15,900. You mentioned no place there above that?—Yes, I mentioned Coulan.

15,901. I don't think there is any part of Glen-Grianan that is less than a 1000 feet in height even at the bottom of the valley. Allt-beath is 900 feet. Now, with regard to the possibility of making arable holdings in a country of that kind, do the keepers usually cultivate only the best and driest spots of the place, or do they cultivate all and sundry?—The fact of it is that they cultivate only small patches near their houses.

15,902. You have passed down through Glen-Affaric?—Several times.

15,903. And you have seen some cultivation at the top of the loch where the keeper lives?—Yes.

15,904. Would you possibly get any more holdings suitable for crofters to settle upon beyond what the gamekeeper occupies?—Did you go up the track of Robb?

15,905. Yes, I went up?—Isn't there plenty of arable land between Allt-beath and the top of the loch?

15,906. There is no arable land at all. There are some green flat haughs and some very good grazing?—In my opinion there is plenty arable land.

15,907. Is your opinion that that green flat ground should be made arable land?—Certainly, it is my opinion.

15,908. Is it subject to flooding or not in winter?—Floods in winter? Maybe if a flood would come like the flood we had two years ago.

15,909. I could easily understand a man with your practical experience would propose to grow grass upon that ground, but I don't think—.—Oh, yes, and grow crops.

15,910. Are you really of opinion crops could be grown there with safety, without danger of frost?—There is danger of frost in any high place. It is liable to frost.

15,911. I think the low places would be more liable to frost than the high yonder. From your own personal knowledge of Glen-Affaric would you recommend people to go and stay there and cultivate that flat ground?—It is not cultivation I look to; it is pasturage.

15,912. But if you plant crofters you must have some arable land?—Just a few acres to keep as I said three cows and a pony.

15,913. But would you recommend them to plant potatoes upon that green ground?—I would, because I have seen the best potatoes that ever I saw growing at Allt-beath.

15,914. And do you think it would be safe to plant potatoes at Allt-beath; I don't think Allt-beath is quite so frosty as some places lower down. Now, with reference to the distribution of population in this parish, you say the 500 people are confined mostly to the shores round here. The population of Glenshiel I think you said?—392 is the population of Glenshiel.

15,915. You said the parish contained 518 I think?—That is Kintail.

15,916. That population is confined mostly to the low ground?—Well, yes; there is a number of shepherds up the glen.

15,917. And the extent of ground which this population occupies is less you said than the forest of Glomach?—I said that of the population in the parish of Kintail.

15,918. Quite so, I quite understand you. Now, would you make any difference between land at the seaside and land up on the forest of Glomach, as regards suitability for maintaining a population?—The

Glenshiel. Alexander Macrae.

place that I said I would put people on in the forest of Glomach is not above 150 feet above sea-level.

15,919. Which part of the forest of Glomach is that?—Up at Achadh-a'-chuirn; well, it may be more than that, but is it not high.

15,920. I don't think there is 100 acres of the forest of Glomach that is less than 500 to 600 feet, and the great bulk of it is over 1000 feet in height?—Yes, but look at Carnach it is just the same.

15,921. How many people would you put into the forest of Glomach to-morrow if you had it all to yourself?—I was going to add this to Camuslunie, that is part that was taken away from them Fraoch-Choire.

15,922. What number of the population do you think you could take up in the way of redistributing it over this part of the country. How many of your 518 people could you send up to Glomach?—Well, I didn't study the number of people that I would send up. [*The Chairman.*—But you are asked to say if you can.] I would send three up to Achadh-a'-chuirn and I would give them the forest of Glomach.

15,923. That is 15 people of your 518 that you could send up even if you had it in your own hand?—I was giving the benefit of Fraoch-Choire to the Camuslunie people.

15,924. I am not disputing the propriety of giving it to the people, but it would not take away many of the present population from the low part of the parish?—It is only a small bit.

15,925. I suppose the same thing holds good of the portion of Killilan that has been afforested; the Killilan and Patt forests?—Certainly.

15,926. You mentioned I think about 20,000 acres in them?—I could not say whether it is more but it cannot be less.

15,927. Well, it is more than double that. There are more than 50,000 acres in Killilan, Patt, and the present grazing of Killilan?—Between the present grazing farm and the deer forest?

15,928. And the deer forest of Patt.—Are you sure you are not taking in part of Glen-Strathfarrar that is added to Patt.

15,929. I am taking in just exactly what belongs to Sir Kenneth Matheson (*shows witness a plan*). This included your 7000 or 8000 sheep.—How many acres?

15,930. I don't know, it is about 14 inches long by 4?—Well, you will never make 50,000 acres of it.

15,931. It is over 60 square miles—Take it at 18. You will never make more than that.

15,932. How many sheep do you think that would keep to the acre?—I know the stock that was on it; it was sometimes up to 10,000 I was told, but I have never seen that on it.

15,933. Ten thousand?—Yes, it was once, but the sheep were hardier then; they were a cross-breed from the old sheep they had in the country, but now the sheep are softer.

15,934. And how many people do you think the sheep farm of Killilan would take; how many holdings would you propose to divide it into?—I would give them the whole farm and I would send 20 crofters to it.

15,935. And how many sheep would they be able to keep?—They would be able to keep—they would winter between 6000 and 7000 sheep—about 6000 sheep and would summer thousands more.

15,936. How many thousands more?—I would say easily 3000 more.

15,937. That would be altogether a stock of 9000 sheep?—No, it would be only 6000, they don't always count the stock. They don't count the hoggs in the stocks until they are a year old.

15,938. But you would have your hoggs away wintering?—They are never counted sheep stock.

15,939. I quite understand they are not upon the ground, but I am talking now of the capital. 9000 sheep would belong to those 20 people. Now are there 20 people you know in this part of the country that could afford to stock that farm?—Not of crofters.

15,940. What would be the value; you say you would divide that 9000 by 20. That would be 450 sheep to each of them. Would you have any difficulty at all in finding people in this quarter of the country, small tenants that could rise the price of 450 sheep and put up their buildings and buy their cows and horses?—A few could be got, but I believe not 20.

Glenshiel. Alexander Macrae.

15,941. And how would you do with the rest of the farm when you broke in upon it; what is your scheme for dividing a farm of this kind?—A club farm.

15,942. But you cannot have a club farm without men to form the proprietary?—No, but still——

15,943. Do you know 20 men to make up the number of your club farm?—There are several people that have not much themselves that could easily find it.

15,944. That is not exactly an answer to my question. How are you going to find the owners of these sheep; you must make up your number to fill the club farm?—Yes, but I would divide it into more than one farm, I would consider I would make several farms, but still it would require the same money for all that.

15,945. It would require the same money. Have you any scheme in your own head. You propose to break up this farm and to make it into a club farm either in one or two lots. Now, have you any scheme where you would find the people to occupy it?—The first thing to be done is to open up the land.

15,946. The first thing to do is to find the people to occupy the land before we break it up?—I don't think so. There are plenty people who can get money who have not it themselves.

15,947. They would not get it for nothing, like any other place. But you don't know any people who would occupy all this farm?—Not enough that have the need of going there in the congested district; but I am sure that 20 would be gathered from the country.

15,948. Would it not be better to take as much land as is required for the people rather than to force the people into a speculation which they have no capital for?—But I would not force them in if they would not be willing to have it.

15,949. But you propose to take the whole farm you must find means of occupation in some form?—I would give the low part under sheep to 20 and it would winter about 3000 sheep, and I would get other 20 that would take the upper farm.

15,950. The upper farm?—The forest as a club farm, and they could work it from their present holdings.

15,951. Do you mean to say that you will find first the 20 people to occupy the present grazing farm of Killilan of the present small holdings in Kintail?—Yes.

15,952. Could you give me the name of a few of them?—Well, the names of them, there is no occasion to give the names in the meantime.

15,953. I would like to get the names because it is a sort of proof positive that you know what you are speaking of?

15,954. Surely, sir, you won't know the names.

15,955. *The Chairman.*—Can you mention any names?—My name is Alexander Macrae and I would go as one.

15,956. *Mr Gordon.*—I have no doubt of that. I don't take you as a typical crofter, but I think you are an independent gentleman. No, I am not, I am earning my bread like any other common man.

15,957. *The Chairman.*—Have you any other name?—There are several at Bundalloch that said to me that they would be willing. There is one John Macrae and a good many. It is not my business to give all the names.

15,958. *Mr Gordon.*—I am not saying it is your business to give the names, but you say you could occupy the whole of this farm profitably by 20 different holdings. Now, I would like to know if you have it in your mind's eye who the people are that would join you in taking it?—I consider the first thing is to open up the land to them.

15,959. *The Chairman.*—Mr Gordon's question is to whom would you open up the land?—To crofters who are in need of it.

15,960. Well, who are they: tell us that?—

15,961. *Mr Sutherland.*—Those who appointed you; you are a delegate, are you not?

15,962. *The Chairman.*—I am sorry I interrupted the witness, he is in the hands of Mr Gordon.

15,963. *Mr Gordon.*—I am not pressing far in the matter, but the object of my inquiry at him is to see whether his scheme of breaking up a farm of this kind is the best scheme, or whether it would not be better to take a part of it?—Well, the grazing farm, as I said, would do for 20, and I say that 20 could be got in the country to go there, it is not my business to give names.

15,964. I think it your business to answer legitimate questions.

15,965. *The Chairman.*—Are you or are you not able to give any names besides your own?—I could give you the names of them who are in the need of land.

15,966. No, that is not the question put?—Or those who are able.

15,967. Willing to go and able to stock, that is the question?—Oh, I could not say as to their ability to pay.

15,968. *Mr Gordon.*—Do you still persist in saying that it would be advisable to take the whole farm of Killilan rather than a part of it only, sufficient to give an extension of grazing or holdings to those people who can occupy them profitably?—Well, in my view, I consider that it would be occupied profitably by 20, the low ground and the upper ground, the forest by other 20.

15,969. That is hardly an answer, but I won't press him further, my lord.

15,970. *Mr Maccallum.*—Do you anticipate that there would be any difficulty in letting this farm of Killilan if it were offered in the way that you propose as a club farm and 20 to be united together in holding it?—Well, I may say this is my point; I could not say that they have the means, but I say that of the people, 20 could be got that would be willing to go there willing to get land.

15,971. You don't want to enter into the question as to how much means they possess, but there is a great desire to get such holdings as this?—Well, I say that.

15,972. And you think that a proportion of them would be able to take such holdings?—Well, I think a certain number of them would be able to pay. I know that there are a good many of them anxious to get land that would not be able to pay.

15,973. And although you make this proposal with regard to the Killilan farm, you would also be willing, I suppose, to add any suitable part of it to the holdings that presently exist, to these congested townships for instance?—Yes.

15,974. What is the rent of Killilan farm as at present occupied?—I could not say the rent at present [*Sir Henry Macandrew.*—£600], but it was let fifteen years ago at £900. It was formerly £900.

15,975. And you did not give the arable acreage of that farm?—I could not give the exact number of acres, but there are a good number of acres.

15,976. Can you give any idea of the number of acres that are actually cultivated?—Not many acres at Killilan now. It is waste land now.

15,977. And can you give any idea of the number at all of old arable?—I am not sure, there would be over 100 acres about Killilan itself.

15,978. That is not now cultivated?—Yes.

15,979. You thought that some of the Inverinate crofters might be transferred to Ruarach I think?—Yes.

15,980. What is the size of that farm?—It would winter between 400 and 500 sheep. [*Sir Henry Macandrew.*—£75.]

15,981. And the rent is £75?—Sir Henry says so.

15,982. And then you thought also that they might get land from Easter Lienassie?—Oh, yes.

15,983. How is that land occupied just now?—It is in the hands of Mr Maclennan, the present tenant.

15,984. Is that part cultivated?—I can't tell you.

15,985. *Mr Sutherland.*—With regard to this desire on the part of the people to take holdings, you were appointed a delegate to represent their opinions here at a public meeting, were you not?—I was.

15,986. Were there any resolutions passed at that meeting?—The only resolution that was passed to make known that they were wanting land.

15,987. And you were chosen for the purpose because you knew their opinions on that point well?—Certainly.

Glenshiel. — Alexander Macrae.

15,988. And were appointed to express it?—Yes.

15,989. *The Chairman.*—Now it may be convenient I think, Mr Mackay, if I ask this witness (to save him coming back as you are here now) a few questions with regard to the land belonging to The Chisholm in the parish of Glenshiel.—[*Mr William Mackay.*—To Sir James Mackenzie's Trustees.]

15,990. To Sir James Mackenzie's Trustees, I beg your pardon. You know Sir James Mackenzie's Trustees' land?—[*Witness.*—I do.]

15,991. Do you ask our attention to any land belonging to the Trustees of Sir James Mackenzie, in the parish of Glenshiel?—The farm of Inchcro.

15,992. Is that a grazing farm?—It was a grazing farm in the hands of small tenants at the beginning of this century.

15,993. And is it now in the hands of one farmer?—It is a deer forest, Morvich and Inchcro deer forest.

15,994. Is that under Mr Winans?—Not just now.

15,995. It is under Sir Allan Mackenzie himself?—Yes.

15,996. There is land there in your opinion suitable for grazing?—Yes, it is good pasture land.

15,997. Is there any land suitable for cultivation?—Yes, there is about 100 acres or between 80 and 100 acres.

15,998. Of old arable?—Of old arable.

15,999. Where is that exactly?—Lying between the point of Inchcro and Glenlic, on the side of the river Cro.

16,000. Is it old arable haugh land?—Oh, yes, it is quite green as yet, it can easily be seen that it was cultivated.

16,001. And is it in your opinion suitable for settlement?—It is.

16,002. How far is it from here?—About three miles Inchcro.

16,003. Any other land belonging to Sir Allan Mackenzie?—The farm of Morvich again.

16,004. What do you say about it?—The farm of Morvich was occupied by 16 tenants until the year 1820.

16,005. Small tenants I suppose you mean?—They had the farm of Morvich and they had six cows and four followers and a pony.

16,006. Is there old arable upon that land?—Oh, yes, it is not cultivated, but small patches that are cultivated this year, a park of 18 acres was given to 16 crofters just now.—[*Mr William Mackay*, factor for Sir James T. Mackenzie's Trustees.—21 acres]. [*Witness.*—Well, that is news to me.]

16,007. *The Chairman.*—Well, whatever the area, 18 or 21 acres, it was assigned to 16 crofters?—16 crofters.

16,008. That was last year?—This year at Whitsunday.

16,009. By Sir Allan Mackenzie? Now to whom was that extent of land assigned, who were the crofters that got it?—There are 16 of them. The Morvich crofters, they are not crofters, they were cottars.

16,010. Now, besides that land that was assigned and which is now in the hands of these cottars, is there other land on Morvich?—Between the land they got and up glen I was estimating there would be about 154 acres.

16,011. Of old arable?—Yes.

16,012. And is it suitable for a similar purpose?—For a similar purpose.

16,013. Either for settlements or for extension of grazing?—Both.

16,014. Does that land march with the Morvich land, the cottars' land?—Yes.

16,015. Any other land now in this part of Sir Allan Mackenzie's estate?—This farm of Invershiel.

16,016. Invershiel farm? Who is the farmer?—Maclennan, Lienassie, and Macrae, Airdantoul. They are in partnership. Invershiel and Achadh-nan-gart and Cluanie are the three farms held by them.

16,017. These three places are held in partnership by Maclennan and Macrae, Airdantoul?—Yes, Macrae is a farmer on Sir Kenneth Matheson's estate.

Glenshiel. — Alexander Macrae.

16,018. Are they in a joint lease?—I could not say as to that.

16,019. Now is there land there?—Yes, there is.

16,020. Old arable?—Old arable. Until nineteen years ago last Whitsunday, the farm of Achadh-nan-gart was let separately to one Macrae, and the farm of Invershiel and Cluanie were let separately to the late Donald John Macrae.

16,021. Well, then, what happened nineteen years ago to Achadh-nan-gart?—This Donald John Macrae took the whole three farms, and about seven years ago—he died sixteen years ago, and the widow was keeping on the farm, and she could not keep it on and the proprietor would not give her a reduction as I was told, and she had to part with the farm and to sell the stock herself. If she had continued the lease until it expired, the proprietor would be bound to take the sheep over on valuation, and it was reported that when she would retire Mr Winans would take it. So she had to sell out the stock, and when the stock was sold out Winans would not take it.

16,022. And it is now under lease to Maclennan and Macrae?—Yes.—[*Mr Donald Macrae*, Plockton.—Duncan Macrae, Justice of Peace, Airdantoul.]

16,023. Are there buildings on Achadh-nan-gart?—Yes, there is a farm steading.

16,024. Is there anybody in it?—Yes, there is a gamekeeper.

16,025. A keeper to whom?—To Sir Allan Mackenzie.

16,026. But the steading is not carried on as a farm, is it?—No.

16,027. Then, on the farm of Cluanie, is there a steading?—No, that farm was in connection with Invershiel always.

16,028. And there is no building on it?—No.

16,029. Are these three farms of Invershiel, Achadh-nan-gart, and Cluanie worked as one?—Worked as one farm.

16,030. A grazing farm?—A grazing farm, and small patches here in possession of a few cottars; small patches round about below the road here, and the grazing of a cow.

16,031. Never mind that just now. Can you tell me the stock upon these three farms at present?—About 4500 or so.

16,032. How many hoggs do they winter?—They don't send them away to winter. They are blackfaced sheep and they are wintering them at home.

16,033. I am not saying where; but how many did they winter?—About 1200 hoggs I should think.

16,034. I am not pinning you to a figure. Are these wintered at home?—Yes, but they were not sold last year.

16,035. Are they wintered at home?—Yes.

16,036. Where are they wintered?—On the farm among the sheep.

16,037. Do you know the rent of it?—At present about £350 or so.

16,038. Do you know as to these farms held as one farm, is it a lease for a term of years?—Last year the lease was out in nineteen.

16,039. *Mr William Mackay.*—Perhaps I had better tell you that the rent is £625.—[*Witness.*—But that is for this year.]

16,040. *Mr William Mackay.*—And for last year. Oh, no, for this year only.

16,041. What was the former rent?—[*Mr William Mackay.*—Upwards of £300.]

16,042. What was the former rent?—[*Mr Maclennan*, Lienassie.—The rent the trustees of Donald John Macrae were paying under the will was £1150, and they got a reduction from Sir James T. Mackenzie of £200.]

16,043. Macrae paid a rent of £1150?—[*Mr William Mackay.*—That is only a matter of £8.]

16,044. Are you of opinion Mr Macrae, that there are traces of land upon these three farms combined into one farm suitable for crofters?—Yes, I am of that opinion.

16,045. Considerable tracts of old arable?—There are. Glenshiel. — Alexander Macrae.

16,046. And tracts of grazing?—And tracts of grazing as well.

16,047. Are these lands in the neighbourhood; what crofters are they nearest?—There are no crofters at present on the estate.

16,048. Oh, there are none on the estate?—No.

16,049. Do you wish to tell us anything about any other farms or any other land upon this estate in Glenshiel, in the parish of Glenshiel?—There is the farm of Ratagan.

16,050. Is that Sir Allan Mackenzie's?—No, it belongs to Mr Baillie of Dochfour.

16,051. That is another estate?—In the estate of Sir Allan Mackenzie these are all the lands.

16,052–3. *Sir Henry Macandrew.*—You stated that there must have been small tenants on Lienassie?—Yes.

16,054. What ground have you for saying that?—That there is old arable land there and.—

16,055. And how long ago do you think?—I told his lordship that I could not say the exact date on which there were crofters on it.

16,056. You don't know that it has been let to one tenant since 1715?—I well believe it. It was long in possession of the Macraes of Inverinate.

16,057. I think the witness was going to say that Lienassie had been divided into places under other names?—Yes, I say that there was part of the farm of Lienassie that was on other places later than the date you mentioned.

16,058. There have been additions to the farm of Lienassie?—There were.

16,059. But there was no part of it left under a separate name as a separate holding except what has been added to it?—There was part of it on Inverinate, even of the farm of Lienassie at present.

16,060. At what date?—Yes, the latter end of last century.

16,061. 1715 is a good long time before that?—It was the Macraes of Inverinate that had it, and on that they never crossed over the burn at Dorusduan. But they had Lienassie.

16,062. The Inverinate tenant?—Yes, Macraes.

16,063. That is Finlay Macrae of Inverinate who had a wadset of the place. Now, coming to the Glomach forest you told us that different parts of it had been held at one time by crofters?—I did.

16,064. What crofters held it?—The crofters of Camuslunie and the crofters of—well, it was the Rev. John Macrae, the minister at Glenshiel, had part of it, and the tenants of Inverinate had part of it.

16,065. How many tenants were in Inverinate at that time?—Well, as I was told, it was three.

16,066. And were they joint tenants?—Well, maybe it was one of them that was in for it, but they had equal shares.

16,067. But were they joint tenants?—They were joint tenants.

16,068. Or did they pay separate rents?—Certainly, they did.

16,069. They paid separate rents?—They paid separate rents.

16,070. To the landlord?—I could not say to the landlord.

16,071. Now was that a sheiling, was it as a sheiling they had it?—As a shieling.

16,072. And they sent their cattle there in the summer?—They did.

16,073. And that was before the time of the introduction of sheep farming into the district?—There were sheep but not the same kind of sheep as there is to-day.

16,074. Now I suppose that applies to all these places in the forest that you have been speaking about; they were really summer sheilings, is that so?—I believe so.

16,075. Now you told us that small tenants could be settled in the Glomach forest; that they could cultivate it profitably?—I did

16,076. How many did you say, I didn't notice exactly?—Three.

16,077. In the whole forest?—I was going to give back to the Camuslunie people this Fraoch-Choire that was taken from them.

16,078. You would give them the sheiling and you would settle three more tenants?—Yes, at Achadh-à-chuirn.

16,079. Is there any land there fit for cultivation?—There is.

16,080. Was it ever cultivated?—It was.

16,081. What rent would they be able to pay?—I am not appointed as a valuator; I could not say the rent.

16,082. You cannot say what would be a fair rent for three tenants settled there?—No, I could not, Sir Henry, say that.

16,083. Now, could you state the amount of money that would be required to stock the place?—It won't require very much this year, but the exact figure I could not say.

16,084. How many sheep would you give them?—When Fraoch-Choire was taken from it I believe 600 or 700 blackfaced would be about it.

16,085. Between the three?—Yes.

16,086. Can you state what would be a fair rent for the Camuslunie people to pay for the sheiling that you would give them?—I could not say what a fair rent would be. A fair rent this year is not a fair rent next year.

16,087. Do you know what rent is paid for it now?—For Camuslunie? The Glomach Forest?—No.

16,088. Would £550 be an extravagant rent for the small tenants to pay?—It would.

16,089. Now, as to the Patt forest, do you state that there is any land within the limits of the Patt forest suitable for the occupation of small tenants?—No, I did not say that; I said that it would do as a club farm added to a township on the low grounds.

16,090. It would do as an addition to one of the existing crofter townships?—Yes.

16,091. Is there any land in it fit for cultivation?—Not much, there are a few acres, but not much.

16,092. Is there any land in it that ever was cultivated?—There is that was ever cultivated.

16,093. Where?—There was land cultivated at Patt, there was land cultivated at Coire-each, there was land cultivated at Beneveig, there was land cultivated at Mulbuie.

16,094. Was that shepherds' lots?—Shepherds' and maybe herds' in the olden times.

16,095. Was there ever anybody permanently residing in that forest except shepherds and smugglers perhaps?—Yes.

16,096. Where?—At Patt.

16,097. Do you know when the house at Patt was built?—There is a good number of years, I could not tell the exact date, but I know that there were people staying there before the house you mean was built.

16,098. It was built for a large sheep farmer, is that so?—I could not say, I was under the impression that it was built for the shooting tenant.

16,099. Then that is the only house you mention as being there?—No, that is not the only house; there were several houses.

16,100. Where?—At Patt.

16,101. Who lived in them?—One Donald Macrae lived there once, and one Alexander Macrae lived there once.

16,102. That is occupied now?—Well, the son of this Alexander Macrae is there yet.

16,103. That is the smuggler I was alluding to. [*The Chairman.*—We are not going into the matter of smuggling.]

16,104. Is that the only other one?—Yes.

16,105. How many tenants would you consider suitable to turn that into a club farm?—It would be a good help for 20.

16,106. Can you state what stock it would carry or did you state that?—It would be plenty for it to winter 2000.

16,107. And can you state what money would be required to stock it?—I would stock it this year with £1200 and less.

16,108. For 2000 sheep?—Yes, good sheep.

16,109. Would they be cheviot or blackfaced?—Both of them; I could buy cheviots cheaper than blackfaced this year.

16,110. Would they be ewes or wedders?—Ewes and wedders, but I would put wedders on it.

16,111. Well, I will ask you some questions about wedders by-and-by. Have you any idea of the death-rate among the sheep when it was occupied by Mr Brown?—Yes.

16,112. It was the wedder ground farm; was that so?—Oh, yes, I have an idea.

16,113. Do you know what it was?—Well, I saw myself 2300 hoggs wintered in the low country, and I saw 1260 tops and 320 shots leave the farm as three year olds.

16,114. Are you aware of this, that of the wedders bought in and put on there, only 63 per cent. were sold as mature wedders?—63 as tops.

16,115. No, altogether?—That might happen for a class, Sir Henry.

16,116. I am talking of the wedder class?—For a class of them for a year.

16,117. But I am talking of the whole occupation; that of the number of wedders put on the ground, only 63 per cent. were sold off?—Yes, that was a class.

16,118. No, of the wedders?—For a year.

16,119. No, for every year, as the general result of Mr Brown's farming?—That does not happen anywhere.

16,120. Now, suppose Mr Brown came here and told you that was the fact, would you say it was true?—No, I believe Mr Brown was a truthful man, but I believe Mr Brown would not say it was the same death-rate he had every year.

16,121. If I showed you a letter from Mr Brown, saying that, would you believe it? I don't say that it was that every year, but on the average?—On the average is it?

16,122. Yes.—Oh, there would be some years that there would be a heavy death-rate, but I would not consider that a great loss. I have seen worse than that we are not complaining very much of it.

16,123. You would not consider 37 per cent. of deaths, one with another, high?—(No Answer.)

16,124. You have told us about the farm of Ruarach; you propose to put four crofters on that?—Yes.

16,125. That would displace the present tenant?—Oh, well, there are tenants at Inverinate that were displaced before from Ruarach.

16,126. But it would be the fact if you put four men there, the present tenant would have to go?—Is it under lease?

16,127. But assuming it was not, and you had your way, that Sir Kenneth appointed you to manage his estate and you put four tenants there, you would have to get rid of the present tenant, isn't that so? That would be three additional men, that would be provided for three?—Four.

16,128. The present man would have to go?—[*Mr Sutherland.*—He might have a share.]

16,129. But there would be only three additional people provided for. Would they have a shepherd, your three to four tenants?—Well, they could do without him, and they could have him.

16,130. And how many servants are there on the farm at present?—Of Ruarach?

16,131. Yes.—Two, a shepherd and a servant girl, as far as I know.

16,132. Two servants?—Or maybe there is a herd.

16,133. Are there three servants?—I am not very sure if there is a herd boy.

16,134. Well, there are two?—There are two whatever.

16,135. They would have to go; the four crofters would not require two servants?—No, they would not require to hire them, but would require their services.

16,136. They would do the work themselves?—Yes.

Glenshiel.

Alexander Macrae.

16,137. So that that farm would maintain four crofters, and it is now maintaining a tenant and two if not three servants?—But four crofters with five of a family is quite different.

16,138. Mr Maclennan, the present tenant, is a bachelor I believe, but I suppose sometimes the servants are married, isn't that so; the servants are married in this country?—Yes, and in every country.

16,139. And sheep farmers too sometimes. If you were to give this to four crofters, you would displace at least three other families. Would that be any great benefit to the country?—I don't admit the three families.

16,140. You didn't think of it at all I daresay, but it is the fact. [*Mr Shaw Stewart.*—He says he does not admit that there would be three families]. [*Witness.*—Three families for a servant girl.]

16,141. I am talking of men servants who may be or may not be married, of course, as crofters may or may not be married. You would admit that the present tenant and two men servants would have to be displaced?—Yes, certainly.

16,142. Well, that would not be a very great gain. Now you mentioned Killilan farm. You spoke of 20 tenants?—Yes.

16,143. You would put 20 tenants there. Now, how many shepherds are there at present?—Two at Coire-dhomhainn, I believe; but there is one married man, his son is herding part of the hirsel, and there is a shepherd at Mulbuie, he has a family, and a shepherd at Carnach.

16,144. Never mind whether they have families or not, that may be an accident, but there are two shepherds at Carnach?—One at Carnach.

16,145. How many more?—One at Mulbuie and two at Coire-dhomhainn.

16,146. Any more?—One at Fadach, two at Killilan.

16,147. And are there any more servants on the farm—men servants?—Yes

16,148. How many?—There is a ploughman.

16,149. Any more?—A servant girl.

16,150. I am not referring to that, only men who are capable of being the heads of families. Well, that is 8, so that the number of people provided for there would be 12; you see that. Now, I think these were the only places you mentioned on Sir Kenneth Matheson's estates here where room could be found for small tenants?—Airdantoul.

16,151. You didn't mention that nor Lienassie?—I did, I say that Lienassie is fit for crofters, and I say that Airdantoul would keep a number of crofters.

16,152. Well, we will take Lienassie. Do you propose that it should be taken and given to small tenants too?—I say it would keep a number of tenants.

16,153. But would you propose to take it from the present tenant and give it to them?—I don't think that is within our inquiry, the inquiry of the Commissioners. The inquiry is as to the land suitable.

16,154. Well, is the land suitable?—It is suitable.

16,155. How many tenants would it keep?—Ten.

16,156. Now, how many shepherds are there?—Three.

16,157. Any other servants?—Yes, there is a ploughman and a herd.

16,158. That is five; Mr Maclennan himself, six; so that is four additional men that could be provided for there?—And three at Màmag.

16,159. Who has that?—Lienassie.

16,160. That is in the forest?—No.

16,161. Well, that is seven then, we will take it; is that so?—Yes.

16,162. Now that is all the land; we have discussed all the land in the parish of Kintail not already occupied by small tenants? [*The Chairman.*—Belonging to this estate].—And Keppoch.

16,163. Yes, and Keppoch, I beg your pardon. How many would that take?—Oh, four.

16,164. How many shepherds are there?—Two.

16,165. Well, that is two more that would be provided for. Now, do you know that Keppoch was advertised for a long time before it was let to Mr Maclennan?—No, I did not know that.

Glenshiel.

Alexander Macrae.

16,166. Will you take it from me that it was?—Oh, certainly, certainly, I don't doubt it at all.

16,167. And that nobody offered for it, you did not hear of any smaller tenants offering for it?—It is quite different.

16,168. It was in the proprietor's hands for a year wasn't it?—Yes, it was for a year.

16,169. For the year 1891?—And it was advertised?

16,170. It was advertised and it was let for £80, which was very considerably less than the previous rent?—Well, is that all in this parish now?—Yes.

16,171. All the rest of the farms are occupied by small tenants, and there is no room for anybody in addition, is that so?—Not in the townships.

16,172. On the townships that are occupied there is no room for any more?—No.

16,173. Now you told us that the Bundalloch people would be able to stock additional land if they got it?—I could not say the number.

16,174. Do you know that the proprietor advanced them money to stock their present holdings; you have heard that I suppose?—Yes.

16,175. And do you know how many of them have paid it back? [*The Chairman.*—He very likely does not know that].—I know as well, Sir Henry, that they were rack-rented.

16,176. I will state that myself. [*The Chairman.*—You may ask him, perhaps he will take it from you. As far as I can see it is not within the scope of this Commission.]

16,177. I will give it in my own statement, my lord. You mentioned the farm of Airdantoul?—Yes.

16,178. That is on the Letterfearn property?—Yes.

16,179. How many small tenants would you put there?—12.

16,180. Where would you take them from?—From Letterfearn.

16,181. How many shepherds and servants has Mr Macrae?—There are two shepherds and a ploughman.

16,182. That is eight people from Letterfearn you would put there, eight additional people you would put on it. Now is this within your knowledge that the farm of Drudaig was offered to the crofters of Letterfearn?—And didn't they take it? Haven't they?

16,183. No, there is only one crofter. Is that within your knowledge, that Mr Maclean pressed it on these people and that only one crofter in the township is now a tenant of it?—On Drudaig?

16,184. Yes, the other four as you know are not crofters, have no other holding on the estate, although they are relatives of the crofters in the district. You know that the letting of that farm has not relieved a single bit of the congestion in the district, and that because the crofters themselves declined to take it? [*The Chairman.*—Do you know that?]—Oh, five of them have it.

16,185. Were they crofters?—Still worse if they were not crofters they were cottars there.

16,186. One of them is the son of a crofter?—Well, they are all tenants now.

16,187. They are tenants now, but were they tenants, before?—No, they were not tenants before; they were cottars. Of course, one of them, Murdo Macrae, was a crofter.

16,188. Where?—At Letterfearn.

16,189. He has his croft yet?—Yes.

16,190. That is one; now, as to the others?—Alexander Macrae.

16,191. What is he?—He has a croft at Letterfearn.

16,192. I don't know their names exactly; but you say Alexander Macrae has a croft?—I say that.

16,193. And a separate house?—Himself and his sister; his house was burnt and he is living now at Drudaig.

16,194. Was he a tenant of that?—Yes, he has a share of it.

16,195. Was it not his sister that was the tenant?

—Well, it is him that is in for the working the share of Drudaig.

16,196. *The Chairman.*—Does it not come to this that although crofters did not get that land other small tenants—cottars—got it?

16,197. *Sir Henry Macandrew.*—No, they were not cottars.

16,198. *The Chairman.*—What were they?

16,199. *Sir Henry Macandrew.*—They were relatives of the crofters, sons or nephews living with people who were crofters, but only one had a croft, this one man. However, the point I wish to bring out was that it was offered to the crofters?—Mr Christopher Macrae had a house but no croft, and Alexander Maclennan was a crofter.

16,200. But he had no croft at that time when he took that.

16,201. *The Chairman.*—It was offered to crofters and they did not take it. Friends of the crofters residing on the land took it except one who was a crofter. That seems to be the English of it.

16,202. *Sir Henry Macandrew.*—You don't propose to take the farm of Leacachan?—No, I would not.

16,203. And Saraig you would not touch?—No.

16,204. Don't you think it would be a disadvantage to the country if there were no considerable farmers in it?—I say there would be that, should the people get land and plenty of it I say there would be that still.

16,205. Wouldn't it be a disadvantage that there should be no single considerable farmers in the district? You told us a great deal of good Mr Brown did to it?—Any considerable farm?

16,206. Mr Brown did a great deal of good?—I say that on the system he was going.

16,207. He was a considerable farmer?—Yes, and to my knowledge he was a very good man, an excellent man, but I would say I would rather see the land with the people.

16,208. Now, do you know why Mr Brown gave up the forest land?—Because the proprietor chose to make a deer forest of it.

16,209. Do you know that it was because it was unprofitable, and that he freely gave it up?—There is no fear about that Sir Henry, because a farm that Mr Brown had for £450 the rent was £1350, and he was getting £900 for the shooting, and how could you say he was not working it to profit? He made lots of money there, thousands and thousands and twenties of thousands at Killilan.

16,210. Do you know whether it is the fact that wedder farming about that time became unprofitable? [*The Chairman.*—About what time?]—The time Mr Brown gave it up—1878.

16,211. Is that the fact?—I say they came down at that time, but they were profitable afterwards.

16,212. Is it not the fact that wedder farming has been given up to a great extent?—So it has, but why?

16,213. And if Mr Brown told you that he found the wedder farming entirely unprofitable, and that he was glad to get rid of it, I suppose you would believe him?—Well, he did not tell me that.

16,214. But if he did, you would believe him?—Well, I would believe him.

16,215. *Mr William Mackay.*—You know that the parish of Kintail originally included what is now the parish of Glenshiel?—I do.

16,216. And that the old estate of Kintail included the whole of both parishes?—Yes, I do know that.

16,217. You also know that the Seaforths had also the whole of the parish of Lochalsh?—I do.

16,218. And very extensive estates away in the direction of Brahan and the Black Isle?—I do.

16,219. Do you know that the Seaforth Highlanders were raised on the whole of those estates?—I heard that.

16,220. And not on Kintail only?—Oh, certainly not on Kintail only.

16,221. Well, you told us that at one time there was not an inch of land, I think you said, or an acre in the parish of Glenshiel in the hands of a native?—I did not say that now.

16,222. I understood him, my lord, to say that?—I said that there was not an acre.—[*The Chairman.*—He said every acre and yard of this parish is fit for small tenants.] Glenshiel. — Alexander Macrae.

16,223. Oh, yes, but before that. I think you said that there was not an acre of land in the parish of Glenshiel in the possession of a native at one time?—In the possession of crofters ten years before.

16,224. You modify it now. In 1882?—Yes.

16,225. That is, there were no small tenants upon the estate?—No, paying rent to the landlord I said.

16,226. Of course, you know that Invershiel was in the hands of a native farmer, Macrae?—Oh, I never said that; small tenants I said, I never said that.

16,227. You know that he was an old soldier, don't you?—Yes.

16,228. Do you know his brother was a soldier too that was killed in Egypt?—I have heard that too.

16,229. You know that Achadh-nan-gart was in the hands of a native, Donald Macrae?—Yes.

16,230. And that Morvich was in the hands of a native, Alexander Macrae, and afterwards his son Patrick Macrae?—Not his son.

16,231. Well, a native; was Patrick a native?—Not a native of Kintail, although originally a native of Kintail.

16,232. You mentioned that Inchcro was in the hands of small tenants?—I did.

16,233. Do you remember that?—No.

16,234. When was it in the possession of small tenants?—In this century, the early part of this century.

16,235. What authority have you for that?—Well, I told his lordship there that my father told me of it. That is my authority for it.

16,236. And did he remember it?—No, my father was born in the year 1808.

16,237. And he did not remember the small tenants?—Well, yes, he remembered, not so many as there were there in the latter end of the last century, but there were tenants, they could not be small, there were three of them whatever.

16,238. At Inchcro?—Yes.

16,239. There were three tenants?—There were in this century.

16,240. You don't think there would be more than three?—Yes, in last century.

16,241. Well, how many tenants were there during 1700, during the eighteenth century?—I could not say the very number, but I know there were more than three.

16,242. Could you give us any idea of the number?—No.

16,243. You don't?—No.

16,244. Would you be surprised to learn that in 1715 there was only one tenant on Inchcro?—One tenant?

16,245. One tenant, yes?—Paying direct to the landlord.

16,246. One occupier of land?—Maybe that was the one that was in the rental for it, but there was more than one tenant.

16,247. But you don't know that of your own knowledge?—I was told of it by several old people in the country that that was the way; that one would go in and take a farm, and then that there would be so many then that would go in, and still they would have equal shares.

16,248. Then about Morvich, I think you said there were 16 tenants there?—I said that.

16,249. Until the year 1820 I think you said?—Well, about that, I could not be exactly sure, between 1817 and 1820.

16,250. Who told you that there were 16 tenants in Morvich?—One Alexander Macrae, that is now dead, was the first that told me of it, but I heard of several since, and he was there himself as a young boy in his father's house as one of them.

16,251. Were these 16 tenants at Allt-a'-chruinn and Cairngorm, where the cottars are now?—Not at that time.

Glenshiel.
Alexander Macrae.

16,252. Were they not the fathers of the present cottars?—The people there are the descendants—some of them at any rate are the descendants—of those that were there.

16,253. But are you sure that those 16 held any land?—I am sure they were tenants.

16,254. And that continued until 1820?—About that.

16,255. How far were there 16 tenants, how long were they there do you think, or their forefathers?—Well, I could not say how long they were there, but I am sure there are several ages since the Macraes and Maclennans were at Morvich.

16,256. And you think those 16 tenants or their forefathers were there for ages?—For ages.

16,257. *The Chairman.*—Is Macrae or Maclennan a clan name in Morvich?—Yes.

16,258. The headquarters were at Morvich?—Well, there were a good many of them there.

16,259. *Mr William Mackay.*—Well, in this rental of 1715 there are just two tenants in Morvich, Farquhar Macrae and Alexander Macrae. Do you believe that, if His Majesty's rental of 1715 says so?—You know that Seaforth at that time left the country.

16,260. Exactly, and that is why the rental was taken. But do you believe that this rental is correct? It was taken on oath I am told?—I believe it might be the case that there were only two tenants that were in for it, but there were more than two tenants.

16,261. There were no leases then it appears. Now I show you an old retnal of 1756. Would you believe that according to that rental after Seaforth came back when he got his land again, would you believe there were only two tenants there, Rev. Donald Maclennan, and John Maclennan?—It might be the case, but that does not show, but there were tenants. [*The Chairman.*—There might have been far more afterwards].—Yes, and at the same time, my lord.

16,262. I come then to the next rental of 1857, when Morvich was in the possession of one man, do you know that?—But how was it let when the tenants had it between them up to 1818?

16,263. I cannot give you a rent?—It would not suit your purpose.

16,264. I don't think there could have been any more you know. There is only one in 1856, do you know?—Oh, yes.

16,265. Do you remember 1856?—Well, hardly.

16,266. Well, I will put you to a year that you will remember. In 1870, you remember that there was just one tenant, Patrick Macrae?—Yes.

16,267. And away back as far as you can remember there was only one tenant?—As far as I remember.

16,268. Now the farm of Invershiel you remember has always been in the possession of one tenant?—Always since I remember it.

16,269. And the farm of Achadh-nan-gart and Ach-a'-ghiurain belongs to Invershiel.

16,270. It did not at one time; it belonged to Achadh-nan-gart. It now belongs to Invershiel, so that there were only two tenants as far as you can remember between Invershiel and Cluanie?—Two tenants.

16,271. Now you mentioned at Inchcro how many acres did you say of land?—Well, I could only give a rough guess. I came down through it the other day; coming down from Alltbeath I came down through it to see it, and I was calculating just that there would be between 80 and 90 acres on the Inchcro side.

16,272. That is all the way up Glen-lic?—Yes, on the Inchcro side.

16,273. On the Inchcro side of the river Cro up for four miles?—Yes.

16,274. You include, of course, the whole of the meadow land along the river bank?—Land that was cultivated.

16,275. But do you include the meadow land along the river bank or the green?—No.

16,276. Now, how do you know that there was any of that land up in Glen-lic cultivated?—There are signs, the fields are there, they will speak for themselves.

Glenshiel.
Alexander Macrae.

16,277. Do you remember any of that land being under cultivation?—Not up the glen; I remember a bit being cultivated at the shepherd's house at Glen-lic.

16,278. And that is cultivated now?—No, there is no house there.

16,279. Do you know that Glen-lic is very subject to floods?—It is like every glen, when there are heavy floods it will come out.

16,280. Did you know that sometimes it is altogether under water, Glen-lic?—No, I did not know that.

16,281. As to Achadh-nan-gart you say there is considerable arable land there?—There are a considerable number of acres between Ach-a'-ghiurain land and Achadh-nan-gart.

16,282. Part of Ach-a'-ghiurain is in the hands of the cottars?—It was; is it now in their hands?

16,283. You did not know that the cottars have the peat of the forest of Ach-a'-ghiurain?—I am glad to hear it.

16,284. Now, how many cottars would you put at Achadh-nan-gart; you said it was suitable for crofters, small tenants?—Between Ach-a'-ghiurain and Achadh-nan-gart.

16,285. Yes, just on the farm of Invershiel, taking all the arable land, how many cottars would you put; you would require to give them arable land as well as grazing? That is the only arable land on the farm you know, Ach-a'-ghiurain and Achadh-nan-gart?—It would support 30 families.

16,286. How much arable land would you give to each of them?—Well, I would divide what there is among them, say four acres, or if it would make seven for them, good, or if it would make ten for them, good. I would make four acres apiece.

16,287. That would make 120 acres arable land. Is there anything like 120 acres of arable land on the whole farm?—Yes.

16,288. Have you ever measured it?—Certainly not, I did not, but I don't say that 120 acres could be put together on it between Invershiel and Cluanie.

16,289. Well, you know that the arable lands down here are in the hands of the cottars?—Yes; I would take them in.

16,290. Well, how many acres are there do you think?—On this part between this and Invershiel below the road you mean?

16,291. Yes, quite so?—Well, there is a long stretch of it, but it is very narrow; I would count that as 8 acres.

16,292. Well, 8¾ acres is the exact sum. Well, now, how many acres are on Ach-a'-ghiurain, take it on the way up?—Oh, but there is more than that at Invershiel.

16,293. Where?—The park at Invershiel and other lands.

16,294. But that is under cultivation already, it is in the hands of the tenant?—Well, but I take it in.

16,295. What is the extent of it then?—Between three and four acres, and I would get five acres at Eilean-nan-Gall and three acres over at Allt-a'-chruinn.

16,296. That is in the hands of tenants or cottars?—Yes, still the better.

16,297. *The Chairman.*—Surely you would not take land from cottars; their complaint is that they have not enough of land?—Well, but we are making up the number of acres on the farm.

16,298. *Mr William Mackay.*—But what I want is the number of acres available for new tenants. These are held already you know by cottars?—That is not held by crofters.

16,299. *The Chairman.*—As I understand they are held by crofters or other small tenants?—They are not crofters.

16,300. *Mr William Mackay.*—But they are cottars; you call them cottars yourself?

16,301. *The Chairman.*—Allow me to try to bring it to a point. Exclude from your consideration for the moment land in the hands of crofters or cottars. You can speak to it afterwards if you wish. Now dealing

Glenshiel. — Alexander Macrae.

with arable not in the hands of crofters or other small tenants or cottars?—We will begin at Camus-nan-Gall, five.

16,302. *Mr William Mackay.*—Isn't that in the hands of cottars?—No, no.

16,303. Where is the next?—Three or four on Invershiel.

16,304. But that is in the hands of a tenant, Mr Maclennan?—He is not a small tenant nor a crofter.

16,305. It is under cultivation though?—He is cutting grass in it, but it is not under cultivation.

16,306. Well, take it, where is the next?—That is nine, and there are acres above the houses here opposite the bridge. I would say I would get four acres up there.

16,307. Opposite General Wade's bridge up here, four acres there?—Yes, that is 13 and between Ach-a'-ghiurain and Achadh-nan-gart.

16,308. How many on Ach-a'-ghuirain, keep out, remember, 17 acres already held by the cottars. There is not much left?—No, at Achadh-nan-gart.

16,309. But Ach-a'-ghuirain, don't run away from Ach-a'-ghiurain, you say there are considerable quantities. I want to know what it is?—Well, I was taking in—

16,310. There is no land except the 17 acres at Ach-a'-ghiurain that you could give to tenants?

16,311. *The Chairman.*—Do you know of lands other than these 17 acres available?—There is land at Achadh-nan-gart.

16,312. *Mr William Mackay.*—There is none on Ach-a'-ghiurain. Well, take Achadh-nan-gart, how many at Achadh-nan-gart?—30 acres.

16,313. Would you get 30 acres?—Yes.

16,314. *Mr Gordon.*—There is an enclosed field there.

16,315. *The Chairman.*—His statement is 30 acres.

16,316. *Mr Shaw Stewart.*—Is any of it under cultivation?—No.

16,317. *Mr William Mackay.*—Of that there are 3 acres under cultivation, cultivated by the shepherd?

16,318. *Mr Sutherland.*—May I ask if that is the land that is visible from the road?—[*Mr William Mackay.*—Yes.]

16,319. We have seen it all.

16,320. *Mr William Mackay.*—Yes, you have seen it. Is there any other arable land that you could give?—There is land up at the shepherd's house up at Strath-Cluanie.

16,321. Isn't that upon another estate?—No.

16,322. Well, how much is it?—Another place, a shepherd's place above us.

16,323. Would you be surprised that there is only a rood at the first place?—I would be surprised because there is more.

16,324. Is it just a bit of a garden?—There is a good stretch down near the river there. I would get 3 acres at the shepherd's house there.

16,325. *The Chairman.* — I must ask you to abbreviate this, Mr Mackay. We have seen it all.

16,326. *Mr William Mackay.*—I am sorry, my lord, to detain you, but these plots are all that you can find on this estate. [*To Witness.*]—And you would divide these 43 acres among thirty tenants?—But I was taking in the whole of the arable land.

16,327. *The Chairman.*—I don't think this need be continued.

16,328. *Mr William Mackay.*—Very well, my lord. There is just one question. Do you know how many shepherds and servants are on this farm of Invershiel and Cluanie?—Yes, there will be seven shepherds.

16,329. Well, I think there are eight. Will you take it from me that there are eight, and do you know that four of these are married and have houses of their own, and families?—Yes, and I know, but that they would take a good stretch of the land.

16,330. *The Chairman.*—Mr Macrae, have you any questions?

16,331. *Mr Donald Macrae.*—No, my lord, with the exception perhaps of the question of rent on this large farm of Invershiel, Achadh-nan-gart and Cluanie. It was ascertained that the rent some few years ago was £1100, that at the present moment it is £600 odd, and I think Mr Macrae said that a very few years ago it was £300. Perhaps Mr Maclennan, Lienassie, will be able to tell us, or Mr Macrae himself, what foundation he had for saying the rent was £300.

Glenshiel. — Alexander Macrae.

16,332. *Mr Mackay.*—Oh, I will explain that in a minute if Mr Macrae will take it from me.—[*Mr Donald Macrae.*—Decidedly]. The rent of the farm used to be £1100. For a time it was in the hands of the proprietor, Sir James Mackenzie. It was not paying, and he got tired of it, and he let it to Mr Maclennan and Mr Macrae. In any case there was no stock on it when they took it.—[*Mr Maclennan.*—No.] And as your lordship is aware, it takes years to get up a stock. In respect that there was no stock upon the land the rent was fixed at a very small sum, £300 odds.

16,333. *Mr Donald Macrae.*—That satisfies myself because Mr Macrae made that statement and Mr Mackay found fault with him for saying it.—[*Mr William Mackay.*—Now it is £625.]

16,334. *Mr Shaw Stewart.*—I want to clear up this point. Are all the lands that you have spoken of arable land? Do those come under the terms of our remit, viz., lands at present under grazing or deer forest?—Yes.

16,335. Or does it include some that is cultivated by shepherds and others, because that is an important point?—Cultivated by shepherds.

16,336. Have you included in the lands which you have pointed out to us any patches of land that are cultivated by shepherds or other people, or is it entirely under grazing or deer forest?—Yes, in the deer forest, but not on the sheep farms.

16,337. But does any of the land you have mentioned as suitable for us to go and inspect, does any of it include land at present under cultivation by anyone?—Yes, most certainly, on all the farms that I spoke about there is some land under cultivation.

16,338. *The Chairman.*—That is not the question. Put the question again if you please.

16,339. *Mr Shaw Stewart.*—I want to understand this clearly. You pointed out to us certain arable lands in the different glens hereabout?—Yes.

16,340. Do all these acres that you tell us about come under the terms of our remit? We are strictly confined to lands which are under grazing, grouse moor, or deer forest; we cannot look at any land that is cultivated at present?—Not in the possession of crofters or small tenants, but not shepherds?

16,341. We cannot look at any land that is cultivated by anybody; all we have to look for is land that is at present under grazing, grouse moor, or deer forest; the chairman will correct me if I am wrong. [*The Chairman.*—Yes, that is so,] and I want to know whether in the lands you have pointed to, you have included some portions that are at present cultivated by some one, never mind who?—Oh, yes, I was doing that.

16,342. Oh, well, then that is an important point. Thank you.

16,343. *The Chairman.*—What lands do you include?—I was giving the estimate of all the old arable land, and land under cultivation on these farms.

16,344. You were including both old arable, land presently under cultivation by farmers, and land under cultivation by shepherds?—Yes.

16,345. The whole of it?—The whole of it.

16,346. Were you also including land under cultivation by crofters or cottars?—No.

16,347. *Mr Sutherland.*—I just ask only I think three questions, on three separate points. Sir Henry Macandrew asked you if you were aware that Lienassie [is that the name of the place), Lienassie was advertised and the small tenants did not apply for it. [*Sir Henry Macandrew.*—Keppoch]. Oh, Keppoch, well, are you aware of the terms of the advertisement?—No, because I never read it.

16,348. And is it within your knowledge that it was offered to small tenants in any way, or to be subdivided, or taken from them as a small farm?—I never

Glenshiel. Alexander Macrae.

heard that. [*Sir Henry Macandrew.*—I never said that.]

16,349. The suggestion was that the crofters did not apply; what I wish to bring out is that the crofters did not get an opportunity of applying, because it was not offered to them as crofters. Was the general belief not that the Keppoch farm was to be let as a whole farm?—Certainly, that was the belief. [*Sir Henry Macandrew.*—Allow me to say I don't think that is warranted. It would be readily let to a number of joint-tenants.]

16,350. But were reasonable means taken to let the people understand that it would be let to crofters?—*Witness.*—Never.

16,351. Now you were asked about the number of tenants that were in Inchcro and there was some difference of opinion between you and Mr Mackay as to the number of tenants. You stated there were 16 tenants?—At Morvich.

16,352. On Morvich was it? And Mr Mackay asked if you would be surprised to know that since the year 1715 there was only one tenant there. Was that not the statement that was put to you?—He said two.

16,353. But you didn't agree as to the number of tenants?—No, I didn't agree with him.

16,354. Well, don't you think that you scarcely understood each other as to what tenancies were? Do you think that there may have been a tenant or there may have been occupants there who were not tenants?—Well, I understand that a man that is in the possession of land is a tenant.

16,355. But I rather gathered that Mr Mackay meant as a tenant, a man who was on the rent-roll?—That is it, that is the difference.

16,356. Was it not possible for a man to be there, occupying land without being on the rent-roll at all?—Yes, and so there were.

16,357. You believe that?—Certainly.

16,358. You were asked regarding these if you knew that of your personal knowledge. Can any person know of his personal knowledge of what happened so far back as that?—No.

16,359. So that when you don't know of your personal knowledge that there were not more, Mr Mackay could not know of his personal knowledge that there were. Is that not so?—(No answer.)

16,360. *Mr Maccallum.*—In giving the number of arable acres of Inchcro, you did not include anything that is cultivated?—Well, the time of Winans they were not cultivating any, but the keeper that is there this year, maybe he is cultivating a little.

16,361. You are not aware of the extent that he cultivates?—Well, he has planted a few potatoes.

16,362. But that is all. But you gave a pretty considerable area, 80 and 100 acres. Now is all that in one place or is it distributed?—Oh, distributed.

16,363. Can you give the names of the places separately where the arable land is to be seen?—No, I don't know the names of the places separately.

16,364. Then in Morvich you gave an area of about 154 acres?—Yes.

16,365. Does that include anything that is cultivated just now?—Well, I was keeping out this part of 18 acres that was given.

16,366. Yes, exclusive of that part?—The keeper there has planted some potatoes this year and some corn.

16,367. And is it just one keeper?—Yes, one keeper.

16,368. That is cultivating, and you think that there are altogether about 150 acres of arable land?—I should think so.

16,369. And you have to deduct the 18 that were given to the crofters?—No, I deduct that.

16,370. You have deducted the 18, and the small patch that was cultivated by the keeper?—No, I was not taking that into account.

16,371. We have to deduct that from you in getting the acres with which we can deal.

16,372. *The Chairman.*—Have you any knowledge yourself of what was said or done by the landlord towards letting Keppoch in whole or in part to crofters or cottars?—I could not say until I heard.

16,373. Have you any knowledge of the matter yourself?—No.

16,374. What is your own personal desire in this question of available land; what do you yourself desire to obtain?—Well, I would take five or six acres of arable land and the grazing of 150 sheep.

16,375. Where would you get that five or six acres?—I want to get to Inchcro.

16,376. And where would you get the grazing of 150 sheep?—It is on the club farm system. I cannot say, should I go there, how I could take what would keep 150 sheep.

16,377. Yourself?—No.

16,378. You would be one of a club?—Certainly.

16,379. And how many would you have in the club suppose you had the making up of the club?—Seven.

16,380. I understand then you are very much in favour of the club system?—I am.

16,381. Have you seen it working to advantage?—Well, our township were working on the club farm system for the last twenty-seven or thirty years.

16,382. To advantage?—Well, I could not say; we were working it very well whatever, but I could not say to advantage.

16,383. We are at cross purposes as to the meaning of the word. Are you of opinion that it is much more advantageous to work according to the club farm system than each man to hold and work his own stock?—I am certainly of that opinion.

16,384. More profitable?—More profitable.

16,385. You would like to see an extension of that system in the Highlands?—I would. It is the only way that I can see at present that the land could be worked.

16,386. Now, suppose you had the matter to deal with yourself, and had the necessary powers, would you be in favour of new settlements here, or would you not rather be in favour of extending the grazings to existing crofters?—Yes, where that could be done.

16,387. Which do you think would be the better course to take, having regard to the land on the one hand and the people on the other?—Well, if it could be done where they are.

16,388. Which would you do?—Oh, I would say to remove a certain number out of a township to create new holdings.

16,389. You think that could be done?—Yes.

16,390. And would you also look to the extension of the grazings of existing crofters where that could be done?—Yes, I say the crofts that would be vacated could be added to those which were left.

16,391. But about extension of grazings, if you had the power do you see your way to extending the grazings of existing holdings?—Well, in a number of these places that I mentioned I cannot see how there can be any extension of grazing but at Inverinate.

16,392. Then is Inverinate the only place where you could see your way to extend the grazing?—Yes, where it is contiguous.

16,393. But do you see your way to extend the grazing where it is contiguous?—Yes.

16,394. In a practical way?—Yes.

16,395. Does any one else in this district carry on the business you carry on of sending hoggs to the low country by contract?—Not in this country.

16,396. You are the only person?—Yes, in Kintail.

16,397. *Mr William Mackay.*—May I ask if the Commission take steps to ascertain the extents of arable land on the various estates for themselves, or whether it is necessary for me in the case of this estate to get the place measured?

16,398. *The Chairman.*—No, not necessary to get it measured. We can easily ascertain that with sufficient accuracy; we have at least not had to measure it yet (I cannot say what we may have to do) and we have not had any difficulty in understanding for our own purposes the extent of land under cultivation which

was brought under our notice or which was attached to farms brought under our notice.

16,399. *Mr Mackay.*—I should be surprised if your lordship would find 10 acres where the witness says 154.

MURDO MACRAE, Camuslunie, Kintail (68).
(Examined in Gaelic through an Interpreter.)

16,400. *The Chairman.*—Are you a crofter?—Yes.

16,401. What was your old rent?—Is it to Sir Alexander Matheson, the father of the present proprietor?

16,402. Were you dealt with by the Commission?—Yes.

16,403. What was your old rent, and what is your new rent?—£10 is the present rent. At one time I paid Sir Alexander Matheson £20. Sir Alexander reduced the rent from £20 to £10, but the Commissioners did not reduce it from £10. [*Sir Henry Macandrew.*—And he has appealed.]

16,404. Do you wish to get more land?—Yes.

16,405. Where do you think the land is available?—A corrie in the hill that was taken from the township, Fraoch-Choire.

16,406. Is it a part of a farm just now?—It is to-day a part of Mr Winans' deer forest; it marches with The Chisholm lands.

16,407. Is it part of the forest of Glomach?—Yes, the forest of Glomach.

16,408. Do you remember when it formed part of the grazings of Camuslunie?—Yes, I myself used to send my cattle, sheep, and horses there, and bring them back again.

16,409. Was it used as a sheiling or as a permanent grazing?—It was as a summer grazing.

16,410. Not a sheiling?—They were not using it as a sheiling in my recollection.

16,411. How many years is it since you lost it?—I think about forty years ago.

16,412. Do you speak for the rest of the township of Camuslunie?—There is a letter sent in from somebody who was secretary for the township stating that I and another represent the township.

16,413. Who is the other man?—Christopher Macrae.

16,414. All the township ask for is an extension of their grazing into the corry?—I think so, they wish to get Fraoch-Choire back again.

16,415. And that would satisfy them?—I think they would be satisfied, but if we got land from the forest nearer us than Fraoch-Choire, we would be willing to let Fraoch-Choire alone.

16,416. What part of land in the forest nearer than Fraoch-Choire do you point to?—A place above Achadh-a'-chuirn called Craig-Daoimhlig.

16,417. Is that near Loch Leitreach?—It is at the east end of the loch.

16,418. Then in the case of your getting Craig-Daoimhlig you give up any application for Fraoch-Choire?—If we got Craig-Daoimhlig and a part of Lon-Mhurcaidh, I think we would give up our claim to Fraoch-Choire.

16,419. What part of it?—The part of it that marches with Craig-Daoimhlig, up from Achadh-a'-chuirn.

15,420. May I take you as saying that none of the crofters in Camuslunie wish to leave the township?—I didn't hear any of them say a word as to that. I am not aware that any of them wish to leave.

16,421. *Sir Henry Macandrew.*—What distinction do you make between a sheiling and a summer grazing?—I can't tell that.

16,422. In your recollection did they just send their sheep and cattle and horses there to graze for summer and take them back?—Yes, I sent them there to Fraoch-Choire. It was the eild cattle they sent there, not the milk cows.

16,423. They sent them up in summer with the herd and brought them back at the end of the summer?—Yes, at the end of autumn. Glenshiel.

16,424. What rent would they be willing to pay for Fraoch-Choire if they got it again and for this other place that they want?—As we did not get a reduction of rent at Camuslunie, we thought we should get it as a township grazing for the rent we are now paying. Murdo Macrae.

16,425. What rent were they paying when they had that place?—I think the rent of the whole township was £140.

16,426. When?—When we had Fraoch-Choire.

16,427. And what is it now?—£80.

16,428. Did Sir Alexander Matheson expend a great deal of money on their place and improve land for them?—Yes.

16,429. Did he give materials for building new houses to several of them?—Yes, to some of them.

16,430. Did he offer the whole of them lime and wood and slates and £20, if they would build houses for themselves?—[*The Chairman.*—£20 each?—*Sir Henry Macandrew.*—Each].—Some of them were not wanting it; we built pretty good houses at our own expense.

16,431. When did they build them?—I can't give you the date; I am not up to dates, the dates of years.

16,432. Do you know when Camuslunie was made into a township for small tenants?—No.

16,433. Do you know that it was at one time in the possession of one tenant?—I heard that it was.

16,434. And was it formed into a township by Sir Hugh Innes?—I cannot be sure as to that.

16,435. How many bachelors are there in Camuslunie?—[*The Chairman.*—You are not bound to answer that unless you like.]

16,436. Are you a bachelor yourself?—No.

16,437. *The Chairman.*—Have you a family?—Yes.

16,438. *Sir Henry Macandrew.*—How many bachelors are there?—I don't know at what age they should be counted bachelors.

16,439. *Mr Sutherland.*—Regarding the rent, you stated that when you had the summer grazing the rent was £140?—That is my opinion; when Mr Lillingstone was the proprietor I think that was the rent.

16,440. Had they Fraoch-Choire grazings in the year 1882?—It is forty years since we lost Fraoch-Choire.

16,441. How do you explain that the rent of the township was in 1881 £160, after the grazing was taken away?—Yes, that is so. After we lost Fraoch-Choire the rent was increased.

16,442. The grazing was taken away and the rent was increased?—Yes, and some of our low lying ground was put under wood, planted. There are two parks under plantation.

16,443. Then, with regard to there only being one tenant at one time, was it the tenants themselves that went in and sub-divided?—I think that is so, but I don't know.

16,444. And no person tried to prevent them sub-dividing the land?—I have no record of that.

16,445. Did you hear where the people came from that went there?—They came from different places; I cannot tell the places from which they came first.

16,446. Then what knowledge have you that they went in there, the people themselves, and made those small holdings. Have you any knowledge that they actually went there of their own accord?—I think it was the proprietor who gave them permission to go there.

16,447. *Sir Henry Macandrew.*—Was the land re-divided, when Sir Alexander Matheson bought the estate, and given to a smaller number of tenants than before?

16,448. *The Chairman.*—Do you remember whether the land was re-divided and given to a smaller number of tenants when Sir Alexander Matheson got the estate?—Yes, I know that.

16,449. What reduction was made on the number of tenants by Sir Alexander?—At that time the township was divided into twelve shares and each tenant had a

Glenshiel.

Murdo Macrae.

share, then at the redivision it was reduced by four and the township divided into eight shares.

16,450. Now, when the township was divided into eight shares, what became of the four?—They were sent away from it.

16,451. Do you know where they went to, or what became of them?—Although originally each tenant had one share, at the time when Sir Alexander came in there were as many as two on one lot.

16,452. They were equalised into eight, but were any of the tenants put away?—Yes.

16,453. How many were put away or induced to go away?—I think eight tenants left the township at that time.

16,454. And where did they go?—Two of them went to Bundalloch, one went to Dornie.

16,455. Were they divided out among the other townships?—Three of them remained in the township as small cottars. One of them went to a place in Lochalsh, Ceann-na-moine.

16,456. And the remaining one?—I believe that four remained in the township.

16,457. *Sir Henry Macandrew.*—Was it after the reclamation of land and the expenditure of money on the place that the rent was raised, and are you aware that £1150 was spent in reclaiming land?—Yes, but I did not remember that so much as that was spent upon it. [*The Chairman.*—Are you satisfied that there was a considerable amount spent whatever it was?—Yes, I know that he expended a large amount of money.]

16,458. And do you know further that the increase of rent was interest upon that expenditure?—We thought it was.

16,459. *Mr Sutherland.*—Was the rent decreased the time the summer grazing was taken from you?—A little, I can't tell how much.

16,460. And was the expenditure referred to made upon your holdings?—I think it was.

16,461. *The Chairman.*—In what way was it spent on the holdings, was it on the reclamation of land?—Yes, there was a part trenched there and dykes were made.*

Christopher Macrae, Crofter, Camuslunie, Kintail (over 60.) (Examined in Gaelic through an Interpreter.)

Christopher Macrae.

16,462. *The Chairman.*—What is your age?—I have no writing on it by your leave, but I left sixty years behind me.

16,463. What is your fixed rent and your old rent?—[*Mr Watson*, surveyor.—£20 and £10.]

16,464. Was your old rent £20?—Not at the time we had Fraoch-Choire; £140 was the rent of the township and it was too much.

16,465. It was reduced by Sir Alexander to £10, and then raised from £10, raised to £10, 10s. by the Commissioners?—Yes, and I don't know why; I have nothing but the same as the other tenants.

16,466. Did you hear the evidence by Murdo Macrae?—I was listening, but I am somewhat deaf, and I did not hear him very well.

16,467. Do you agree with him as far as you heard him?—I don't agree with the amount said to have been expended on the township.

16,468. What do you say as to that?—Seven years after Sir Alexander bought the estate there was a settlement, a rearrangement. At that time some land was taken from us and the rent was increased, and it was agreed that £800 would be expended on the township at that time, there was so much land to be reclaimed, but that land has not been all reclaimed.

Glenshiel.

16,469. We are rather drifting away from our main inquiry; all that would be fully gone into before the Crofters Commission I have no doubt.

Christopher Macrae.

16,470. *Sir Henry Macandrew.*—The Commission put 10s. on each of the men who got new houses.

Ewan Maclennan, Dornie, Kintail (68.) (Examined in Gaelic through an Interpreter.)

Ewan Maclennan

16,471. *The Chairman.*—You wrote a letter to us?—'I wish to intimate that I should be able to give the 'Deer Forest Commissioners some information regarding 'at least some of the forests in this district, my great-'grandfather, grandfather, and father were all tenants of 'part of what is now the deer forest of Morvich, and I 'myself have lived all my life in Kintail and am now an 'old man. If you think it well to call upon me to do 'so I should be happy to lay before the Commissioners a 'good deal of such evidence as they are in search of.'

16,472-3. Did you write that letter?—No, but I ordered it to be written.

16,474. What is it you wish to tell us?—I have no English, but I will tell my story in Gaelic.

16,475. Are you a crofter in Dornie?—Yes.

16,476. Your old rent was £3, 17s. 6d. and your fair rent is £3. What is it you wish to tell us?—I wish to tell the Commissioners that this place Morvich was at one time in the occupancy of my ancestors, my great-grandfather, my grandfather, and my father.

16,477. As grazings?—My great-grandfather had the one side of Morvich himself and a piece of The Chisholm land along with it, the principal part of Glen-Affaric.

16,478. Was that as sheilings or as permanent grazing?—My great-grandfather lived in Morvich, and The Chisholm lands he had as summer grazings.

16,479. Had your great-grandfather a croft in Morvich?—Had he not Morvich altogether and the glen above it?

16,480. *Mr William Mackay.*—He says that I told exactly to-day how the matter stood. Possibly, my lord, he was one of the two tenants in 1756. Was your great-grandfather one of the two tenants of Morvich estate, Donald Dearg Maclennan?—That is what they were telling me.

16,481. And who was the other tenant of Morvich?—His four sons were there.

16,482. Was there a John Maclennan there?—Yes, his eldest son was Kenneth, and John was another, and Ewan was another son.

William Grant, Cottar, Letterfearn, Glenshiel (53.) (Examined in Gaelic through an Interpreter.)

William Grant.

16,483. *The Chairman.*—Was your rent fixed by the Commissioners?—I have no rent, I am not a crofter.

16,484. Are you a cottar?—Yes.

16,485. Have you some stock?—No.

16,486. Do you pay any rent?—No, I would not get the chance.

16,487. Are the subjects you occupy situated on somebody else's croft?—On a brother's holding.

16,488. What is the brother's name?—George Grant.

16,489. Do you wish to obtain more land?—Yes.

16,490. Where do you say the land can be got?—There is plenty of it on the estate of Letterfearn, plenty of it in the township where I was born of Letterfearn in Easter Achantourd.

16,491. Is that a township?—That is the township in which I was born; there were nine crofters there, and land was taken from them in 1852. My father was paying rent to four proprietors for the same house and he was never a penny in arrear, and I would not get land to plant a creel of potatoes when other cottars got land.

16,492. Anything more you wish to say?—In the

* According to an old shepherd who accompanied the Commissioners when Killilan Farm, &c., was inspected, the old townships in Glen-Elchaig were the following:—On the right or north bank of the Elchaig, and following the course of the river to the sea, there were—Daoimhlig, Carnach, Leitear, Cracaig, Ach-a'-ghairgein, Glas-choire, and Fadach. On the left or south bank the townships were—Carn-na-breabaig, Achadh-a'-chuirn, Mamag-uachdrach, Mamag-iochdrach, Coille-Righ, and Camus-laoinidh.

township where I was born I saw nine crofters in 1844 produce 800 barrels of potatoes and some oats, and the land to-day under cultivation will not take a peck of barley seed; it was added to the farm of Leacachan in the year 1852.

16,493. It was added to the farm of Leacachan and is it part of the farm of Leacachan now?—Yes.

16,494. Under grazing?—Yes.

16,495. Does that land march with the township of Letterfearn?—Yes, it is in the heart of the estate of Letterfearn. There are two farms east of it marching with Mr Baillie's estate.

16,496. What are the names of these?—Saraig is the name of one of them; there were two tenants there in the year 1831, that was the year they left it, and in Leacachan there were four, they left it in 1832.

16,497. Will you show us the land to which you refer when we come to your district?—I will show you the ground where they could not cure as much hay as the land would produce, and they had to remove it; and there is nothing growing there to-day but rushes.

16,498. *Mr Sutherland.*—How many families are in Letterfearn?—24 families with small crofts scarcely worth speaking about, and there are four more small patches, it would take about a barrel of potato splits to plant them, and there are six without any.

16.499. 34 Families altogether?—Two of them are on the glebe.

16,500. Have they got any hill grazing at all in the township of Letterfearn?—In 1884 the tenants of Wester Achantourd got land for the grazing of twelve cows, but it was so small it would be enough for it to graze six cows. The cattle are hand fed with provender brought off the ground late and early.

16,501. How far back does that grazing extend, does it go back to the county march?—No, the greater part of this land restored was the arable land of the Wester Achantourd tenants before the hill of Wester Achantourd was attached to Drudaig. The hill of Wester Achantourd was added to Drudaig in 1850.

16,502. Have the people of Letterfearn got any sheep?—No, they have no place where they would have sheep.

16,503. No sheep at all?—No, they could not let a cat out, if the cat would eat grass.

16,504. *Sir Henry Macandrew.* — (Through the Chairman.)

16,505. Did you get an opportunity of taking a share of Drudaig Farm?—Not from the factor.

16,506. *The Chairman.*—But did you get it from anybody?—The men who got Drudaig would take me in as a partner, but when I spoke to the factor on the subject he would not answer me.

16,507. To whom did you speak?—Mr Roderick Maclean, the former factor. I afterwards spoke to Sir Henry, and he told me that everything was closed up, that there was nothing for me now, but that he would keep me in remembrance. [*Sir Henry Macandrew.*—It was before my time the farm was let.]

16,508. *Mr Donald Macrae.*—May I be allowed to put a question? Would your lordship ask him if he can corroborate the statement by Mr Alexander Macrae, the first delegate, that ten or eleven years ago at the time of the visit of the Lord Napier Commission there was no native in this parish of Glenshiel that occupied an inch of ground, that there was not an inch of the area of the parish occupied by small tenants except 16 acres?

16,509. *The Chairman.*—I would rather put it as a substantive question. [*Mr Donald Macrae.*—All right, just as your lordship pleases.]

16,510. What extent of this parish ten years ago, according to your knowledge, was in the hands of small tenants?—The year that the first Royal Commission came here, there was not one poor man who had the grazing of a cow from the proprietor throughout the whole parish of Glenshiel. There was only 14 acres of land let to tenants, and there were six or seven tenants who had small patches of land where they could plant a few potatoes.

16,511. *Mr Donald Macrae.*—With regard to Wester Achantourd, how many there have land?

16,512. *The Chairman.*—How many have land in Wester Achantourd?—Twelve, and three of these have two crofts.

16,513. *Mr Donald Macrae.*—What amount of arable land have those who have two crofts?—About two acres. the land is so bad that there are not two acres where there is any depth of soil. There is some of the land we have in which potatoes have been planted continuously for sixty years, not a grain of oats sown within that time. I know land myself that has been under potatoes for forty years. They are obliged to do this on account of the scarcity of land.

16,514. How much arable land have the other nine?—Barely an acre each; and those in Easter Achantourd that got land are far from the sea; there is a wood plantation between them and the sea. They have to carry the sea ware on their backs through this plantation to the land. [*The Chairman.*—Explain to him we will see the place.]

16,515. How many years is it since this hill grazing was taken from the township and added to Drudaig?—1850.

16,516. During the time that your township had that grazing before it was taken away from you, how many cows was it allowed to carry?—24 cows.

16,517. Did you get the whole of that back or did you get only a part of it back?—I did not get it myself, but the men who got land restored only got the sixth of the land that was taken away.

16,518. How many cows did you calculate that that sixth part would carry?—The souming fixed for it was twelve cows, but it was too small for six cows. It would maintain or graze five cows and five calves.

16,519. Would you mention places in the farm of Airdantoul where there is old arable land suitable for tenants to be settled?—The whole of Airdantoul is suitable for crofter settlements.

16,520. Could you mention special places?

16,521. *The Chairman.*—I must say it is hardly fair of you getting questions in English which you fully understand. You answer them in Gaelic before they are translated. It is not quite fair to us that. I don't wish to press any witness unduly in the matter of English?—I have forgotten my English.

16,522. Oh, indeed, you have not, because you have very smartly answered these questions?—I would have to gather up my English.

16,523. *Mr Donald Macrae.*—Could you mention special places in Airdantoul suitable for small holdings?—Yes, the west end of it, Camus-nan-Gall, Rudha-Sear, Pairce-na-Dalach, Airidh-ghairgein. A piece that is marching with Drudaig on the east side of it. There is a park there that would be good for one crofter.

16,524. What is the name of the place?—Aonadh. There were three tenants formerly in Airdantoul. It was in 1844 they left it.

16,525. Do you know the farm of Ratagan?—I know a part of it.

16,526. Is it a grazing farm or an arable farm?—They are both there; there were crofters there also.

16,527. Mention the places?—There were tenants in Ratagan itself in 1816 and 1820. There were ten in Cille-chaduinard they were there in 1812 and 1816; but I don't know when they were sent away.

16,528. Do you know how many tenants were in Cille-chaduinard in 1812 or 1816?—I can't state the number, there were a great many ruins of houses there.

16,529. Are they visible to-day?—Yes, some of them are still to be seen.

16,530. Any other place where there were tenants of yore?—I am not well acquainted with the other parts of it.

FARQUHAR MACRAE, Cottar, Letterfearn (62)—*examined.*

16,531. *The Chairman.*—Are you a crofter or a cottar?—A cottar.

16,532. Do you pay any rent?—No.

16,533. Have you any land?—No.

Glenshiel. Farquhar Macrae.

16,534. Is your house situated upon somebody else's croft?—Yes.

16,535. Whose croft is it upon?—It belonged to small tenants.

16,536. What is the name of the tenant?—Achantourd.

16,537. Is your house upon another man's holding?—Yes, on Alexander Macrae's and two or three more, William Forbes and Alexander Macaulay.

16,538. Are you desirious of obtaining additional land?—Certainly.

16,539. Can you point us to land; can you show us land?—Exactly.

16,540. Where is it?—Any amount of it.

16,541. Never mind the amount, I want the locality?—In Airdantoul.

16,542. Wester Airdantoul?—Yes, it would do; any part of it.

16,543. Did you hear the evidence of Mr William Grant?—Yes.

16,544. About Airdantoul and about Achantourd and Ratagan?—Yes.

16,545. And do you agree with that evidence?—Yes.

16,546. He has explained the matter fully, hasn't he?—Yes, my grandfather was in Achantourd.

16,547. Had he the whole of it?—No, he had only his share of it.

16,548. Was there a township there?—Yes.

16,549. An old township of Achantourd?—Yes, there were nine crofters in it.

16,550. Was that Wester Achantourd?—Easter Achantourd.

16,551. And were there some tenants in Wester Achantourd?—Yes, there are small tenants in it yet, my father was there.

16,552. Were there small tenants in Ratagan?—There were at one time.

16,553. Not in your recollection?—No, but I knew men who were there.

16,554. Is there land in these places suitable for crofters?—Yes.

16,555. And you will show us that land when we come to your quarter?—Yes.

16,556. *Mr Shaw Stewart.*—Are you allowing for arable land or grazing?—I am allowing for both. I applied two or three times for places, but I didn't get them.

16,557. I don't understand that you point to land near your present house?—Oh, yes.

16,558. Close by?—Yes.

16,559. Arable land?—Yes, there is Achantourd arable land and sheep grazing.

16,560. Near your present holding?—Just close to it.

16,561. Could you stock it and work it?—Yes.

15,562. Without help?—Yes.

15,563. May I ask what you have been working at for the last ten years?—I was away out of the country.

15,564. In what country?—In New Zealand.

15,565. Were you sheep farming there?—I was shepherd.

15,566. In the South Island?—Yes, Otago.

15,567. I know the place?—Well, I was for many years in it, but I was thirty years before I left home. I was paying my father's rent when I was at home, and I was paying my father's rent after I left home.

16,568. *The Chairman.*—Sending home money?—Sending home money.

16,569. And if you get a croft now you could put up the buildings, and put the stock on the land?—Certainly, my lord.

16,570. Without any assistance from anybody?—Without any assistance.

16,571. *Mr Sutherland.*—There are 34 families, you heard, in Letterfearn?—Yes.

16,572. On whose property is Letterfearn?—On Sir Kenneth Matheson's.

16,573. And I see here that they have got only twelve acres, including five acres taken from the farm of Leacachan, and granted by the proprietor to the crofters at the inspection. I presume that was the inspection by the Crofters Commission? [*Sir Henry Macandrew.*—That applies to only three or four of them].—I don't think there is so much as that.

16,574. Did the whole of the crofters in the township apply to the Crofters Commission, can you tell me?—I can't tell you, I only came here three or four years ago.

16,575. *Sir Henry Macandrew.*—I may explain there were only four as a kind of separate township, and they applied to Mr Macintyre at the inspection. The farm was too small to be under a regular application, but they pointed it out themselves.

16,576. *Mr Sutherland.*—May I ask you Sir Henry, since you are so kind as to tell us that, how much land these 34 families have in their possession?—[*Sir Henry Macandrew.*—I think they stated it quite correctly as 16 acres arable land, and then the last 12 acres, this cow's grazing, was added to them.]

16,577. Are we going to have the honour of a statement from you?—[*Sir Henry Macandrew.*—I will give you all that, yes.]

17,578. *Mr Gordon.*—Is this land at Airdantoul that you are applying for or would you take it near you?—I am not applying for any land in particular, only the first that I would get.

16,579. That you are referring to?—Yes, near us.

16,580. Is it arable land or pasture land?—Both.

15,581. Is the arable land cultivated just now or old arable?—There is very little cultivated.

16,582. It is old arable land?—Yes, the low ground is all arable land, but the hill is for pasture.

16,583. Is there a resident tenant in Airdantoul?—Yes, Mr Duncan Macrae.

16,584. Do you know the rent he pays?—No.

15,585. Is it £100?—I have no idea.

16,586. Have you any idea of the extent of arable land to which you refer as being available?—No, I have no idea.

16,587. Would it be 20 or 30 acres?—Every man's?

16,588. No, but what you refer to as to be added to your township?—Oh, yes.

16,589. What proportion of the farm would that be, half or more?—Not the half of it I think.

16,590. It would still leave 20 or 30 acres of the farm?—Yes. He has in this parish about 60 acres I think, between 60 and 80, but there is a lot outside this parish.

16,591. Of old arable?—Yes.

16,592. And is it that you principally refer to?—No, I will take a share of Achintourd or any place.

16,593. Do you propose that the farm should be broken up?—Certainly.

16,594. *Sir Henry Macandrew.*—How long were you in New Zealand?—Twenty-nine years.

16,595. *The Chairman.*—And were you a shepherd all that time?—No.

16,596. What were you?—I was a digger and many things, but I was mostly shepherding.

16,597. *Sir Henry Macandrew.*—You have brought home a good bit of money?—Yes.

16,598. Would you take a small farm?—Yes, Sir Henry, I applied for it once or twice, but I did not get it.

16,599. Which one did you apply for?—I applied for Drudaig, and I applied for a share of Achnatourd, but I never heard that Keppoch was in the market.

16,600. Well, just come and see me.

16,601. *The Chairman.*—I was going to say this may result in business. [*Witness.*—All right, that will do me.]

Glenshiel. Farquhar Macrae.

SIR HENRY MACANDREW, Solicitor, Inverness, Factor and Commissioner for Sir Kenneth Matheson of Lochalsh—*examined.*

Sir Henry Macandrew.

16,602. *The Chairman.*—I understand you desire to submit a statement to us. Are you to confine your

Glenshiel. — Sir Henry Macandrew.

observations just now to the Matheson estates in the parishes of Kintail and Glenshiel?—To the estates of Sir Kenneth Matheson in these two parishes,—the parish of Glenshiel and the parish of Kintail.

These estates were acquired by the late Sir Alexander Matheson, as follows, viz.,—(1) Ardintoul and Letterfearn in what is now the parish of Glenshiel from the late Mr Mackinnon of Corry in 1842 at the price of £17,000; (2) Inverinate from the late Mr Mackenzie of Applecross in 1844 at the price of £29,999; and (3) the estate of Ellandonan from the late Mr Lillingston or his representatives in 1851. This last estate was purchased along with the estate of Lochalsh at the price of £120,000 and its price cannot be given separately.

These estates at one time formed part of the extensive possessions of the family of Seaforth, and the first authentic information I possess regarding them has been obtained from the records of the Commissioners on forfeited estates in the Register House, Edinburgh. According to a rental made up for these Commissioners, in or about 1727, from the depositions of the tenants, it appears that the whole of the lands were then divided into 39 holdings occupied by 50 tenants paying rents amounting to £3415, 8s. Scots money, or £284, 12s. 4d. sterling, besides 23¼ muttons, 19⅓ stones of butter, and 36 stones of cheese which are not converted into money. The rents include what is called vicarage, which is presumed to be teind payable by the tenants. There are several cases in which there are possessions in the occupation of more than one tenant, but in none of these cases except that of Ruarach, which is described as divided into the 'meikle oxgate, middle oxgate and 'coulmiln,' are separate rents stated for each tenant, showing that the possessors were joint-tenants, and jointly and severally liable for the rents. In the case of Ruarach separate rents are stated for each of the seven tenants. I have obtained from the same records a copy of the depositions of the tenants taken by Sir Patrick Strahan of Glenkinchy, Surveyor-General for the Forfeited Estates, in presence of David Bethune of Coulnaskill, Sheriff-Substitute of the Shire of Ross at Ardhill, on 20th September 1718, but the rental if any was made up on these depositions does not appear now to exist. From these depositions, however, it appears that there were considerable changes of tenancy and of rental between the two periods.

The next information which I have as to these estates is from a rental of the Seaforth estates in 1756 in the possession of Sir Kenneth Matheson. The rents are given in sterling money and there are no payments in kind. From this document it appears that between 1727 and 1756 there had been considerable consolidation of holdings and changes in the tenants and state of possession, and that the rent was more than doubled. At the latter date there were 20 holdings and 32 tenants and the total rental at this time was £340, 10s. 8d. A tabulated statement of these two rentals is given in Appendix B. page 396.

The estate of Ellandonan was acquired by the late Sir Hugh Innes from the family of Seaforth partly in 1801 and partly in 1814. The first part acquired was Glen-Elchaig, that is, Killilan, and from a rental of Sir Hugh Innes's estates in 1822–3 I find that the whole of this portion was let as sheep farms in two possessions, as follows, viz., Easter and Wester Killilan to Roderick and John Maclennan at a rent of £340, with 'ten good four year old wedders, ten lambs, and 20 'fowls or hens,' and Fadoch and others to Farquhar, Finlay, and Duncan Macrae, at £140. At this time the fishing of the Elchaig was let to Farquhar Macrae, one of the tenants of Fadoch, Alexander Downie, the minister of Lochalsh, and Mr Coll Macdonell, the tenant of Achtertyre in Lochalsh.

About 1770 there was a considerable emigration from the West Highlands, and a number of substantial farmers emigrated from Kintail to Carolina. Some time after 1786 sheep-farming was introduced into the district. In the end of the last and the early part of the present century there was a great deal of public discussion about the best means of finding employment for the people of the Highlands who were then in a state of great poverty, and the formation of villages or settlements along the coast from which fishing could be prosecuted was much advocated. As is well known the British Fisheries Society was formed for the purpose of promoting the formation of such settlements and of otherwise encouraging fishing. Lord Seaforth adopted this policy, and about the beginning of the century commenced to form the village of Dornie and Bundalloch, and also to form rural settlements of the kind now called crofter townships; and the same policy was pursued by Sir Hugh Innes after he acquired the estates. This will be more fully shown when I come to deal with the parish of Lochalsh where the policy received its fullest development.

The earliest complete rental of the estate of Ellandonan which I have been able to find is that for 1817 when the rental and state of possessions were as follows:—

Possession.	Tenants.	Rent. £	s.	d.
Fadoch, . . .	T., D., A. and J. Macrae	640	0	0
Killilan, . . .	R. Maclennan and D. Macrae, . . .	450	0	0
Salmon Fishing,	H. Innes, M.P.; Dr Downie; Donald and Duncan Macrae, . .	8	0	0
Cambuslunie, .	12 tenants (11 Macraes and 1 Macmillan) in various proportions, .	200	0	0
Carr and Wester Keppoch, . .	10 tenants (7 Macraes and 3 Macdonalds) in various proportions, .	135	0	0
Easter Keppoch,	7 tenants (4 Macraes, 1 Murchison and 2 Maclennans) in various proportions, . . .	42	0	0
Leault, . . .	Duncan Macrae, . .	60	0	0
Village of Dornie,	Number of tenants not given	367	3	2½
		1902	3	2½

For the village of Dornie a separate rental was made up, but I cannot find it so I am unable to give the number of tenants. I believe the village of Dornie then included the present grazings both of Dornie and Bundalloch. Before 1823 a considerable change seems to have taken place, for in the rental of that year the state of possession is as follows, viz.:—

Possessions.	Tenants.	Rent. £	s.	d.
Fadoch, . . .	D., A. and J. Macrae, .	440	0	0
Killilan, . . .	Duncan Macrae, . .	330	0	0
Salmon Fishing,	Robert Mackinnon, .	30	0	0
Cambuslunie, .	10 tenants (7 Macraes, 1 Macculloch, 1 Mackenzie and 1 Macdouald) 2 lots vacant valued at £36, 13s. 4d., . .	220	0	0
Carr and Wester Keppoch, . .	4 tenants (3 Macraes and 1 Macdonald) in equal shares, ...	120	0	0
Leault and Easter Keppoch, .	Duncan Macrae, . .	120	0	0
Dornie and Bundalloch, . . .	Number of tenants not given, ...	377	15	2½
		1637	15	2½

The first detailed rental of Dornie and Bundalloch which I have been able to find is that of 1825, when the village was occupied by 111 tenants all of whom had sites of houses with small gardens held under long leases, most of which are dated in 1812. The duration is ninety-nine years. 65 of these tenants had allotments of arable land as follows:—

Glenshiel.

Sir Henry Macandrew.

1 acre and under,	47
1 acre and not exceeding 2,	11
2 „ „ 3,	4
4 „	1
4½ „	1
7 „	1
In all	65

61 of these had besides grazing for one or more cows and three had cows grazing but no land. The remaining 43 had only the sites of their houses held under the leases already mentioned. The rents which amounted to £351, 7s. 8d. exclusive of £30 paid by one of the tenants for Glass Island in Lochalsh, was made up as follows, viz. :—

Ground rents,	£33, 9s. 0d.
Rent of arable land,	106, 13s. 1d.
Rent of cow's grazing,	188, 0s. 0d.
Payment for right to make kelp	22, 8s. 5d.
Dues the nature of which not mentioned,	17s. 2d.
	£351, 7s. 8d.

The extent of land was 79 acres 1 rood, and the number of cows grazed was 94, from which it will be seen that the rent charged for arable land was 26s. 10¾d. per acre, and for the grazing of a cow £2. From these particulars it will be seen that the village was formed on the model of those of the British Fisheries Society, and that it was intended the people should earn their living by fishing and other industries, having in the village merely homes with potato plots and grazing for a cow for the comfort of the families. Very few of the residents now live by fishing.

I regret that I have not been able to find rentals of the other portions of the estates in Kintail and Glenshiel earlier than the purchase of the estate by Sir Alexander Matheson. The rent ledgers now in the office commence with the rents payable at Martinmas 1852 and with a clear sheet. At the time of Sir Alexander's entry to the estate a valuation and readjustment of the holdings took place and there were considerable changes. In some cases tenants were removed from some of the holdings and settled elsewhere, but I believe none were removed from the estate. At this time a number of the Dornie and Bundalloch tenants who were very largely in arrear were deprived of the land and grazing which they held, and the land was relet as follows, viz. :—

	£	s.	d.
Lonellan to F. Macdonald at	30	0	0
Bundalloch Farm to D. and J. Macmillan at	60	0	0
Dornie to 23 tenants forming what is now the township of Dornie at	82	3	3
	172	3	3

There remained in Dornie and Bundalloch at this time 59 householders who had no land or grazing.

I give in an appendix a tabulated statement [see App. A, page 395] of the rentals of these estates for the years 1852–3, 1862–3, 1872–3, 1882–3 and 1892, excluding ground rents and feu-duties, and from this it appears that the number of holdings and tenants exclusive of shootings and sporting tenants has been as follows:—

Year.	Holdings.	No. of Tenants.	Rents.
1852–3	21	81	£3048 18 3
1862–3	17	75	3276 4 0
1872–3	19	88	3517 18 4
1882–3	21	87	2699 19 6
1892	18	93	1789 12 6

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During this period the sporting rents have been as follows:—

	£
1852–3	530.
1862–3	505.
1872–3	440.
1882–3	2370.
1892	2422.

The grazing rent of the portion of the farms of Killilan and Lienassie converted into forest as aftermentioned was £467, the remainder of the decrease on agricultural and grazing rents between 1873 and 1892 arose mainly from voluntary reductions on the part of the proprietor.

In 1878 the tenant of Killilan gave up the higher or wedder ground of his farm, and as it could not be let separately for grazing it was formed into a deer forest and let to Lord Lovat at a rent of £860. In 1881 Mr Maclennan, the tenant of Lienassie, gave up the wedder ground of his farm and it was formed into the forest of Glomach and let to Mr Winans at a rent of £550. Mr Winans also holds the Killilan forest as sub-tenant of Lord Lovat.

The late Sir Alexander Matheson was an advocate of club farms, that is farms with several tenants having common grazing and owning a sheep stock in common, and at his instigation the townships of Dornie and Cambuslunie were converted into such farms in or about 1860, and Inverinate in or about 1867. Previously the sheep on these farms had been owned in separate flocks by the different tenants. The tenants of Carr and Wester Keppoch appear to have had a common sheep stock before Sir Alexander acquired the estate.

In 1875 the tenant of Lonellan, who was then also tenant of Drudaig, was induced to give up the part of this farm above the high road and it was added to the grazing of the Dornie club farm at the same rent as Mr Macdonald was then paying. With three exceptions the Dornie tenants did not come under the Crofters Act, but last autumn Sir Kenneth had the holdings valued by Messrs Macrae & Adam who had acted as assessors to the Crofters Commission in the fixing of fair rents in the district, with the result that the rents have been reduced from £63, 5s. to £49, 6s. These reductions will be given effect to in the current year, and the arrears (which are not large, many of the tenants having never been in arrear) will be dealt with on the principle on which the Crofters Commission have dealt with arrears. The Commissioners will see that Dornie is a thriving village.

In 1885 the farm of Bundalloch, which was then held by Mr John Macrae at a rent of £100, fell out of lease, and as frequent requests had been made by the people of Bundalloch for land and grazing, Sir Alexander was induced to let this farm to 20 of them at a rent of £80 as a club farm. With three exceptions these people were not able to pay their shares of the price of the club stock, and for those who could not pay Sir Alexander guaranteed a credit at the Commercial Bank, Balmacara, to enable them to enter the farm. The result has been very far from satisfactory. I produce a statement [App. C, page 396] showing the sum advanced to each tenant and the balances which remain owing including interest to 31st October last at the rate of 5 per cent., from which it appears that the original advance was £233, 7s. 10d., and that the sum now owing is £227, 12s. 8d. The arrears of rent on this farm (Bundalloch) now amount to £180, 15s. The tenants of Bundalloch do not fall under the Crofters Act in respect they do not reside on their holdings and were under lease at the passing of the Act; but as in the case of Dornie, Sir Kenneth has had the lands valued by Messrs Macrae & Adam, with the result that the rents, including the rent of several crofts not included in the club, have been reduced from £92, 11s. 6d. to £65, 9s. This reduction will also be given effect to in the present year and the arrears will be dealt with as in the case of Dornie.

In 1890 the farm of Drudaig was out of lease and Sir Kenneth offered it to the crofters of Letterfearn whose

holdings are on it. Only one of these would agree to take it. Four other men, relatives of some of the crofters, ultimately joined this man, and the farm has been let to the five as joint-tenants on lease at a rent of £40. These men paid for the sheep stock and have paid their rents punctually up to this date. Sir Kenneth expended £111, 3s. in building a house for a shepherd on this farm and providing the tenants with fencing materials.

With reference to Camuslunie which was spoken about I find that the sum actually expended on land improvements there up to the date of Lord Napier's Commission when a return was prepared and given in was £111, 13s. 4d. Since then there have been £214, 10s. expended principally in the materials for houses for three men, and another man is now being provided with materials to build or to rebuild his house. With regard to Letterfearn, when Sir Alexander got possession, there were fourteen small tenants holding little plots of land for which they paid £22, 15s. In 1862, one of these had disappeared, there were only thirteen paying £22, 10s., so that I assume his lot was added to the others. In 1872, the number had risen to twenty-two, and that arose in this way. There were some tenants in Wester Auchantourd who had no land, and a piece of land was taken from the farm of Leacachan and given to them in small crofts; and there was a number of those who had no land at all who got potato crofts for which they pay only a shilling or two. Four of these have this year got the grazing for a cow, the only four who had no cows' grazing in the parish, and the only change that has taken place with regard to them has been the creation of these new holdings for them, and the addition which was given at the time of the Commission to the Wester Achantourd people, four in number. They were too few to apply, and the rent was only £75, but when Mr Macintyre was there they expressed a desire to get a piece of the land, and we sent for the tenant and persuaded him to give it.

16,603. Making nothing of the objections which would have arisen under the Act?—No, Mr Macintyre and I talked the tenant over, and at last he agreed very willingly when the thing was explained to him that the piece of land should be taken off and the tenants said that was quite satisfactory to them and they got from the proprietor materials to fence this addition to their holdings. Of course, there are matters about the general management of the estate I would prefer to give after you have dealt with Lochalsh, because the estate has been managed throughout as one estate since 1852.

16,604. Does that complete your statement?—Yes.

16,605. In what year did you become factor and commissioner?—1891.

16,606. And since that time Sir Kenneth has made several additions to the land in the occupation of crofters here?—Not since that time; the only one is this one at Letterfearn since then, on these estates.

16,607. It is these estates I am dealing with. Have there been any other applications for land?—For extension of holdings?

16,608. For extension of holdings?—Well, there were none until the Crofters Commission came here, and none of the townships here have ever applied to me for extension of grazing. You will see from the map that they possess the greater part of the land along the sea coast.

16,609. Is it your opinion that any of the townships of which we have been hearing a good deal and are dealing with to-day are congested?—Of course, I believe the Bundalloch people have too little land for the purpose of making a living out of it, but that was not intended. They were placed there as fishermen and it was intended that they should make their living by that.

16,610. And do you think they can make their living by that just now?—I don't see why they should not be able to live by fishing as other people do.

16,611. But during the last few years has there been as much fishing as would enable them to live within reasonable distance of their holdings?—Well, fishermen have lived during all these years; of course, they don't prosecute fishing regularly as an industry, and that is a mistake; as you are no doubt aware that is what has happened with most of the villages that were created with that intention.

16,612. I think you said that the township of Bundalloch was included in Dornie at one time?—Yes.

16,613. Then had that land been previously grazing land in the occupation of the Dornie tenants?—Dornie and Bundalloch in 1817 were occupied in all these small lots that I gave, and the tenants had grazing for their cows on what is now the grazing of Bundalloch and Dornie.

16,614. The Dornie tenants had?—The whole of the tenants together were treated as one.

16,615. Wasn't Dornie a township there before Bundalloch?—No, the two places formed one township. In 1852, Dornie was formed into a separate township by the whole of the grazing that now belongs to Dornie with the exception of Loan being given to these 23 tenants. That was the first separation between Dornie and Bundalloch.

16,616. Which of these townships is the oldest?—They were one.

16,617. Is Dornie congested?—I don't think so; you will see it; the people there seem to be all very prosperous, they have built very good houses.

16,618. I have been on the place. Would you say that Carr is congested?—Certainly not, there are only three tenants, they have a very good farm which carries 500 ewes.

16,619. That is within the limits of the township?—Carr and Wester Keppoch.

16,620. What do you say as to Inverinate?—I think the club tenants there are very well off.

16,621. And what do you say as to Camuslunie?—They are the best men on the estate; they pay their rents better than any other township.

16,622. But do you say you don't think they are in need of additional land, suppose it could be got?—I don't think so.

16,623. You mentioned rises of rent, which began to be much larger at the time of afforestment?—There was a large additional rent procured for the forests, but I may say that so far as I have been able to ascertain there was no rise of rent on the small tenancies during the whole of Sir Alexander Matheson's time, except as interest on expenditure. Sir Alexander had the theory that if money was worth spending it was worth getting interest for. All the interest had disappeared from the rental before my time.

16,624. I should ask you this question, have you found, since you became factor and commissioner, Sir Kenneth Matheson willing to listen to complaints from the crofters with regard to their need of land?—Most willing.

16,625. *Mr Forsyth.*—You made reference in your general statement to the sheep tenants giving up wedder ground, I think notably in the wedder portion of Killilan?—Killilan and Lienassie, the two portions that were formed into forests, were the wedder grounds of these farms.

16,626. Was that during your period as commissioner?—No, a considerable time before.

16,627. Have you any information as to the reasons for giving up the wedder ground?—Mr Maclean, my predecessor, said to Lord Napier's Commission that they were voluntarily given up by the tenants. Mr Brown has informed me since that that perhaps was a little stronger than need have been said, but he said it quite coincided with the wish of his father and himself who were then joint-tenants that they should relinquish the wedder ground. They had found it unprofitable and were desirous to give it up.

16,628. I wish to ask you that in connection with some questions you put yourself this morning, I think to Mr Alexander Macrae, as to the death-rate on wedder ground and I thought that the actual state of the death-rate did not come out very accurately. I think you said there that 63 per cent. of the wedders which

Glenshiel. — Sir Henry Macandrew.

were sold at three years old survived from the period of their being put on the ground. Now at what age were they put on the ground?—As I understand, Mr Brown's statement to me was that from the time they were put on as wedder hoggs until they were three year old, only 63 per cent. were sold as mature wedders.

16,629. That was a period of two years, virtually and possibly part of the summer?—Yes, one year to three year olds.

16,630. But you have no evidence on your estates as to the death-rate from the wedder lamb to the three year old wedder?—No, that is the only information I have on the subject.

16,631. Can you give me a little information about the fishing in the neighbourhood. You say that the Bundalloch crofters depend on the fishing?—I said it was intended that they should.

16,632. Well, would that be the herring fishing or just the white fishing?—Mainly the herring fishing, but there is no reason why they should not fish for white fish. There are a few fishermen who do fish between this and Skye, where there is lots of fish to be caught.

16,633. And where is their market?—Strome.

16,634. How would they send the fish to Strome?—By the boats.

16,635. Is there a good service?—They could land at the Railway station with the boats.

16,636. With their own boats?—Yes.

16,637. Sail up the loch?—Yes, and the steamers call at Balmacara and Totaig here twice or three times a week, I am not quite sure which.

16,638. Is there any way of improving the facilities for getting the fish quickly to the markets in the south?—A railway station at Kyle in a few years.

16,639. You think that would improve the fishing?—Most certainly, it would be much more convenient for the fishermen along the coast than the present station.

16,640. Crofters living on the coast then would be able to prosecute the fishing to better advantage than they did in the past?—I think so. There is a project for a pier at Plochton, Mr Macrae is in charge of it. Sir Kenneth offered to subscribe one third of the expense necessary.

16,641. So there is a good prospect of the fishing industry developing?—I hope so.

16,642. Does your experience of club farms lead you to think that it is a good arrangement for crofters?—Well, my experience is leading me to doubt it. I was at one time of opinion that it was undoubtedly the best form, but it is a somewhat expensive one. It necessitates the employment of a shepherd by the crofters, an expense which would be avoided if each man had his own flock of sheep. On the other hand each man having his own flock of sheep leads to more quarrelling, and I understand that it is a general impression with people who are skilled in the matter that the club stocks are better, they produce better sheep. But it is a greater expense and I don't think the men themselves take so much interest in sheep farming as they would if each man had his own stock.

16,643. But is it not the case sometimes that one of the members of the club acts as shepherd?—Very rarely. So far as I have been able to ascertain, and I have inquired on the point, I think every club farm on Sir Kenneth's estate employs a shepherd. These five men at Drudaig employ a shepherd.

16,644. *Mr Gordon.*—I would like if Sir Henry would explain himself a little better because one of my reasons for wishing this information is that to my knowledge Sir Henry has lately constructed a club farm?—Where.

16,645. Part of the farm of Conchra?—Sir Kenneth has let a part to the Ardelve crofters.

16,646. On the condition that they work it as a club farm I understand?—Well, there is no special condition; it is known that they intend to do that, but there was no special condition.

16,647 How do you make it out that it is more expensive?—I say because they employ a shepherd.

16,648. But if they were not employing a shepherd they would have to work themselves?—Exactly.

16,649. But suppose they are fully employed otherwise?—Well, if they are fully employed otherwise, that objection would go.

16,650. And then the shepherd would do the work, suppose there were ten men about the club farm he would do the work of the ten?—But if the ten men had each their own stock there would be no shepherd required, that would save about £50.

16,651. But each of these ten men would, when they are so disposed, perambulate through the whole ground upon the plea of looking after the sheep and while they were looking after the sheep they would disturb the others?—I have heard of that objection, but I have in my eye a club farm that you know where the people have separate stocks and there is no objection of that kind.

16,652. Again, it is often argued with reference to assigning land to crofters that under a club-farm they would still remain, supposing you take part of a deer-forest, while there might be deer got, at all events they would get grouse; the game would not be disturbed in the case of a club farm so much as it would be in the case of grazing held by a number of individual crofters?—Well, the grouse shooting on the club farms on this estate is exceedingly poor.

16,653. I quite believe that, but assuming that to be the case?—And I should look on converting ground into club farms as nearly destroying the grouse shooting from my experience.

16,654. I don't quite follow you that it would be more expensive?—Of course, the same objection as to grouse shooting would apply to separate sheep stocks. [*The Chairman.*—With increased force?—Probably.]

16,655. Is it not the case that in a good many club farms there are one or two men of more capital who monopolise a great part of the profit of the whole subject?—That has happened, but that can easily be prevented by proper regulations.

16,656. Ah, it is difficult to regulate some folks?—Well, you know Gruinard.

16,657. I know something about that?—That was let under regulations about twelve years ago.

16,658. I know club farms in that part of the country which are subject to the failing that I have described?—In this instance which I am referring to where each man has a separate stock, there were quarrels on that head, but after the farm was let on lease with the strict regulation that each man was to keep only so much stock, it has worked admirably. On the adjoining land which is let as a proper club farm about the same size the people are not at all so prosperous. The grouse shooting where the tenants have separate stocks is let for £350 a year, and on the other for £70.

16,659. *The Chairman.*—Do you attribute that difference to the better management of the farm by the individual crofters than the central management of the club farm?—Not entirely, I think the £70 rent is a great deal too low.

16,660. Your argument scarcely holds then?—But I give it simply as showing that the individual holding does not deteriorate grouse shooting.

16,661. *Mr Gordon.*—You are recently converted to the individual holding?—Certainly, I at one time believed very strongly the other way, but I am coming round.

16,662. I am sorry to hear it. I am not prepared to follow you.

16,663. *Mr Sutherland.*—Continuing the subject of club farms, Sir Henry, as we are at it, have you read the statement regarding them that was submitted to the Napier Commission by a gentleman who had large experience of them?—Do you mean Mr Mackenzie?

16,664. Yes; was that your predecessor, may I ask?—Not immediate, but he was factor of these estates for a long time.

16,665. And he sent in a valuable statement?—Yes, I know it well.

16,666. And you don't agree with it, I take it?—I did agree with it, but my opinion is shaken.

16,667. He concludes his statement thus:—'There

'are many large sheep farms which would bring a 'higher rent in this way,' that is as club farms, 'than 'by occupation either in large holdings exclusively 'under sheep as is now too much the custom. The 'other mode would give a numerous class of industrious 'resident tenants themselves and their families doing 'all the work.' That is his general conclusion?—I think he would not say that if he had lived till to-day, however, I will say this, I know that the late Sir Alexander Matheson said that if anybody brought him five or six respectable men who could stock a sheep farm and would take it he would give it gladly, and I know that Sir Kenneth would do the same, I say that.

16,668. To put the matter generally, do you state that the club farm system that was inaugurated and carried out by Sir Alexander Matheson has proved a failure?—No, I am not prepared to say that.

16,669. Thank you. Now, you gave us an historical account of this estate and your authority quoted in every case was a rental, is that not so?—Yes.

16,670. So that was an historical view of the estate from the rent point of view; you don't claim?—I heard you put that question at Glen-Urquhart, but I don't quite understand it.

16,671. Do you mean to lead us to understand that the history of an estate or of the country consists of the rentals of the country?—By no manner of means; I gave the statement merely as showing that there had been no such things as crofter townships on these estates at the times these rentals were made up.

16,672. How do you prove that from the rental?—Because the rent of each holding is given as one sum irrespective of whether there are one or more tenants.

16,673. Do the rentals account for the total population?—I don't suppose it for a moment.

16,674. It applies only to the condition of the people who paid rent?—Rent direct to the proprietor. I take it that on all these farms, or many of them, there were sub-tenants as on all farms at that time.

16,675. So that for the condition of the people or the state in which they lived they are of no value whatever?—As to the condition of the sub-tenants, do you mean.

16,676. The people generally, or the history of the Highlands?—The mere statement that the farm of Lienassie usually had one tenant and that that tenant paid £200 of rent does not, of course, give any information as to the state of the people, I don't put it forward as doing that, but it gives some information as to the state of possession of the land.

16,677. So far as the tenants entered on the rental are concerned?—So far as the landlord was concerned, who was the proprietor.

16,678. That is the point I wanted to make clear. Now, why have we not got statistics from you as we had from some other estates regarding the occupation of the land at present among the various classes of tenants?—I will give you an exact statement of that when I come to deal with the whole estate.

16,679. I would at the present moment like it, because I thought we might have some remarks to make upon the deer forests which are a feature, I understand, of the estate in this part, but you heard the questions I myself addressed to some of the witnesses to-day as to the distribution of the people on the land?—Yes.

16,680. And was it substantially correct?—That they were distributed all round the sea coast.

16,681. And as to the number of families that were in the small circle down here?—I have no reason to doubt that Mr Macrae's statement was correct.

16,682. Is there any prospect so far as the estate management is concerned of the afforestment of land being stopped?—Well, Sir Kenneth got a very tempting offer from Mr Winans last year to afforest two other farms and he declined it.

16,683. Upon economic grounds?—Upon the ground that he did not think it a right thing to do.

16,684. On moral grounds?—I don't know whether to put it on moral or economical grounds, but he thought it was not a wise thing for him to do in the management of the estate, and not just to the tenants.

16,685. Just to the tenants, that is the moral point of view I take it?—You may take it that way.

16,686. Have you read the statement, the valuable statement I may say, made by the minister of this parish with regard to the deer forest?—You mean the Rev. Mr Morrison, minister of Kintail, no, I have not read that. I read his evidence the other day. I noticed that he was to send in a statement, but I did not read it. I had not time to read it. But I will read it before I come up again.

16,687. I would highly recommend it to you. He is a gentleman of authority I should say from his position, and from the knowledge he has got on the subject. Then we will have an opportunity of hearing something about the statistics?—Yes, I will give you the exact area occupied by small tenants, by sheep farms, and by forest.

16,688. Now, with regard to the fishing here, are those villages that were founded by the British Fisheries Society thriving all over the west of Scotland?—Not by fishing. Ullapool has ceased to be a fishing village. Tobermory has entirely ceased to be a fishing village. I don't know about any others.

16,689. Is Dornie one of them?—Dornie was a town long before.

16,690. You referred to some one in this neighbourhood; was there one here?—Dornie and Bundalloch.

16,691. *The Chairman.*—He mentioned Dornie I thought as a settlement like what had been done by the British Fisheries Society?—Yes, it was on the model of Mr Knox's recommendation to the British Fisheries Society.

16,692. *Mr Sutherland.*—Are the stations of the British Fisheries Society all decaying places at the present moment?—Tobermory is a thriving town.

16,693. Fishing town?—Not a fishing town.

16,694. I presume it is the steamer traffic that has helped Tobermory?—Yes, and the tourist traffic helps it immensely, and Oban was made by tourists.

16,695. Do you think then that the example of the British Fisheries Society is one to be followed with regard to the making of communities depending upon fishing alone?—I think the idea of having fisherman and crofter combined in one person has not succeeded. It would be better I think if the men took to one calling or the other.

16,696. Was not that the idea that the founders of the British Fisheries Society had?—Which.

16,697. The view you expressed now, and this attempt was made to separate the two occupations?—Well, in Mr Knox's address to the Society he says they should found villages to be occupied by fishermen with plots of an acre, and half an acre, and some larger ones, and with a number of plots for mechanics of a larger size.

16,698. And the society followed that advice?—They did.

16,699. And you are not prepared to say that the result has been satisfactory, judging from the state of the places here?—I think not, judging from what I see here now and have seen all my life.

16,700. How then do you think any fresh movement in that way would be successful?—I should prefer to see the men who live by fishing, living by fishing alone, just as the east coast fishermen do.

16,701. But isn't that practicallywhat was attempted by the British Fisheries Society?—It was.

16,702. And it has not succeeded?—That failed in some cases, because the herring left the lochs where the villages were founded, and so on, but it is remarkable that the men along the western shore don't take to fishing as a sole occupation as they do on the east coast.

16,703. *The Chairman.*—Would you add Pulteneytown to those towns you mentioned as a town founded by the British Fisheries Society?—I believe it was.

16,704. Now, you have, I have no doubt, read the Grazings Act?—Yes, I have.

16,705. Are you of opinion that the principle of that Act is sound?—Well, I really—I don't remember

Glenshiel. — Sir Henry Macandrew.

exactly what its provisions are, but my impression was that it was loose.

16,706. But would you be in favour of crofters where they are so minded appointing a committee of their number to manage the grazing?—That is essential.

16,707. Taking sole charge of it, and dividing the profits among ths crofters of the townships?—I think it is essential that they should appoint one or two to do the buying and selling.

16,708. You are in favour of the provisions of that Act which go in that direction?—I think all the townships here do that of their own accord.

16,709. But are you in favour of the Act?—Oh, yes, certainly, but I think it might be better done.

16,710. Do I understand that this is your view that the principle of a club farm is a sound principle if it is properly carried out?—Yes.

16,711. *Mr Donald Macrae.*—I should like to put a question or two, my lord. As I understand it Sir Henry made a statement that the laird did not raise the rents of any small tenants except as interest upon money expended. [*The Chairman.*—Sir Alexander did.]

16,712. Sir Alexander? Is Sir Henry aware that the rent of the crofter township of Inverinate was raised in the year 1867?—I am not, but I will tell you in a minute.

16,713. I may state that my information is that the rent of each crofter was raised £3, 10s. in 1867 without a penny being expended by the estate on improvements?—I will tell you from the rentals in a moment.

16,714. I understand, I want to make it as easy for Sir Henry as possible?—The rent of the Inverinate crofts in 1852 was £99. In 1862 it was £106; 1872, £117, 15s.; 1882, £104; 1892, £62, 7s.

16,715. Would Sir Henry tell me what it was in 1865?—(Refers to rent ledger.) Give me one instance.

16,716. Alexander Macrae?—At Whitsunday 1865 his rent was £10, the same rent in the previous year.

16,717. What would it be now in 1868?—It was £10 in 1868. In the following year it was £13, 10s.

16,718. That was in the year?—1869.

16,719. 1867 I said. I was wrong so far. There is an increase of rent of £3, 10s. on the year's rent?—Yes, clearly.

16,720. Can Sir Henry say whether that £3, 10s. represents interest on capital expended by the proprietor on improvements; my information is that no money was spent on improvements? [*Mr Watson.*—It does not, it is on a revaluation of the subject].—I adopt Mr Watson's statement that it does not. It was on a revaluation.

16,721. So that Sir Henry's evidence so far as that subject is concerned must be modified at least to that extent?—Clearly.

16,722. Now one question more Sir Henry. You would allow, of course, that a fair rent, a fair and equitable rent is one of the essential conditions of success in a club farm, in the management of a club farm?—Or in any farm.

16,723. Or in any farm for that matter. Now the Bundalloch club farm has not been an unqualified success as I understand it?—No.

16,724. Has it not been proved within the last two years that the tenants were rack-rented?—I don't think so; one tenant was paying regularly £100 for it, and was a successful man. The tenants got it for £80.

16,725. I am not asking what the other tenant—The previous tenant?

16,726. Exactly, who may have been foolish enough in his day to have paid £100 for it, what his opinion of the matter was; that is not what I am concerned about, but has an independent tribunal by the consent of the tenants and of the proprietor adjudicated on the question of rent and made a substantial reduction of the rent?—Yes, I said so.

16,727. Exactly so. Does that not imply a rack-rent before then?—It depends entirely on the judgement of the two men who had it. We know that Commissioners have been reducing all the rents. [*The Chairman.*—Not all].—Well, not all, nearly all.

16,728. Sir Henry would not charge the Commissioners nor the Assessors with having made too big a reduction of rent in any case?—I have no doubt the valuators of Bundalloch did in their judgement what was right, and Sir Kenneth's instructions to them were to fix a fair and reasonable rent that the people could pay.

Glenshiel. — Sir Henry Macandrew.

16,729. Now, with regard to the club farm of Inverinate which has been managed as a club farm since 1867, is it not a fact that they were very severely rack-rented until the Crofters Commission reduced their rents two years ago?—I don't think so.

16,730. What was the rent of the township from 1869 down to 1880?—Well, as I say, the rent in 1882 was £104, 5s., in 1892 it was £62, 7s., but in the interval there was a very large reduction by Sir Alexander or Sir Kenneth I am not quite sure which.

16,731. They are paying £104, 5s.?—Yes.

16,732. For a period of years?—Yes.

16,733. And that rent has been reduced to £64 by the Commission?—£62, 7s.

16,734. Will Sir Henry not admit that £104 was a rack-rent?—Certainly not. Not at the time. There was a very great fall of rents all over the country between these two times. What would have been a rack-rent now would not have been a rack-rent then.

16,735. Was there agricultural and pastoral prosperity during the whole of the time that the rent was above £64. Was there not a depression?—The depression began in 1878.

16,736. Was the rent not considerably above £64 after 1878?—Well, I will give you, if you like, the years when the reduction was made, but it will take a little trouble.

15,737. Oh, well, I am not particular. Now I should ask one question?—It was immediately after 1882 that Sir Alexander made the reduction, I believe.

16,738. I should like to ask a question or two with regard to the fishing villages?—One moment. Will you allow me to say this.

16,739. Certainly.—That there has been £826, spent on the township of Inverinate since Sir Alexander Matheson became proprietor of the estate.

16,740. But Sir Henry has already admitted that the rent was raised £3, 10s. on each holding before any money was spent?—Not before any money was spent. Certainly not. The amount I have mentioned was spent in various sums during the whole period of Sir Alexander's possession.

16,741. When was the first of that money spent?—Oh, I cannot tell you, but this £697, 8s. 9d. was the sum at the date of Lord Napier's Commission.

16,742. Would Sir Henry believe the tenants themselves, Sir Henry says that he doesn't know when this improvement began to be effected, when this money began to be expended; would he take the word of the tenants themselves for it?—Certainly.

16,743. Well, I have it from one of the tenants that there was not a single penny expended by the estate on improvements at the time the rent was raised £3, 10s. on each tenant?—Oh, I can't take that because the estate accounts show that the money was expended. I take this at once that there was no large expenditure immediately before that.

16,744. Was there any expenditure at all before that?—Yes.

16,745. How much, and when?—I say up to Lord Napier's Commission it amounted to £697, 8s. 9d. Since then to £129.

16,746. But the rent was raised in 1869?—Yes.

16,747. Was there any money expended by the proprietor on improvements before that date?—Yes.

16,748. *The Chairman.*—I think what Mr Macrae means is this. Had the raising of the rent in 1869 anything to do with the expenditure which had been previously made?—No, I tried to explain,—Mr Watson tells me it had not, and I accept his statement.

16,749. *Mr Donald Macrae.*—Now, with regard to the crofting village, does Sir Henry know Bundalloch well?—Well, I have only been factor for two years, and I can't say that I have any special knowledge—I have visited them, I have conferred with them.

Glenshiel. — Sir Henry Macandrew.

16,750. Has he made a study of the fishing industry?—I don't put myself forward as an authority on that subject.

16,751. Could he imagine a more unsuitable place for the site of a fishing village than Bundalloch?—Certainly, very much more unsuitable.

16,752. On the sea coast of Scotland?—Yes.

16,753. Does Sir Henry consider Bundalloch a suitable site for a fishing village?—I don't see why not, but, of course, I am not defending the policy of Lord Seaforth, when he chose it I have no doubt he believed it was and I don't see why the people should not fish.

16,754. Can Sir Henry say from his knowledge that a barrel of herring has been exported from Loch Long, on which this village is, within the last ten years?—I don't suppose the men are going to fish on Loch Long or make their living there, but they are no distance—a few hundred yards—from Lochalsh, and the whole Atlantic is near them.

16,755. Could Sir Henry say as a matter of his own knowledge that a barrel of herring went into Loch Long?—I have seen people fishing for herring there, but I don't believe Loch Long is a herring fishing loch.

16,756. Is it in any way suitable for a herring fishing village?—Not if you look to Loch Long alone, certainly not, but they are not nearly so far from their fishing ground as the people in Ardersier.

16,757. Is Sir Henry aware that the currents in Loch Long make it in the highest degree unsuitable for a fishing village?—No, the currents run twice each way in twenty-four hours.

16,758. Is it possible for a sailing boat with any amount of wind however far to go into that loch against the tide or to come out against the tide?—I have seen the ferry boat do it. Glenshiel.

16,759. Will Sir Henry say that he ever saw the ferry boat come in from end to end of the loch, or didn't the ferry boat go across it describing the circumference the arc of a circle?—Well, I have seen them crossing, but I will undertake to row a boat against the tide if you will take the other oar. Sir Henry Macandrew.

16,760. Is it not a fact that at the time these fishing villages were selected, the sites I mean, is it not the fact that at the time Loch Duich was a good fishing loch, but that since then it has been a complete failure as a fishing loch?—I have heard great stories in my youth when I used to live hereabout of the number of herrings that used to be here at one time. The same has happened to Loch Carron and Loch Broom.

16,761 It is entirely played out as a herring fishing loch for the last twenty years?—I believe so. They very seldom come indeed.

16,762. So that it is high time that parties ceased to make reflections upon the people because they are not good fisherman?—I am making no reflections whatever on the people, I am saying that they don't devote themselves to fishing as a regular profession as the fishermen on the east coast do.

16,763. They are not on the ground in fact?—I say they are quite as near the fishing ground as many of the villages on the east coast that I am well acquainted with.

16,764. But they are farmers as well?—No, these fishermen are not.

16,765. The Bundalloch fishermen? Well, they became farmers.

16,766. Is it not high time that they became farmers and nothing more?—Or fishermen and nothing more.

Appendix A.

Tabulated Statement of the Rents of the Estates of Letterfearn, Inverinate and Ellandonan at intervals of ten years from 1852 to 1892.

Possession.	1852.		1862.		1872.		1882.		1892.	
	No. of Tenants.	Rents.	No. of Tenants.	Rents.	No. of Tenants.	Rents.	No. of Tenants.	Rents.	No. of Tenants.	Rents.
		£ s. d.		£ s. d.		£ s. d.		£ s. d.		£ s. d.
Camuslunie,	8	125 0 0	8	162 0 0	8	160 0 0	8	132 0 0	8	80 0 0
Carr and Wester Keppoch,	4	105 0 0	4	111 8 0	4	110 0 0	3	113 6 6	3	64 0 0
Leault and Easter Keppoch,	1	120 0 0	1	136 13 9	1	135 0 0	1	120 0 0	1	80 0 0
Fadoch and Killilan,	1	950 0 0	1	961 17 6	1	950 0 0	1	840 0 0	1	600 0 0
Dornie and Bundalloch,	23	82 3 3	23	82 8 9	23	84 2 0	23	114 2 0	22	92 11 6
Bundalloch Farm,	2	60 0 0	1	91 2 6	2	100 0 0	1	100 0 0		
Lonellan,	1	30 0 0	1	30 7 6	1	35 0 0	1	5 0 0	1	5 0 0
Lienassie,	1	600 0 0	1	668 5 0	1	815 0 0	1	300 0 0	1	230 0 0
Inverinate Farm,	In proprietor's hands.		1	40 10 0	P	30 0 0	P	30 0 0	P	30 0 0
,, Crofts,	16	99 0 0	16	106 11 0	14	117 15 0	14	104 5 0	14	62 7 0
Coillrèè,	1	42 0 0	1	42 0 0	1	41 10 0	1	50 0 0	1	30 0 0
Clachan and Seabank,	1	40 0 0			2	13 10 4	2	23 0 0	2	20 0 0
Mill of Croe,	1	15 0 0								
Torchullin,	Ground officer.									
Fisher's Croft,	1	3 0 0								
Ardintoul,	1	290 0 0	1	350 0 0	1	400 0 0	1	300 0 0	1	220 10 0
Drudaig,	1	120 0 0	1	121 10 0	1	130 0 0	1	130 0 0	5	50 0 0
Leacachan,	2	150 0 0	1	172 2 6	1	170 0 0	1	126 0 0	1	70 0 0
Lots in Letterfearn and Achnaturd,	14	22 15 0	13	22 10 0	22	30 1 1	21	25 6 0	28	48 8 0
Glass Island,		25 0 0		25 0 0		25 0 0		15 0 0	included in Ardintoul	
Ruarach,	2	170 0 0	1	151 17 6	1	165 0 0	1	130 0 0	1	75 0 0
Inverinate Cottages,					4	6 0 0	4	6 0 0	2	3 0 0
Saraig,							1	26 0 0	1	28 16 0
Saraig Cottage,							1	10 0 0	let to tenant of Saraig.	
Total,	81	3048 18 3	75	3276 4 0	88	3517 18 4	87	2699 19 6	93	1789 12 6
Shootings.										
Killilan shootings and fishings,		£300 0 0		250 0 0		250 0 0		300 0 0		300 0 0
Inverinate House,	1	105 0 0						let along with shootings.		
Dorusduan,				190 0 0		170 0 0		200 0 0		200 0 0
Ellandonan,				45 0 0						
Letterfearn and Ardintoul,				20 0 0		20 0 0		80 0 0		120 0 0
Glomach Forest,								550 0 0		550 0 0
Killilan Forest,								600 0 0		600 0 0
Patt and Riochan (part of),								260 0 0		260 0 0
Inverinate shootings,		125 0 0	P			P		380 0 0		392 0 0
Total,		530 0 0		505 0 0		440 0 0		2370 0 0		2422 0 0

Glenshiel.

Sir Henry Macandrew.

Appendix B.

Rental of the estate of Glenshiel, Inverinate and Ellandonan for the years 1727 and 1756.

Possession.	Year 1727.				Year 1756.			
	No. of Tenants.	Rents (Scots money.)			No. of Tenants.	Rent (Sterling money.)		
		£	s.	d.		£	s.	d.
Muck,	1	93	11	8				
Lienassie,	1	40	0	0	1	29	8	$3\frac{4}{12}$
Achnaturd, Easter,	1	26	13	4				
,, Wester,	1	33	6	8				
Easter Drudaig,	1	86	0	0	} 1	19	19	2
Wester ,,	1	78	16	8	}			
Tollie,	1	17	15	8				
Dall,	1	141	6	8				
Arieyngan,	1	140	9	0				
Camusnagoul,	1	80	0	0	1	14	17	$9\frac{4}{12}$
Ruarach divided into Meikle Oxgate, Middle Oxgate and Coulmiln,	7	180	0	0				
Artuluch and Clachan,	1	60	0	0	3	25	1	$1\frac{7}{12}$
Easter Leackachan,	1	23	13	4				
Wester ,,	1	57	6	8	1	5	2	$2\frac{8}{12}$
Achidren,	1	84	0	0				
Meikle Inverinate,	4	243	13	4	2	20	18	$10\frac{8}{12}$
Keppoch, Meikle,	4	56	5	0				
Carr,	1	74	10	8	3	13	4	$3\frac{4}{12}$
Little Keppoch,	1	25	0	0	1	4	7	$9\frac{4}{12}$
Clinbow,	1	37	5	4				
Fadoch,	1	129	0	0	1	16	13	$7\frac{4}{12}$
Half Craigag,	1	12	12	0				
Leault,	1	95	6	8	1	8	5	$6\frac{8}{12}$
Achyargan,	1	229	6	8				
Bundalloch,	2	140	0	0	2	12	17	$9\frac{4}{12}$
Bislaig,	1	137	6	8				
Upper Killilan,	1	179	3	4	1	20	18	6
Nether Killilan,	1	186	6	8	3	16	3	$10\frac{8}{12}$
Keillins,	1	80	0	0				
Achig-chuirn,	1	143	6	8				
Upper Mamaig,	1	64	0	0				
Half Craigag,	2	12	0	0				
Duyleg,	1	229	6	8	1	19	11	$1\frac{4}{12}$
Nether Mamaig,	2	77	18	8	1	6	14	4
Coridhoin,	1	120	0	0	1	10	7	6
Little Inverinate,					1	23	17	$9\frac{4}{12}$
Dornie,					5	26	7	$9\frac{4}{12}$
Camuslunie,					1	33	6	8
Ardintoul,					1	12	6	8
Total,	50	3415	8	0	32	340	10	8

Appendix C.

State of advances to Bundalloch tenants.

	Amount advanced.			Balance due.		
	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
John Macrae, Gamekeeper,	14	19	1	0	0	0
Duncan Macrae,	15	0	4	19	10	0
John Macrae, 'Lasser,'	15	0	6	8	7	2
John Macrae, 'Donald's son,'	15	0	6	15	12	0
Donald Macrae, Shoemaker,	7	1	4	9	2	0
Finlay Mackerlich,	15	0	6	19	10	0
Murdo Macrae,	15	0	6	19	10	0
John Mackay,	15	0	6	19	9	11
Kenneth Macrae,	14	0	7	18	4	0
Donald Macrae, 'Bain,'	15	0	6	19	10	0
John Murchison, Shoemaker,	15	0	6	19	10	1
Donald Macrae, Turner,	13	0	6	14	13	2
Alexander Macrae, Blacksmith,	10	0	6	5	15	0
John Macrae, Fisher, 'Big,'	15	0	6	13	15	0
Duncan Macrae, Fisher,	10	0	6	5	14	4
Christopher Macrae, Sawyer,	Paid					
John Hector Macrae,	14	0	6			
Christopher Macrae, Boatbuilder,	15	0	6	19	10	0
John Macaulay (paid in cash),						
John Macmillan, ,,						
Total,	233	7	10	227	12	

[Adjourned.]

Glenshiel.

SEVENTEENTH SITTING.

GLENSHIEL, July 12, 1893.

Present :—

David Brand, Esq., Advocate, Sheriff of Ayr and Chairman of the Crofters Commission, *Chairman.*
Michael Hugh Shaw Stewart, Esq., M.P.
Angus Sutherland, Esq., M.P.
James Noel Muller Forsyth, Esq.
George Gordon, Esq.
Rev. Malcolm Maccallum.
William Mackenzie, Esq., *Secretary.*

Donald Macrae, Morvich, Kintail (68.)
(Examined in Gaelic through an Interpreter.)

Donald Macrae.

16,767. *The Chairman.*—Are you a crofter?—Not a crofter, but I have a small lot and the grazing of a cow.

16,768. Do you pay any rent?—No. It is at Whitsunday last I got the land.

16,769. Who is your landlord?—Sir Allan Mackenzie. [*Mr William Mackay.*—Sir James Mackenzie's trustees are the proprietors.]

16,770. You got land at Whitsunday. How much land did you get?—An acre and a half of arable land.

16,771. Without rent?—We will have to pay rent at the end of the year.

16,772. What have you to pay?—When we were first promised the land we were told the rent would be £2, but there was nothing said about the amount of rent when we got the land.

16,773. And the grazing of one cow?—Yes, the grazing of the cow is included in the rent stated along with the arable land.

16,774. Do you wish to make a statement to us about more land?—Yes.

16,775. Tell us what you desire to say?—If I got five or six acres of arable land and the grazing of 100 sheep.

16,776. If you got that, what then?—I would take that in partnership along with others. I mean a club stock, that each share would have five or six acres and 100 sheep.

16,777. Can you show us such land as you are thinking about?—Yes.

16,778. Where is it?—Out Glenlic to the march with Strathglass.

16,779. Is it occupied as farm just now?—No, it is not a farm, it is a deer forest.

16,780. What is the name of the forest?—The deer forest of Kintail.

16,781. Is there old arable at this place you are mentioning?—Yes.

16,782. A considerable tract?—There is arable land till you reach the top of the glen and the glen is four miles in length.

16,783. Is there old arable up the whole of the four miles here and there?—Yes, throughout the whole four miles.

16,784. The land could accommodate a great many more besides yourself?—Yes.

16,785. And is there a desire among your neighbours for such holdings as you indicate?—Yes.

16,786. Has that land always been forest in your recollection, or was it something else in your time?—It was not a deer forest; I myself saw six sheep farmers in it.

16,787. How long ago is that?—About seventy-three years ago there were sixteen tenants there; after that one Alexander Macrae came in and got the whole place for himself; he got this from the Seaforths who were then proprietors of the place.

Glenshiel.

Donald Macrae.

16,788. What was the next change in the tenancy after the time of Alexander Macrae?—A son of Alexander Macrae then got the place for five years. That was Duncan Macrae.

16,789. And after his time what became of the tenancy?—After that one Peter Macrae, a grandson of Alexander Macrae, got it.

16,790. And after him?—Macrae, whatever happened, did not run out the lease; the lease was terminated in some way. Then there was the banker in Balmacara, one Annat, and Mr Maclennan, Lienassie, were both trustees of this Macrae, and they had the place for one year as trustees.

16,791. And at the end of that year what happened?—Then the late Mr Brown, Killilan, took the place. The six tenants I spoke of were six tenants in succession.

16,792. Did Mr Brown's occupation cease about 1878?—Mr Brown was there for nine years; he gave it up fifteen years ago.

16,793. Do you know why Mr Brown gave it up?—Mr Brown and the proprietor did not agree.

16,794. Was it afforested after that?—Sir Allan Mackenzie had it for three years after Mr Brown.

16,795. As a sheep farm?—As a sheep farm.

16,796. And then it became forest?—After that it was made a forest.

16,797. But according to your opinion that strip of ground in Glenlic and running up to Strathglass is arable land suitable for the settlement of crofters?—Yes.

16,798. And would it grow all the usual crops that crofters rear, corn and barley, turnips and potatoes?—Crofters don't speak about oats. What they want is hay and their cattle and sheep. They want to have cattle and sheep and what is necessary to winter them. They don't speak of raising oats.

16,799. *Mr Gordon.*—Do you remember seeing this arable land under crop?—Yes, I remember oats, barley and hay there. I also saw potatoes in it.

16,800. How many crofters would the glen take?—There were sixteen at one time there.

16,801. Would you find sixteen men willing to go there now?—That is a question which I cannot answer.

16,802. Would you be able yourself to occupy one-sixteenth of it?—Yes.

16,803. *Mr Sutherland.*—Where were you yourself before you came to Morvich or have you been here always?—I was always in Morvich.

16,804. Were you always a cottar?—No, I was a shepherd to those six tenants that I mentioned in Glenlic.

16,805. Then, with regard to the land which you dyou got at Whitsunday, the one-and-a-half acres, tell us shortly the circumstances that led up to your getting that land?—We were writing for it; applying for it.

16,806. And was Whitsunday last the first time you wrote about it?—I was a shepherd and I did not know what they were doing till lately, but my neighbours tell me that there are twenty-two years since they began to apply for land.

16,807. And they did not get it till Whitsunday last?—No.

16,808. And all they got was an acre and a half?—Yes.

16,809. Could you tell us upon what conditions they got them. How were you not certain about the rent?—We did not get the letter of agreement or the lease for it yet.

16,810. And how do you explain that you took land without knowing the conditions on which you got it?—The document was read to us, but of the fifteen men who got land not one of them understood five words that were in the letter. It was in English.

16,811. And what is the nature of the document?—I cannot say.

16,812. Was it a lease?—I understand that the document explained the conditions on which we were getting the land.

16,813. Could you hand in a copy of the document?—[*Mr William Mackay.*—I will hand in the principal.] I have not a copy.

16,814. Have any of them got copies, or a copy of the document?—Well, if they got it none of them admitted to me that he had received it.

16,815. And did you get one yourself?—No.

16,816. I would like to ask you with regard to the sixteen tenants who were in Glenlic before it became one farm, do you know what was the extent of the land they held?—I cannot state the extent of the arable land each held, but I know that they held ground in common.

16,817. Do you know if they crossed the watershed into the Glen-Affaric side for grazings?—No, they went to the watershed. The Strathglass water flowed east and the Kintail water flowed west: they went to the watershed.

16,818. Do you know how they managed their grazings; did they manage them in common?—It was cattle and a few sheep they had on the hill at that time.

16,819. How did they manage them?—The cattle were left outside all winter: they went up to the top of the glen in the winter time and fed them.

16,820. Then when they sent their cattle out in summer to the grazing had they one man to manage the whole of them?—Everyone went with his own cattle to the shieling in the summer.

16,821. And when did they bring home the cattle?—When the snow would drive them home.

16,822. Did they winter all their stock without sending them out of the country at all?—Oh, yes.

16,823. They always wintered their stock?—Yes. There was no word about the low country then, among the people of this place.

16,824. How far, can you tell us, does the forest to which you refer to come down; how low does it come?—It comes down to our houses.

16,825. It comes down to your houses?—Yes.

16,826. Was any land that was before in cultivation put out of cultivation when the forest was made?—Yes.

16,827. Where is that land?—The land about Morvich, the low-lying lands of Morvich.

16,828. Are they parks, enclosures?—Yes, parks.

16,829. And these parks were cultivated up to the time the land was made into a deer forest, were they?—Yes, every kind of crop.

16,830. Is there much extent of that land?—About 40 acres of land about Morvich.

16,831. And has any crop at all been grown on that since?—Nothing until we planted a few potatoes now.

16,832. Is it out of that land that you are to get your acre-and-a-half?—Yes, it is out of these 40 acres we have got our lots.

16,833. How many people have entered into this arrangement by which they are to get one-and-a-half acres?—16.

16,834. Could you give us the names?—Yes.

16,835. If you please?—Alexander Maclennan, Morvich; Donald Macrae, Morvich; John Cameron, widow Flora Macrae, Alexander Macrae, Murdo Macrae, Farquhar Maclennan, Katherine Maclennan, Duncan Macrae, Donald Macrae, widow Katherine Paterson, Roderick Macleod, widow Christina Fraser, Farquhar Macrae, Donald Macrae (the third), Alexander Maclennan.

16,836. Would you kindly state again how long you have been shepherd upon this ground?—Forty years.

16,837. And you will then know the land more intimately than perhaps any person?—I am as well acquainted with it as any one can be.

16,838. And are you of opinion that it is suitable land for the purpose which we have in view?—I think it is.

16,839. *Mr Shaw Stewart.*—Are we to understand that you would propose to occupy the whole forest of Invershiel with new tenants?—Oh, I don't think that at all, I am only referring to the land where I have been myself.

16,840. Both sides of Glenlic?—Both sides of Glenlic are very suitable for tenants.

Glenshiel.

Donald Macrae.

16,841. Would you propose that farm only up to the watershed on both sides?—If we got as much as we wanted we had no notion to go beyond the watershed.

16,842. And the new tenants should live in the glen, Glenlic?—Yes, it would be quite convenient for them to live in the glen.

16,843. You know the glen well, is it subject to floods?—Floods come out there at times undoubtedly.

16,844. Could you winter all your sheep there?—Yes, and our sheep were always wintered there.

16,845. Does sheep farming pay as well as it used to do?—No.

16,846. And you don't expect that the new tenants will be as successful sheep farmers as former tenants there?—No, they would not succeed as well as the old tenants.

16,847. *The Chairman.*—When that land was under sheep were the hoggs wintered there?—Yes, and I was herding them there myself. The best of the highest part of the hill ground of Morvich is there; I was wintering my hoggs on the highest ground on the Morvich lands there.

16,848. You remember the forest before that land was made part of it?—There was no forest there.

16,849. I thought there had been an old forest?—No.

16,850. *Mr Forsyth.*—You said that you wintered the hoggs in Morvich on the highest ground there. Was not that rather in the beginning of winter and that afterwards they were taken down?—No, we didn't take them down until they were brought down to Morvich at the clipping time.

16,851. You kept them on the higher ground all the winter?—Yes, the wedder hoggs.

16,852. Is it the whole available land at present of Inchcro and Morvich that you wish to use as a club farm and holding?—We did not want except what we thought we would require; what we consider is necessary for us.

16,853. I ask that because if it only goes to the watershed on the north side it appears there would be a good deal of land now in that forest left unused?—There are a great many people in the country and they would take that land.

16,854. Could they take the ground northwards over to Glen-Choinneachain and Loch-a'-Bheallaich on the north?—Is it Glen-Cannich?

16,855. No, not Glen-Cannich but the glen to the north of the River Cro, Glen-Choinneachain?—There is no such glen there.

16,856. What is at present the north march of the forest?—Glen-Choinneachain, we call that the Beallach.

16,857. Is it down to there that you propose to occupy?—No, we did not propose to go over there; what we wanted is the south side of Glenlic.

16,858. The south side up to the watershed?—Yes.

16,859. With the river Cro as the northern march?—We don't want any land to the north of the river Cro; we take the river Cro as the northern boundary.

16,860. *Mr William Mackay* (representing the Trustees of Sir J. T. Mackenzie)—Do you remember in July 1892 that the cottars of Morvich met me at Morvich?—Yes.

16,861. The first time that I came to Kintail after I was appointed factor?—Yes.

16,862. Were you among them?—Yes.

16,863. Did they then apply for this big park of Morvich?—Yes.

16,864. Well, do you remember my having another meeting with them in January last?—Yes.

16,865. Were you present then?—Yes.

16,866. And I told you then that your application was granted?—Yes.

16,867. Did you then get all you had applied for?—It was the park we applied for that was given to us then.

16,868. And the grazing?—Yes.

16,869. And the carse ground?—Yes.

16,870. Do you know the extent of the big park?—I saw the park measured on two occasions and the measurement was 18 acres.

16,871. Do you know Mr Joass, the surveyor, whom I brought up to measure it?—Yes.

Glenshiel.

Donald Macrae.

16,872. If he says that the large arable park of Morvich is 20½ acres, do you believe him?—Yes, to be sure. If the man knows his business we should agree with his measurement.

16,873. You have got the carse lands; do you know that they extend to 40 acres according to his measurement; would you believe it is 40?—Is it down to the sea?

16,874. Yes?—I can hardly believe there are 40 acres there.

16,875. Then the hill grazing, you have got that between Morvich and the forest, haven't you?—Yes.

16,876. And it extends, do you know, to about 275 acres?—I don't know the extent.

16,877. You were present at this meeting on the 20th July last. Do you remember that I then read a statement to the crofters and explained it in Gaelic?—There was not one word of Gaelic in the statement from the first one that went in to the last that came out.

16,878. I am not referring to the meeting at Morvich House; that was a later one. Do you remember me having this meeting in January on the high road at Morvich, that very stormy day?—Yes.

16,879. Did I not speak in Gaelic that day?—Yes.

16,880. And explained what I intended doing?—Yes.

16,881. Now did I then mention—this is the statement that I had then and that I read—did I then mention—and did you understand—that you were to have the grazing of a cow and follower?—Yes.

16,882. You also understood that you were to have an acre and a half in the big park?—Yes.

16,883. And you understood that you were to have the carse for cutting hay or pasturing your cattle as you thought proper?—We might graze our cattle there, but we could not cut hay on it.

16,884. But you understood you were to have the carse?—Yes.

16,885. Now, did I mention that you were to pay £2 a year for all that?—The second time you were there we understood the rent was to be £2.

16,886. I will put in this statement, my lord. Then the third time that I came—did I mention the second time by the way that I would write leases?—You told us that the last occasion.

16,887. You can write your name?—Yes.

16,888. Is that it? (*Showing missive of lease*).—I think it is.

16,889. Now, did I read that document to you before you signed it?—You read it in English.

16,890. Did I not explain it in Gaelic?—Not one word.

16,891. Did you tell me you did not understand it?—I was two or three from the last of those who signed it, and as the others did not put the question I did not.

16,892. Well, do you know the lease contains exactly the terms of this statement which I read to you in January and explained?—I could not say that, as the lease was not read to me in Gaelic.

16,893. *The Chairman.*—Exactly, I don't see how, if he did not understand the lease read in English, he could tell whether it agreed with the terms of the other document?

16,894. *Mr William Mackay.*—Not if he did not understand it. You had no land before I gave it to you in January last?—No.

16,895. Well, you said that there was suitable land in Glenlic all the way up to the bounds of Strathglass, for crofters?—Yes.

16,896. Do you know whether the whole of Glenlic was ever occupied as arable land?—At the uppermost dell or bend of the river at the height of the glen there are signs of cultivation.

16,897. That is, there are low meadow grounds near the river?—There is low lying ground all over the banks of the river there. [*The Chairman.*—Are these signs of cultivation visible still?—Yes.]

16,898. Are these lands subject to floods?—I will

say that they are more liable to floods now than they were in the time I refer to.

16,899. Do you know that, starting from Glenlic, from the keeper's house at the very top of the glen and coming down for about a mile, the whole of that country is often entirely under water, the low lands of it?—The river will be very high indeed when it will be like that.

16,900. You have seen that, haven't you?—Yes, I have seen it.

16,901. Now, do you know that Glenlic is subject to large land slips?—That will not make any great harm.

16,902. You know the names of the places in Glenlic?—Yes, every foot.

16,903. Will you tell us where the people lived in the olden times?—Yes.

16,904. Where tenants lived, I mean?—Yes; Achayark, Stoireag, Carnahahan, Carnabhaile-gheamhraidh. That is all on the Morvich side, but I haven't mentioned those on the north or Inchcro side.

16,905. Well, just proceed?—Beginning at Inchcro it is Achayark again (there is an Achayark on each side of the river), Glascharn, Eilean-Fhearchair, that is all that were on the Inchcro side.

16,906. Now, do you remember people living at all those places except Inchcro?—No, they were cleared out of those places about six years before I was born.

16,907. Were the tenants that you mentioned upon the south side of Glenlic some of the sixteen who had the farm of Morvich?—Yes.

16,908. They were part of the sixteen?—Yes.

16,909. Now can you say that they were really tenants or sub-tenants, that they had the land at all?—They were paying rent; they had Morvich.

16,910. When was it that they last had Morvich?—They lost Morvich when the sixteen lost it.

16,911. But when?—Seventy-three years ago.

16,912. How long had they the farm before they were turned out?—I cannot tell the year exactly.

16,913. Do you know any people who would join you in taking the south side of Glenlic?—Yes.

16,914. Who are they?—Some of those who are in company with me at present.

16,915. That is some of those who have the Morvich Park?—Yes.

16,916. How many acres would you require?—If we got about five acres arable and hill pasture.

16,917. How many tenants would join you in this club farm or whatever you want?—I am sure I would get ten or twelve at any rate.

16,918. And are they all able to stock their shares?—Yes.

16,919. Would you be able to get on the south side of Glenlic, five acres arable land for each man?—Yes.

16,920. And they would be able to build houses for themselves?—If they got land on the south side of Glenlic they could occupy their present houses.

16,921. You mentioned that there were 40 acres arable land at Morvich put out of cultivation when the forest was made?—The park that we got ourselves was included in this 40 acres.

16,922. Then there is also included in those 40 acres the park on the other side of the high road?—We included the two parks.

16,923. And that is under cultivation now?—Munro the keeper there cuts hay for his cows in one of those parks and plants potatoes for himself.

16,924. And corn?—He sowed a bit of oats this season.

16,925. Then do you know that the other arable land (what you call arable land, what I call meadow land), is cut off from the forest by a high deer fence at Morvich?—Yes, there is a deer fence going down Morvich.

16,926. *The Chairman.*—When was it erected?—Last winter.

16,927. *Mr Sutherland.*—I notice that you make a distinction between arable land and cultivated land at the present moment? [*Mr William Mackay.*—No, between arable land and meadow land.]

16,928. Do I understand that it is land that was under cultivation at one time that you call meadow land? [*Mr Mackay.*—Not the whole of it.]

16,929. What do you mean by arable land when you use the term? [*Mr Mackay.*—I mean land suitable for cultivation. It may be old arable that has not been under cultivation for many years.]

16,930. I understood the witness to have said that this land in his memory was under cultivation for many years, and you now call that meadow land? [*Mr Wm. Mackay.*—Part of the land is meadow.]

16,931. What I want to know is what you call arable land because you made a distinction that made me believe that you applied it to land that was cultivated within the memory of the witness? [*Mr Wm. Mackay.*—I don't quite follow.]

16,932. It is not quite germane to the point now, but I wish for my own information to know what you mean definitely by arable land? [*Mr Wm. Mackay.*—What I mean is either land now under cultivation or old arable land that might be cultivated.]

16,933. But don't you see that you applied the term meadow land to the land which the witness saw himself under cultivation? [*Mr Wm. Mackay.*—I am not aware that I did.]

16,934. It may be my mistake, but I wanted to be clear on the point.

16,935. *Mr William Mackay.*—You have seen the whole of the low lands of Morvich under water?—Yes, one time, the big flood.

16,936. You know that a great deal of gravel was thrown upon it last year?—Yes.

16,937. And that the dykes were carried away and the fences? He is answering me in English, my lord. Here is the man who did not understand the lease.

16,938. *Mr Sutherland.*—The lease is written in very technical language.

16,939. *Mr William Mackay.*—Not this one I think. You will be delighted with the simplicity of its terms. (*To witness*). You saw the whole of the low lands at Morvich under water last year; I want to know whether the dykes were carried away and the fences?—Yes.

16,940. And do you know that the dyke of the big park has been repaired by the proprietors since the cottars got it?—Yes.

16,941. Did you hear me asking the cottars whether they would not help me in repairing it?—I heard some talk of it.

16,942. That I suggested that when they had nothing else to do they might do a little themselves?—You were speaking about that undoubtedly.

16,943. Do you know that you all declined to give any assistance?—Yes, we refused. We would do it for payment such as was given to people from other places.

16,944. Do you know that I offered you £20 if you would repair this dyke yourselves?—There may have been some others in the company who heard it, but I did not hear it.

16,945. Would you be surprised to know that the repairing of that dyke round the field that you got cost £59, 6s. 11d. to the proprietor?—I did not hear it till now.

16,946. You know it cost money, of course?—Yes.

16,947. Well, are you dissatisfied with the lease as I explained it to you? You pay £2 and you know what rights you have?—I am not sure until I hear it in Gaelic.

16,948. Perhaps, my lord, I had better read it to him, because I was not aware until this morning that there was any dissatisfaction, quite the contrary. (*To witness*). Well, you get the right of grazing of one cow on the arable land; do you understand that?—Yes, I understand that.

16,949. Then, in the second place you get the right in common with the other cottars of cutting hay from the big park, you get an acre for that; you understand that?—Yes, I understand that.

16,950. *Mr Sutherland.*—Excuse me one moment. The right in common with the other names we have got?—There are 17 altogether.

16,951. *Mr Wm. Mackay.*—I may explain here that

Glenshiel. — Donald Macrae.

they cast lots for separate hay lots after the leases were signed. (*To witness*). Then you got also the carse ground among you; did you understand that?—Yes.

16,952. Your cattle are on it now, I saw them on. Then you have got the piece of land at Allt-a'-chruinn and pertinents connected therewith in which your dwelling house is erected. You have got a house and little garden there, haven't you. Have you got a garden?

16,952*a*. 'I am Donald Macrae, Seana-Ghoirtean.' That is your writing?—Yes.

16,953. *The Chairman.*—But you got him to say a minute ago that another signature was his?

16,954. *Mr William Mackay.*—I did not, my lord; I asked him the question. It was another Donald Macrae's lease I showed him first, it appears.

16,955. *The Chairman.*—You put it in the affirmative form.

16,956. *Mr Sutherland.*—Is this a different sheet of paper. [*Mr William Mackay.*—This is a different sheet of paper.]

16,957. *The Chairman.*—Well, but it is a pity to ask a man such a question. It is an awkward question. [*Mr William Mackay.*—There are so many Donald Macraes.]

16,958. *The Chairman.*—Is that your signature?—(In English) Oh, yes.

16,959. *Mr William Mackay.*—You have got a garden have you at Seana-Ghoirtean?—Yes.

16,960. And you have got the potato ground in the big park?—Yes.

16,961. Well, for all that the lease says that you are to pay a yearly rent of £2, payable at Whitsunday in each year; do you understand that?—Oh, yes.

16,962. Well, that is really all that is in the lease.

16,963. *Mr Sutherland.*—Why should not the tenants have got the leases? [*Mr Wm. Mackay.*—I may mention that the delay is possibly mine.]

16,964. But that ought to be done privately, surely?—Privately?

16,965. Yes?—Well, I sent a copy to one of the tenants. The leases were signed not very long ago, and we are copying them in the office; that is the fact of the matter. In connection with the Whitsunday term we are exceedingly busy, and in connection with these matters we have to take our own time.

16,966. *The Chairman.*—I don't think we need take up more time.

16,967. *Mr William Mackay.*—Are you dissatisfied with that lease as you understand it now?—If my rent is £2 I will have to expend other £2 in hay for the wintering of my cow.

16,968. Then, do I understand you to say that for this right of grazing a cow and a follower and for your potato ground and hay ground and the carse ground and your garden, you think £2 a year too much?—One cannot say that it is dear altogether.

16,969. *The Chairman.*—I must interpose the remark that this is not a tribunal for fixing fair rents, Mr Mackay. We are not here dealing with rents at all.

16,970. *Mr Wm. Mackay.*—I think this examination may do good. I never heard of a complaint at all. (*To witness*). Do you remember that the cottars of Morvich were in the habit of getting a bit of potato ground and cow's grass from the tenant of Morvich, from Patrick Macrae?—Some of them were.

16,971. Do you know what they paid him?—Some of them were paying nothing.

16,972. And did some pay?—Yes.

16,973. What did they pay?—I can't tell.

16,974. Do you know it was £5 a year?—No, none of them ever paid £5 to my knowledge. The one who paid the highest price for a cow there paid £4.

16,975. That is for the cow alone?—A cow and a stirk.

16,976. Do you know Murdo Macrae, cottar, Morvich, owner of 'the pet lamb?'—Yes.

16,977. If he told Lord Napier's Commission that they paid £5 a year for that right, would you believe him?—Yes.

16,978. *The Chairman.*—I want to ask you this. Your acquaintance with the glen extends over the last forty or fifty years?—Yes, I knew it all my time.

Glenshiel. — Donald Macrae.

16,979. And you were a shepherd for forty years?—I was a shepherd since I was able to do shepherding.

16,980. Now during all your time as shepherd would you, speaking from that experience, say there is any danger in settling crofters in that glen from the frequency of floods?—I can say there is no danger.

16,981. Then if you were offered a settlement there, you would not be afraid of taking it from the risk of flooding?—No, no.

16,982. There was a great flood about two years ago?—Yes, that was the biggest flood we ever saw in this country.

16,983. I was just going to ask that. Did you ever in your experience see any flood so large?—No, not a flood that came within ten feet of it.

16,984. Now speaking of your experience of previous floods, what is the average extent to which a flood goes when the lands are flooded, over the low ground? [*Mr William Mackay.*—Perhaps your lordship might preface that by asking the breadth of the low land from the river.]

16,985. Yes, I will do so. What is the breadth of the land from the river?—Some of these dells are but narrow; others are pretty broad.

16,986. What is the average breadth, would you say?—There are two or three parts up from Morvich; it is at the broadest part about 300 yards I would say.

16,987. In your experience have winters sometimes passed without any flooding worth speaking of?—Yes, we used to cut meadow hay on the river banks and we would have to watch for fear of the river sweeping it away.

16,988. That was hay gathered in at the margin of the river?—Yes, and oats in the park we have referred to in the neighbourhood of Morvich.

16,989. When floods do occur, what time of the year are they most likely to happen?—We are more liable to floods in winter, but one might come in autumn.

16,990. *Mr Donald Macrae, Plockton.*—I understood the witness to have said that since Morvich was made into a deer forest, this park that was got this year was never cultivated, nor any portion of the arable land of these parks until this year. Would your lordship ask him if that is strictly accurate, or did he not within the last ten or twelve years see this park cultivated on one occasion at least?

16,991. *The Chairman.*—Have you seen this park at Morvich cultivated during the last ten or twelve years at least on one occasion?—I did not see it cultivated since Mr Winans got it as a forest. [*Mr William Mackay.*—That was in 1882.]

16,992. Eleven years ago?—Eleven years past.

16,993. *Mr Donald Macrae.*—Might I ask him this? Did the cottars turn out between this and a dozen years ago, and cultivate this park in a body, in one day?—Some of them turned out, I was not there.

16,994. Did you see them do it?—No, I was not there.

16,995. Did you see the crop there?—Yes.

16,996. Was it a good crop?—Yes, very good. [*Mr William Mackay.*—That is the field they have now?]—Yes. [*Mr William Mackay.*—That is the best land on the west coast of Scotland.]

16,997. Exactly so. In what condition were the cottars of Morvich then? [*The Chairman.*—He says they had no land.]

16,998. Was an arrangement made after that whereby you got potato ground and a cow's grazing each? [*The Chairman.*—Do you refer to the lease, Mr Macrae?]

16,999. No. Did the cottars get land on Invershiel farm here?—Yes, they got land on Invershiel here.

17,000. What more did they get besides arable land there?—They also got Achghiurain up Glenshiel here for the cutting of hay.

17,001. And have the cottars been in the occupation of that arable land on the Invershiel farm and in the enjoyment of this cow's grazing for the last ten years till now?—Yes.

17,002. What rent were they charged?—Very little. One year they got it for a penny.

17,003. Well, next year, and so on?—For years they were returning the money to themselves in order to fence their lands with it. [*The Interpreter.*—The receiver of the rent handed it back to the payer.]

17,004. And when the fencing was done, were you asked to pay it to the parish minister for the relief of the poor of the parish?—Yes.

17,005. *The Chairman.*—And did you pay it?—I was not in that club myself, but I know how the thing was done.

17,006. *Mr Donald Macrae.*—You were a shepherd, were you?—Yes.

17,007. You were not in the reverence of half-an-acre. [*The Chairman.*—No, no, I don't want an answer to that question.]

17,008. Did the landlord ask a penny of that money?—I believe he did not.

17,009. Now with regard to this new arrangement, this lease, is it a fact that you were in the possession of a house and stance and garden, and between half an acre and an acre of arable land and a cow's grazing rent free until you got this land under lease this year?

17,010. *The Chairman.*—I will put that question. Before you got the lease had the other cottars each the site of a house and a garden and a cow's grazing and potato ground?—Yes.

17,011. *Mr Donald Macrae.*—Had they it rent free?—From the proprietor?

17,012. Was it rent free or was there a rent for it?—Yes, to the landlord, and he gave it to them one year for a penny.

17,013. Now let me ask you this with regard to this. [*The Chairman.*—You are speaking of the time of the lease?]

17,014. I am coming now to the lease. Were these men deprived of what they had under that arrangement when they got this park and the carse and the cow's grazing?—Yes, they gave it up. [*Mr William Mackay.*—They give it up themselves.]

17,015. *The Chairman.*—Did they give it up willingly?—I hadn't it, and I don't know whether they gave it up willingly or unwillingly.

17,016. *Mr Donald Macrae.*—Was it Mr Mackenzie who is now procurator-fiscal for Ross-shire that tried to negotiate this arrangement first?—Yes.

17,017. Did you hear it said among these cottars that Mr Mackenzie said that unless they would give up the old rights and take this park they would not get an inch of land on the estate?

17,018. *The Chairman.*—I can hardly allow that question, Mr Macrae. Observe how remote it is. 'Did you hear it said that Mr Mackenzie said.' [*Mr Donald Macrae.*—It is only two years ago.]

17,019. It is not the time at all. It is the remoteness of the knowledge.

17,020. *Mr Donald Macrae.*—Might I put it in this form? Did you hear Mr Mackenzie negotiating with the cottars?—Yes, I was present.

17,021. *The Chairman.*—Did you attend to what was passing?—Yes.

17,022. *Mr Donald Macrae.*—What did he say?

17,023. *The Chairman.*—Did you hear what he said?—I have a cow's grazing from the landlord rent free.

17,024. Did you hear anything Mackenzie said?—I heard him say that we would get a part of the park.

17,025. *Mr Donald Macrae.*—Exactly so. Who was to get the rest of it?—The rest of it was to be paddocks for the forest folks.

17,026. Did Mr Mackenzie say anything about the old rights they had; the arable land and the cow's grazing they had on Invershiel farm?

17,027. *The Chairman.*—Did you hear Mr Mackenzie say anything about your right to arable and cow's grazing on Invershiel farm, and if so, what?—He may have said something to the other tenants, but I had not any on Invershiel.

17,028. Did you hear it?—I did not hear it.

17,029. *Mr Donald Macrae.*—Do you remember Mr Winans being at law with Sir James Mackenzie, about the cottars of Invershiel, of Morvich? Glenshiel.

17,030. *The Chairman.*—I beg your pardon, Mr Macrae, but what is the object of this? Donald Macrae.

17,031. *Mr Donald Macrae.*—My object is this, my lord, that, as I understand it, Mr Winans tried in terms of a lease between himself and Sir James Mackenzie, to enforce the lease by getting Sir James to clear out and to evict all the cottars on the farm of Morvich; that this civil action was raised in the Court of Session; that Sir James succeeded in resisting the action on the plea that it was as easy legally for the cottars to evict Sir James as it was for Sir James to evict the cottars; that they had a tenure of a most peculiar character, similar to the tenure of the native Indians in Hindostan, immemorial rights that it was impossible for a Highland landlord to deprive them of even in the Court of Session. On that plea it was shown that these men had the right to a house stance and garden and to a cow's grazing. The point was raised with reference to four particular cottars and the plea succeeded, and Mr Winans failed in getting the cottars evicted, and my object in raising that point and in entering into it is to show that Highland rights, immemorial rights, traditional rights that came down from generation to generation were frittered from the people, were impetrated, if I may use the term, unless it is too strong, were taken from the people by a lease this year. So that it is not a case of getting land; it is a case of depriving them of lands to which they had an inherent right in lieu of lands that they get under lease, and of which they may be deprived next year, notwithstanding the lease. And we have here, my lord, every facility for giving your Royal Commission the benefit of this. We have Mr William Mackay as representing the estate; we have Mr Burns as representing Mr Winans; and we have these cottars.

17,032. *The Chairman.*—And is that to help us in the present inquiry, do you think?

17,033. *Mr Donald Macrae.*—I think so.

17,034. *The Chairman.*—In what way?

17,035. *Mr Donald Macrae.*—Well, in this respect at any rate. I think at least as much as other points that have been raised, at least for instance the point that there were no small tenants in a certain glen at any time.

17,036. *The Chairman.*—That is a very important question and that question has been pretty fully gone into.

17,037. *Mr Donald Macrae.*—The lands may be suitable or available, whether tenants were there or not; holding direct from the landlord or holding at all.

17,038. *The Chairman.*—I quite agree with you.

17,039. *Mr Donald Macrae.*—And a great deal of time has been spent in discussing that question.

17,040. *The Chairman.*—I don't wish to enter into a controversy with you.

17,041. *Mr Donald Macrae.*—I should be very sorry to enter into controversy unless it was to be of use.

17,042. *The Chairman.*—Let me hear your question to this witness. I doubt to begin with whether he knows very much about it, but you can judge of that better than I can perhaps.

17,043. *Mr Donald Macrae.*—Do you remember Mr Winans endeavouring by an action in the Court of Session to force the landlord to evict the tenants in Morvich?

17,044. *The Chairman.*—Were you a party to an action in the Court of Session?—No.

17,045. *Mr Donald Macrae.*—Does he know the parties whom Mr Winans tried to force the landlord to evict?—(*Witness*). Was it those that had the cattle you refer to? He was wanting to clear the place altogether, to clear out every one.

17,046. Are you aware from what you could gather about that action at that time that Mr Winans failed, through the plea of the landlord that these tenants had rights from time immemorial?

17,047. *The Chairman.*—You wish to prove from this witness the result of the action, to prove whether he is aware of the result of the action? [*Mr William*

Glenshiel. Donald Macrae.

Mackay.—I may explain, my lord, that the action is recorded in the Court of Session books.]

17,048. The result of the action, you know, we can get from the proceedings in the Court of Session, and that is the proper evidence of it.

17,049. *Mr Donald Macrae.*—I shall go now to this lease. Did Mr Mackay himself ask at first that the gamekeeper should have a share with you of this park and of this grazing?—I did not hear that.

17,050. Did Mr Mackay send a letter to your township, or did he say to the cottars that you would have this grazing and this park entirely to yourselves, and that the gamekeeper would have no right at all to the park or to the grazing? [*Mr William Mackay.*—I should like to see the letter; I think it is only fair to myself that the letter should be produced.]

17,051. *The Chairman.*—Have you got the letter?

17,052. *Mr Donald Macrae.*—I have not got the letter, but I was told by the cottars that the letter was in the township.

17,053. *The Chairman.*—But this witness is not one of the cottars?

17,054. *Mr Donald Macrae.*—He is one of the cottars now.

17,055. *The Chairman.*—But not before. Did you see any letter from Mr Mackay?—What was the letter about?

17,056. *Mr Donald Macrae.*—The question was put. Did you see the letter. He wants an explanation of the letter?—I did not see a letter.

17,057. Did you cottars object to the gamekeeper having anything to do with the lands that you had to get from the proprietor?

17,058. *The Chairman.*—I must put this question. Was any proposal made by Mr Mackay or anyone else with regard to the occupancy by the keeper of any part of your lands?—Mr Mackay never mentioned it to us.

17,059. *Mr Donald Macrae.*—Did you cottars object to the gamekeeper having anything to do with these lands? The gamekeeper is in along with you?

17,060. *The Chairman.*—It is not a matter of objecting; he says he never heard any proposition about the gamekeeper being there.

17,061. *Mr Donald Macrae.*—My lord, Mr William Mackay has here made a definite statement. I have his letter here.

17,062. *Mr William Mackay.*—Will your lordship take down Mr William Mackay's statement and his letter produced. I gave these cottars the big park of Morvich last January. There is not a gamekeeper on the estate who has got an inch of that park; it is entirely divided among the cottars, but there is one gamekeeper who has got a cow's grazing along with the cottars' grazing, and that was explained to them and that is in their lease; he has two cows perhaps.

17,063. *The Chairman.*—Was it explained to you by Mr Mackay that a gamekeeper was to share the grazing but not the park with the cottars?—No.

17,064. *Mr Donald Macrae.*—May I read now Mr William Mackay's letter? [*The Chairman.*—Yes.]

'Queensgate Chambers, Inverness, 9th June 1893.—
'To Mr Donald Macrae, "Dearg," Morvich, Kintail,
'Stromeferry. Dear Sir. Your letter of 1st inst.
'arrived during my absence from home and was
'acknowledged in my absence. I herewith send you
'copy of the lease entered into between the trustees
'and yourself. The leases with the other cottars of
'Morvich are in the same terms and you will observe
'that the right of grazing which you and the others
'have is a right to graze one cow each on the part of
'the lands of Morvich therein specified; said right
'being let to you in common with the other cottars or
'other person to whom a right of grazing has been or
'shall hereafter be granted by the trustees. When
'Alexander Grant, the gamekeeper at Morvich, was
'engaged he got the right to graze two cows' (not one, as Mr Mackay says,—*Mr William Mackay.*—I corrected myself). Yes, we will have further corrections no doubt before we are done, 'ngaged he got
'the right to graze two cows on the lands in question'
and not on the carse and pasture as Mr Mackay said
a moment ago, 'on the lands in question, and that
'right he still possesses. My information is that the
'grazing is much more than sufficient for you all.
'Yours faithfully. William Mackay.'

Glenshiel. Donald Macrae.

17,065. *The Chairman.*—Did you ever see that letter?—I never heard of the letter till now.

17,066. The provision is (1) the right of grazing one cow in that part of the lands of Morvich between the Obbephuil Bridge and Aultachruinn Burn lying to the south or southwest of the public road leading from Morvich to Shiel, and between said road and a line drawn parallel thereto . . . said right being let to the said second party in common with the other cottars or other persons to whom the right of grazing has been or shall hereafter be granted by the said first parties; (2) the right in common with the other cottars or others . . . . . of cutting, manufacturing into hay, and carrying away grass from the 'Big Park' at Morvich . . . . . in such quantities as the said first parties may determine . . . . . ; (3) the piece of ground at Seanaghortan and pertinents connected therewith on which said second party's dwelling-house is erected; and (4) a piece of potato ground extending to 2 roods or thereby, situated in said 'big park' which piece of potato ground shall be fixed and set apart by the said William Mackay.

17,067. *Mr Mackay.*—My lord, I may explain that Grant, the keeper, had the grazing of his cows upon that ground before the cottars got it, and they were quite aware of that; his cows were there every day. There is as much grazing now as will keep three times their stock, I believe. The Commissioners will see it for themselves.

17,068. *Mr Donald Macrae.*—I have some question to ask Mr Mackay bye-and-bye; for instance, how 20 acres divided by 17 comes to $1\frac{1}{2}$ acre.

17,069. *The Chairman.*—That may come afterwards, but have you anything more to ask this witness?

17,070. *Mr Macrae.*—Oh, yes, my lord, I come now to the question of the high ground. [*To Witness*]. Do you know what portion of land Strathglass way attached to Morvich in the olden times?—Fionna-ghleann and Caimban.

17,071. You spoke about sixteen tenants being in Morvich. Had they the grazing of Fionna-ghleann and Caimban as well as Glenlic?—The sixteen who were there latterly did not go beyond the march of Morvich itself. [*Mr Gordon.*—That is the watershed, is it?—Yes.]

17,072. How long is it since Fionna-ghleann and Caimban were cut away? [*The Chairman.*—He says the sixteen tenants did not go beyond Morvich proper; your question assumes that they had at one time done so]. But before that, the witness said in the most distinct manner that Fionna-ghleann and Caimban did at one time attach to Morvich. [*The Interpreter.*—The sixteen to whom he referred did not possess it, but before their time it was so held]. My question is how long is it since Fionna-ghleann and Caimban were taken from Morvich?—Long since then.

17,073. How long?—Seventy or eighty years since.

17,074. Did those down at Morvich work this farm by having tenants there or by having hired servants, shepherds?—They worked it themselves.

17,075. Did they keep a stock of sheep there?—Yes, cattle and sheep and goats.

17,076. Did they at one time winter all their sheep in those glens? [*The Chairman.*—In what glens?]—In Fionna-ghleann and Caimban. [*Mr Mackay.* These are on the estates of The Chisholm, my lord]. [*Witness*]. Ever since the sheep stock was brought up there they wintered them and summered them.

17,077. Did the sheep stock winter well there? Did they turn out first class sheep?—Yes, they wintered hoggs in the highest part of it at Caimban; and a man was here yesterday who used to winter there

17,078. Give his name?—James Boa.

17,079. Have you wintered hoggs from Morvich on Fionna-ghleann or Caimban?—No, but I was winter-

ing them on Fraoch-choire and up from the keeper's house.

17,080. Did your flocks winter well at Fraoch-choire?—Yes, unless in an exceptional year with very heavy snow.

17,081. Did they turn out first class sheep?—Yes, they were better than those they winter to-day in the low country.

17,082. Did you hear what Alexander Macrae, the first delegate of the day, said with regard to other parts of the glen?—Yes.

17,083. Do you agree with him in what he said?—Yes.

17,084. What high grazings attached to Dornie? [*The Chairman.*—The first question is, did any high grazings attach to Dornie?]—I am not so well acquainted at Glen-Carnoch and over there as in this quarter.

17,085. Do you know Keir?—Yes.

17,086. Do you know Allt-beath?—Yes

17,087. Do you know Ath-nam-Muileach?—Yes.

17,088. *The Chairman.*—Do you mean Allt-beath in Glen-Affaric?

17,089. *Mr Macrae.*—Yes. (*To Witness*). Were sheep wintered there in your day?—Yes, they were always wintering sheep there until Mr Winans took it as a deer forest.

17,090. *The Chairman.*—Were you ever there wintering sheep?—No, I was not off the Kintail estate.

17,091. Have you known of sheep being wintered there in your time?—Yes.

17,092. Where were these sheep from?—They belonged to Mr Williamson who was the sheep farmer at Knochfin in Strathglass.

17,093. Any other farmer?—Dr Fraser was tenant of the other side of Glen-Affaric,—Dr Fraser, Kerrow.

17,094. And did he winter sheep there?—Yes.

17,095. Any one else?—No, the glen was tenanted by the two of them, Mr Williamson and Dr Fraser.

17,096. *Mr Macrae.*—Do you know the farm of Longart that Mr Robertson of Comar had?—I only saw Longart once.

17,097. Did you know of any shepherds in Longart?—Yes.

17,098. Did these shepherds winter their sheep in Longart?—Yes.

17,099. And did these sheep turn out first class?—Yes, very good.

17,100. Now, I should like to ask you this, In your opinion and from your knowledge as a shepherd, do you believe or do you not believe that it would be a wise thing to go back upon these old customs and to have a portion of these high glens attached as a grazing to croft townships on the west coast, as was done in the days of old? [*The Chairman.*—You mean as hill grazing?]—As hill grazing. If I may be allowed to make the remark just now, my lord, to assist matters,—the word summer sheiling has been used as a c ch-word here. [*The Chairman.*—I hope not by me]. Not by you, my lord; by no means. But as I understand it, your Royal Commission is very anxious to ascertain all the facts of the case, and it is quite possible that by the misuse of a catchword the Commission may be misled. Now what I want your Royal Commission to follow out,—what I should like, at any rate, in the most respectful manner to suggest is that your Royal Commission should follow out that these were not properly summer sheilings; the people wintered their flocks there.

17,101. *The Chairman.*—Would you deem it wise for crofters on this side to have grazings in such a place as Allt-beath, for any use to which these grazings may be put,—summer use or any use?—I would consider it very suitable.

17,102. And could the grazings be worked easily?—Yes.

17,103. *Mr Macrae.*—Might I now, my lord, put this question? Supposing in the future a township was created in Glenlic on the club system, would it be wise that the township should have say one or two of those glens and could they work it profitably by a hired servant, a shepherd? [*The Chairman.*—Now, which glens do you mean?]—Say Fionna-ghleann and Caimban.

17,104. *The Chairman.*—Suppose a township to be in Glenlic. Could they profitably graze sheep by a sheep manager or a shepherd in Fionna-ghleann or Caimban?—Yes.

17,105. Would you desire to enter into such an arrangement yourself, and take part in it?—Yes.

17,106. *Mr Macrae.*—I do not think it necessary to follow the subject any farther, as my purpose is served.

17,107. *Mr Shaw Stewart.*—You told us first that in taking up the grazings of Glenlic the tenants would live in the glen, but afterwards we understood you to say that they would work the grazings from their present houses?—Yes, I say that.

17,108. But which do you mean would be the most advantageous way of working the grazing; new houses to be put up in the glen, or working from the old houses?—It would be fully as suitable for them to remain where they are.

17,109. So that it comes to this, that you would be satisfied if you got additional grazing on the south side of Glenlic, those who live in the houses at the mouth of the glen?—Yes.

17,110. *The Chairman.*—When you were a shepherd in Glenlic, how many hirsels were in the glen?—Three; the whole stock was three hirsels, between Morvich and Glenlic.

17,111. Had you one hirsel?—Yes.

17,112. And was there a shepherd for each of the other two hirsels?—Yes.

17,113. How many sheep were in your hirsel as a rule?—At the time of the clearing when Mr Winans got the land my hirsel consisted of about 400.

17,114. Was that about the average size of the hirsel?—I believe that in the time of Peter Macrae the hirsel consisted of 700.

17,115. What was the largest hirsel in your time?—That was the largest number, 700, and these were ewes.

17,116. I was just going to ask what kind of sheep you had, blackfaced or cheviots?—Cheviots.

17,117. What was the size of the other two hirsels?—They were bigger than my hirsel, but they were not so good.

17,118. You had the best hirsel?—The best in the winter time, because it was in the low lying lands,—lower than the others.

17,119. Your hirsel was the lowest?—Yes.

17,120. How many sheep you suppose the glen would keep now?—Is it the whole glen?

17,121. Both sides.—I explained that Morvich does not cross the river.

17,122. I will put it in this way, could you work three hirsels in the glen now, suppose you had it?—Oh, yes.

17,123. And would you expect the glen from what you know of it to have the same carry as it had in the time when you were shepherd?—No.

17,124. What carry would you expect now?—Very little, because the place has gone wild on account of the long time it has been lying waste.

17,125. It has become to a certain extent unsuitable for sheep from its long disuse or change of use?—Yes, until it is burnt.

17,126. Could you say from your own knowledge the number of sheep that the glen would now winter?—By the use of the word glen you include Inchcro?

17,127. Well, how many would the south side winter?—600 or 700.

17,128. The whole of the south side?—Yes.

17,129. And the north side?—The north side, Inchcro side, would winter 800 or 900.

17,130. *Mr Gordon.*—That would be 1500 on the two?—Yes.

17,131. But the wintering of these sheep would mean that there were no crofters in the glen?

17,132. Suppose you wintered 600 or 700 on the south side and 800 or 900 on the north side, would that imply that there were to be no crofters settled there, and that the land was to be devoted solely to grazing?—There would be no tenants' houses in the glen if they were to be wintered.

17,133. Now suppose you had sixteen crofters there,

Glenshiel. Donald Macrae.

with two cows each and two followers—that is sixty-four cattle, and sixteen horses—how many sheep would you suppose it would carry?—It would not be so many with that.

17,134. How many would you take off for that?—I will take 200.

17,135. Would 200 sheep be equal to sixty-four cattle and sixteen horses? How many sheep do you allow for each cow?—Ten.

17,136. Well, that is 600 sheep that would come off; and how many for each horse?—Twenty.

17,137. Then for every crofter settled there you would take off sixty sheep in respect of two cows and followers, and a horse?

17,138. I think it is too high; but if we take half the number?—It would take off the one half of the total number that I mentioned.

17,139. *The Chairman.*—Now, I want to go back to this lease for a moment, which I think you say is signed by yourself; it bears to be signed on each page 'Donald 'Macrae.' The second clause of the lease is this:—'On 'the other hand the second party (that is yourself) 'hereby binds and obliges himself to flit and remove 'himself from the potato ground presently possessed by 'him at the first day of April 1893, and from the other 'subjects presently occupied by him at said term of 'Whitsunday 1893, and to pay to the said first parties' '(that is to say, to Sir James Mackenzie's Trustees) 'for the whole subjects hereby let a yearly rent of two 'pounds, and that at the term of Whitsunday 1894, for 'the occupancy of the said potato ground from the 'first day of April 1893, to the first day of April '1894.' Did you flit and remove from the potato ground which you occupied when the lease was entered into?—I did not have potato land; I had potato land from the sheep farmer so long as I was shepherd to him.

17,140. Did you flit and remove from any subjects occupied by you?—No.

17,141. *Mr Mackay.*—That is a general lease; some of them did remove, and they got new lands instead.

17,142. *The Chairman.*—The lease provides in plain English that he is to flit and remove,—it may or it may not be intended, but he is to flit and remove from the potato ground presently occupied by him, and to flit and remove from the other subjects presently occupied by him. I wish to know if he flitted and removed from any subjects occupied by him in terms of this lease?—Is it land?

17,143. Potato ground and other subjects?—I did not remove the breadth of the paper. I had not it to leave.

17,144. *Mr Mackay.*—Do you know that the cottars were under lease before I gave those leases at Whitsunday last?—I don't know as to that; I was not one of them.

17,145. Do you know that they were?—They were under lease for the bits of ground they had over here.

17,146. The Invershiel cottars?—Yes, and some of the Morvich ones.

17,147. You do not know that all the cottars who have got leases now, at least those of them who had land were under lease from 1887? [*The Chairman.*—He does not know.]

17,148. Well, you mentioned that you gave cottars' rents to the parish minister, and that he divided them among the poor?—That is what I was hearing; I did not pay him myself.

17,149. Well you are quite correct. You know that that was in Sir James Mackenzie's time?—Yes.

17,150. You know that he is now dead and that the estate is in the hands of Trustees?—Yes.

17,151. You were present at my first meeting with the cottars in July of last year? [*The Chairman.* He admitted that already, quite distinctly.]

17,152. Do you remember that you explained to me that Mr William Mackenzie only wanted to give you half the field?—We were speaking about that.

17,153. Do you remember that I at once said I thought you ought to have the whole, and that I would recommend the Trustees to give you the whole?—You said you would do what you could for us.

17,154. And do you remember that you cheered me, and that one old woman cried out 'God bless him'?—Yes, I heard that. Glenshiel. Donald Macrae.

17,155. Then about the tenant of Fionna-ghleann and Caimban, when did they give up these lands, did you say?—It was long before my time.

17,156. And it was long before the sixteen tenants gave up Morvich?—I was some time,—not a very long time.

17,157. And I think you said that the Morvich tenants gave up seventy-three years ago?—Yes.

17,158. So you don't know really about Caimban and Fionna-ghleann of your own knowledge?—There were no tenants there in my time, although I know the place.

17,159. You mentioned that John Boa who was here yesterday wintered sheep at Caimban and Fionna-ghleann?—James Boa.

17,160. Was he at the time shepherd for Mr Williamson, the tenant of the farm?—Mr Williamson.

17,161. *Mr Sutherland.*—You stated that the old farm Morvich and Glenlic could not carry as many sheep now as it did before. I wish to ascertain whether the calculation you gave afterwards was based upon its carrying power in your time or what it is now?—It would not be suitable to put many sheep on the place at all now, but cattle; the place has gone wild.

17,162. And do you think that small tenants, such as you have indicated, would be in a better position to put cattle on it than a large farmer?—I think small tenants would keep the marches better and would herd the cattle up the glen better.

17,163. And are you of opinion that the pasture would get better or get worse under cattle?—The pasture would get better; the cause of the pasture going back is the scarcity of cattle.

17,164. So that you think the pasture would improve in the future if such an arrangement were carried out?—Yes, I think so.

17,165. Then in regard to the number of sheep's grazing allowed for a horse and a cow, was it the custom of the large farmers when they allowed a horse and a cow to these shepherds to take off a number of stock equal to what they denoted?—The shepherds did not have these in my time, it was a sheep allowance they had, and a money payment.

17,166. Did you yourself see in your experience any sheep taken off a farm because of a cow or a horse given to a shepherd?—No, but I always heard that it was ten sheep that were set for grazing as against a cow.

17,167. But never in your experience did you see the sheep taken off in order to make room for a cow or a horse?—No.

17,168. *Mr Gordon.*—You stated that the number of sheep would be reduced to 750, that would be barely fifty sheep to each of the sixteen tenants. Now what rent would you consider each of the tenants should pay for the fifty sheep, two cows, two stirks, and a horse?—For the rent that I would state I would not get the place, and, therefore, I will not mention it.

17,169. *The Chairman.*—Would you tell it in confidence to me?—I cannot tell.

DUNCAN MACRAE, Allt-a'-chruinn, Morvich, Kintail (43). (Examined in Gaelic through an Interpreter.) Duncan Macrae.

17,170. *The Chairman.*—Are you a crofter?—I am a cottar.

17,171. Do you pay a rent?—I was paying no rent till now, but rent has been put on me this year.

17,172. Are you under lease?—I signed a lease.

17,173. You heard the evidence, I think, of Donald Macrae the last witness?—I did.

17,174. And do you agree with his evidence as to Glenlic?—Yes.

17,175. Do you wish to make any addition to that evidence?—I think not, I am quite satisfied with it.

17,176. And you concur in the evidence?—Yes.

17,177. *Mr Sutherland.*—Where is Allt-a'-chruinn?

lenshiel. —It is in the march of the forest about 1½ miles from here, on the march between Morvich and Invershiel.

17,178. Are you practically included in the cottars we have already heard about? [*Mr Mackay.*—Yes, Allt-a'-chruinn is included in the Morvich cottars.]

17,179. *Mr Donald Macrae,* Plockton.—There are two or three points that the last witness did not mention in regard to Morvich and Glenlic, some places he did not mention. Do you know the Morvich side of Glenlic well?—I know it middling well.

17,180. Do you know Lonamon?—I am not good at remembering specific names.

17,181. Do you mean that you do not remember the name?—I have heard the name.

17,182. Do you know the place?—I saw the place.

17,183. Is there old arable land there?—There is arable land there.

17,184. Is there old arable land there?—There is.

17,185. With the remains of cultivation?—Yes, I would know that it had been cultivated.

17,186–8. How many acres of old arable would you say there are there?—I cannot specify the number. There is also another place there where there is a lot of arable land.

17,189. How many acres would you say?—I cannot specify the acres.

17,190. Is there old arable at Lubnatalloch?—There is.

17,191. Is there old arable at Dalnastrone?—There is.

17,192. Is there old arable at Gorstan Vargortan?—There is.

17,193. Do you know the Inchcroe side?—Yes.

17,194. Do you know Lubnapair?—Yes.

17,195. Is there old arable land there?—There is.

17,196. Is all this old arable land in Glenlic low-lying and subject to flooding, or are there some portions that are considerably above the level of the low-lying land?—Some of it is so high that the flood never comes on it and never did.

17,197. *The Chairman.*—And the rest of it?—The river comes over its banks in some places.

17,198. In other words, some of the old arable is subject to flood, and some of it is above flood?—Just so.

17,199. *Mr Macrae.*—Did Mr Mackay tell the people at that time that it was arranged about this park that the gamekeeper was to have a double portion of it?

17,200. *The Chairman.*—I must put this question myself. Did Mr Mackay say anything about the gamekeeper?—I did not hear him.

17,201. *Mr Mackay.*—Will your lordship ask him if he is a mason.

17,202. *The Chairman.*—Are you a mason to trade?—Yes, generally.

17,203. Were you bred a mason?—I did not learn it as a trade.

17,204. Do you know it as a trade?—I do.

17,205. And you take mason work whenever you can get it, I suppose, at a reasonable wage?—I do.

17,206. *Mr Sutherland.*—Would you build a house if you got a place to build it in Glenlic? [*Mr Mackay.*—He has got a very nice house where he is.]—I could.

17,207. *The Chairman.*—Would you be willing to leave your present house and build a new house in Glenlic if you got land there?—If it came before me I would leave my present house and build a new house in Glenlic if I got land there.

17,208. Are you anxious to leave your present house, or upon the whole would you prefer to remain where you are?—Considering the trouble, I would prefer to live where I am if I got the land and be permitted to live where I am.

17,209. What did your present house cost you?—I built it myself and did the carpenter work, and spent about £20 in timber for it.

17,210. And it is a new house, I suppose?—Yes, it is not quite finished yet. [*Mr Mackay.*—Covered with felt.]

17,211. *Mr Sutherland.*—How many apartments are in the house?—I have two rooms and a closet downstairs, and two attics above. Glenshiel. Duncan Macrae.

William Mackay

William Mackay, Solicitor, Inverness, Agent for Sir James T. Mackenzie's Trustees—*examined.*

17,212. *The Chairman.*—You wish to submit a statement, I understand?—Yes, in regard to the Kintail estate. It is as follows:—

This estate forms a small portion of what was originally the estate of Kintail, belonging to the Earls of Seaforth. Originally Kintail embraced not only the whole of the present parish of Kintail, but also the present parish of Invershiel, which was disjoined from the parish of Kintail in 1726. The estate was purchased by the late Sir James Thompson Mackenzie from Seaforth's Trustees in 1869, the price paid by him being £70,000.

The present estate consists of (1st) the farms of Invershiel, Achnagart, Strathanloan, and Cluanie, all let as one holding to Messrs Alexander Maclennan and Duncan Macrae, as a sheep farm, at a rent of £625; (2nd) the deer forest of Morvich and Inchcroe; right of fishing on the river Croe, and the shooting over the said sheep farm all let to Mr E. S. Bowlby, at a rent of £1000, but which after deduction of Keeper's wages and rates payable by the proprietors may be put down at £880; (3rd) Cluanie Inn let to Roderick Morrison at a rent of £8; (4th) potato ground, and hay ground, and cow's grazing let in allotments to twenty-five cottars paying from £1, 15s. to £2, 2s. each; and (5th) potato plots let to two cottars paying 3s. 9d. and 1s. 6d. respectively.

The whole rental of the estate amounts to £1563, 16s. 9d. The estate extends to 25,881 acres, which, approximately is now divided as follows, viz.:—the deer forest 11,000 acres; the sheep farm 14,521 acres; cottars' allotments and land over which they have a right of grazing 360 acres, in addition to the right of the Invershiel cottars to graze their cattle on the farm of Invershiel.

The estate consists of the valley of Glenlic, and the half of the valley of Glenshiel, with very high mountains, several of which are about 3000 feet in height, and one of which, Scour Fhuaran, reaches a height of 3505 feet. The valleys are low, deep, and narrow, and the mountains rise very sharply and are, as a rule, exceedingly steep. The low lands are greatly subject to floods, and are often destroyed by landslips, and gravel and stones washed from the mountain sides. The rental of 1727, to which I am about to refer, shows that the two tenants who then occupied Morvich retained a considerable portion of the rents 'for damage by waters.' Since I became factor in June 1892, I have expended about £600 in repairing and renewing the embankments which protect Morvich and Inchcroe from the rivers Croe and Conaig. The arable land at Morvich and at Invershiel is divided among the cottars, except a field at Morvich in the occupancy of the proprietors, and on which they grow potatoes, corn, and hay. The cultivable land at Achnagart is cultivated by the shepherd and gamekeeper there. There is no other land worth cultivating on the estate, except some plots connected with Cluanie Inn.

Kintail has always been a grazing estate, and very little corn has ever been grown upon it. That little has for many years been virtually discontinued.

From a rental prepared by the Forfeited Estate's Commissioners in 1727, it appears that the land now forming the estate then consisted of nine holdings which were in the occupancy of the following tenants, viz.:—

1. Achnagart, John Macrae.
2. Easter Achghiuran, Morris Macrae.
3. Wester Achghiuran, John Macrae.
4. Wester Achghiuran, Evan Maclennan.
5. Little Achyark, Malcolm Macrae and Murdo Macrae, joint-tenants.

Glenshiel. William Mackay.

6. Meikle Achyark, Ann Macrae, Duncan Macrae, and John Macrae, Junior, joint-tenants.
7. Inchcroe, Duncan Macrae.
8. Morvich, Farquhar Macrae and Alexander Macrae, joint-tenants.
9. Invershiel, Colin Murchison.

A Kintail Rental, dated 1756, shows that in that year what is now the estate of Kintail was divided into eight holdings, as follows, viz.:—

1. Achnagart occupied by Donald Macrae and Christopher Macrae.
2. Easter Achghiuran occupied by Duncan Macrae and Alexander Roy Macrae.
3. Wester Achghiuran occupied by Donald Macrae and Farquhar Macrae.
4. Invershiel occupied by John Macrae and Alexander Macrae.
5. Morvich occupied by Donald Dearg Maclennan and John and Donald Maclennan.
6. Little Achyark occupied by Alexander Maclennan, Donald Maclennan, and Donald Macleod.
7. Meikle Achyark occupied by Duncan Maclennan, Farquhar Maclennan, and Donald Macrae.
8. Inchcroe occupied by Christopher Macrae, Alexander Maclennan, Donald Bain Macrae, and John Du Macrae.

I have not been able to find any rental of the estate between 1756 and 1856, when the estate first appears in the Valuation Roll. In 1856 the holdings were:—

1. Invershiel, including Cluanie, let to Farquhar Macrae.
2. Morvich let to the heirs of Alexander Macrae.
3. Achnagart let to Donald Macrae.
4. Grazings of Inchcroe let to Messrs Hunter and Williamson; and
5. Cluanie Inn let to Donald Munro.

These holdings practically continued until 1874, when Achnagart was added to Invershiel and Cluanie. In 1882 the lands of Morvich and Inchcroe, which had for several years been occupied by Mr Allan R. Mackenzie (now Sir Allan Mackenzie), were let to Mr W. L. Winans, by whom they were converted into a deer forest. Mr Winans occupied them until 1892.

It does not appear from the rentals that there ever were any crofters or sub-tenants, properly speaking, on the estate. The tenants of Morvich, however, sometimes gave potato ground and grazing for one cow to certain cottars for which each paid £5 a year. When the Crofters Act passed in 1886, the cottars had no ground or grazing whatever. In 1887 Sir James Mackenzie gave them lots of land for potato ground at Invershiel, and hay land at Inchcroe and Achghiuran. Last year the cottars applied for increased holdings, and the following lands were divided among them, viz.:—

1. The big park of Morvich extending to 20½ acres.
2. Carse ground at Morvich extending to 40 acres.
3. Arable land at Invershiel extending to 8 acres, and
4. Hay parks at Achghiuran extending to 17½ acres.

In addition to these lands the cottars have a right of cows' grazing on the lands of Morvich and Invershiel.

In addition to the tenants of Invershiel and Cluanie Inn, and the twenty-seven cottars who have holdings, there are now on the estate six gamekeepers and eight shepherds. All the keepers except one have houses of their own, and four of the shepherds are in the same position.

(Signed)

William Mackay.

That is my written statement, but I should like to add just one word with reference to these leases of which a previous witness spoke, if your lordship will allow me.

17,213. Certainly?—It was only in June of last year that I was appointed factor on this estate.

17,214. Who was the previous factor?—Mr William Mackenzie, solicitor, Dingwall, now procurator-fiscal of Ross-shire; and on the occasion of my first visit to the estate in July a deputation of the cottars met me, and informed me that they had applied, in Mr Mackenzie's time, for the big park at Morvich.

17,215. You knew nothing of that before?—No, I knew nothing of that. They told me that Mr Mackenzie expressed his willingness to give 12 acres of the park, but that he wished to retain the remainder as an enclosure for the forest ponies. I then carefully went over the field, and I took a statement from the cottars, counted them, and made a calculation from which I was perfectly satisfied that they would require the whole park and also the carse, which is very good grazing ground extending to about 40 acres, and the cows' grazing; and I informed them that in my opinion they ought to have the whole park, and that I thought we could arrange to make another enclosure for the ponies in the forest. On my return to Inverness I wrote to the trustees expressing my opinion, and they at once authorised me to give the park to the cottars, and, in fact, to carry out my own scheme. I returned to Kintail on the 20th of January, and I again had a meeting with the cottars; and after meeting them I got back to the hotel and wrote this statement which I hold in my hand, giving the subjects exactly as contained in the leases, and the tenants and their rents; and I met them again on the high road at Morvich, read this statement to them, and, if I remember well, explained it in Gaelic. In any case, I satisfied myself that they perfectly understood what rights and subjects they were to have, and what rent they were to pay. As I have already indicated in a question which I put, they cheered me, and I heard one old lady shout out 'God bless him.' I thought that they were perfectly satisfied, and until to-day I never heard that they were discontented in any way whatever. As they approved of this statement, I returned to Inverness and prepared new leases almost entirely upon the lines of the old leases which they had since 1887, the only exception being that I increased their holdings, and to some extent increased their rents, the rent that I put upon the arable land which they got, the cow and follower's grazing, and the hay ground, being only £2. So far as I saw, they were delighted with the reasonableness, as they thought it, of that rent; and that is how the matter now stands. Glenshiel. William Mackay.

17,216. Have you any objection to advise your clients, the trustees, to have these cottars now placed under the Crofters Act, notwithstanding these leases?—I don't think the trustees can do it; I don't think they can do anything at all as trustees in that way. Were it not that they are trustees, the cottars' rent would now probably be paid to the poor, as Sir James Mackenzie did. We cannot do it, and we are hampered considerably, I may mention, in the management of the estate by the fact that it is administered by trustees.

17,217. Are you of opinion that it would be advisable, if it could be fairly done, to let these cottars have more land still?—I don't think there is any arable land that they could possibly get with any advantage to them; and, so far as the grazing is concerned, I think they have really quite sufficient.

17,218. How do they live? They don't subsist by their holdings, I suppose?—Oh, no, these are simply their homes.

17,219. How do they live?—Some of them are tradesmen, some are shepherds, they informed me that they were engaged on sheep farms here and there, and I understand that some of them are fishermen.

17,220. Is their livelihood precarious?—My understanding is that they are pretty well off. You have heard that they were able to stock ground.

17,221. Are they not rather in the position of small tenants, crushed into very narrow areas, and surrounded by large tracts of ground in the occupation of other people?—Well, there is no doubt but the area occupied by them is very small compared with the whole estate. But I don't think they are in poor circumstances; I understand they are pretty comfortable.

17,222. Don't you think a man with a rent of £2 would be much the better of getting some more land, and a higher rent, of course, if the land could be legitimately got for him?—Yes, if they became farmers entirely, but, as they are, I think they have as much

land as is good for them. In fact, one of them told myself, after the division of the Big Park, that I had given too much for some of them.

17,223. Do you think that, speaking of them generally, they are satisfied with their present position since the enlargement was granted?—I know that, when I visited this place in January, after I read this statement to them, they were delighted. I also know that when I came back again, I think in June,—May or June, I forget which,—when they signed the leases, that they were delighted, every one of them.

17,224. Have any of them expressed dissatisfaction with the state of matters they are now in?—Not one. The only thing approaching a complaint that I have ever heard of was a letter which I received in Inverness, from one "Donald Dearg" I think, requesting me to mention whether Grant, the keeper at Allt-a'-chruinn, at Morvich rather, had a right of grazing over the place, and I replied that he had, and that he had the grazings before the cottars got it, and I sent him a copy of his lease. The leases are all in the same terms.

17,225. How was the £2 rent fixed?—I fixed it myself, and I may mention that, in fixing it, I thought that I was—

17,226. Erring on the safe side?—Erring on the favourable side to them. I can honestly say that I desired to see them as comfortable as possible.

17,227. Still, I suppose you concede that their holdings are narrow, and their position is risky?—I do not think there is any risk about their position.

17,228. I mean their livelihood,—more so than you would like to see it if their position could be improved?—So far as livelihood is concerned, I should like to see the most of them engaged in fishing.

17,229. Do any of them engage in fishing?—Some of them do.

17,230. Have they boats?—Yes.

17,231. Is that fishing round the doors, or do they go abroad?—I really do not know whether any of them go away. Loch Duich used to be a very good fishing loch, but I am sorry to say it has not been so of late years.

17,232. Do you know if any of them make anything by the disposal of fish?—I know one does.

17,233. Of course they catch fish here and there for their own use, but beyond that do they make anything of fishing?—I know there is one man, I don't remember his name now, but he fishes and sells.

17,234. What—herring or white fish?—I think principally white fish.

17,235. Where does he sell them?—Principally to people in the district, Miss Mackintosh of the hotel, and others.

17,236. Neighbours?—Neighbours and the hotel.

17,237. I suppose you concede that they have no proper facilities for the transit of fish, looking to the perishable nature of the article?—Not for large quantities. Salmon, for instance, is sent on by the mail gig and in carts to Strome-Ferry.

17,238. But I think you would agree they have no proper facilities?—No, I must confess that they have not proper facilities; it is a long way round by boat to Strome-Ferry.

17,239. And a troublesome water to navigate?—And part of it a troublesome water to navigate.

17,240. Then the fishing is not a reliable source of livelihood?—I don't know that it is for all.

17,241. Leaving the fishing aside for the moment, is their source of livelihood occasional labour?—I think they could almost always get labour.

17,242. Where?—If they would only go away, like other people.

17,243. I do not mean going away, but round about?—Well, occasionally round about.

17,244. Do you know any one of their number who may be said to have constant employment within five or ten miles of his holding?—Well, I don't know the people very well yet; I have only been five or six times here since my appointment as agent.

17,245. You had no knowledge of the estate, and no connection with the estate, prior to your appointment?—None whatever. I had driven through it once or twice, but that was all.

17,246. Do any of them get employment in connection with the deer forest?—I think there are two of them who are employed as gillies, if I remember well.

17,247. Do they make anything by the sale of what they are able to sell—I mean produce of any kind—to the tenant of the forest, when there was a tenant?—I should think not, except eggs.

17,248. That is a trifle if it did exist?—That is a trifle. But I may mention, with reference to the labour, that when letting the contract of one of the river embankments on my very first visit in July last year, to Mr Murchison, Dingwall, I made it a condition with him that he should employ local men, and he agreed; and I stated this to the cottars in Mr Murchison's presence, so that there would be no mistake about it. The next time I came I was very much surprised to find that they were not employed, and, upon my making inquiry, I was informed, and it was admitted, that, at the very first pay, they were not satisfied with the wages that he offered them, and they threw up the work.

17,249. What were the wages?—I think it was 3s. a day, but I am not certain. But it was the same wages that he was giving his other labourers.

17,250. Are you of opinion that, at a rent of £2 a year, they are able to take that rent out of their holdings without extraneous labour?—Well, if they did nothing else I don't suppose they could live upon the holdings, but these are more their homes, and I may mention that they have got beautiful cattle; your lordship will find as good cattle among the crofters here as you will find anywhere.

17,251. But you think you could not depend on getting the rent except with the aid of money made outside the home?—Oh, I don't think so; I don't expect that they should, without labouring elsewhere, be able even to live upon the holdings; but, as I have already explained, it is really a home for them.

17,252. You did not fix these holdings as fishers' holdings solely?—Well, I had more the fisher in my eye than anything else. I hoped the herring would go back to Loch Duich, as it had left. We know the habits of the herring, that it goes and it comes.

17,253. It generally goes?—It sometimes goes, but it also returns occasionally.

17,253*a*. *Mr Shaw Stewart.*—There was a point that arose a little earlier in the day, not with regard to your statement, but about a dyke which you were examining a witness about. You asked about a dyke which you offered them £20 to help to repair, and you afterwards said it cost £59. Are we to understand that you offered the £20 wages as an equivalent for the £59 worth of work?—What I thought was this. The dyke had been destroyed by the flood, and I said to these people,—'Now, of course, you will have to enclose 'this for yourselves,' and they said,—'Oh, we cannot 'do that.' 'Well,' I said, 'surely among seventeen of 'you you can do that.' Oh, they could not do it. After a little talk I said,—'Well, I don't know what it will cost 'you, I will give you,'—I think it was £20, but I should not like to be very definite,—at any rate I named a sum,—and no, they would not do it. The only man who really expressed his willingness to help was the last witness here, the mason, and I was very pleased with him; he was the only one who offered to come forward. Well, at last I said we would do it ourselves, and I ordered the thing to be done, and I have got the account,—£59 odds.

17,254. *The Chairman.*—Was it not rather too much to ask or expect them to do for £20 what has cost you £59?—I did not know what it would cost, and they could do the work themselves.

17,255. You offered it as a round sum if they would do it?—Quite so. I did not want to have more contracts, and I wanted them to do the work with their own hands.

17,256. You think now, from the cost to which it has put the estate, they were wise to refuse?—Well, I thought they might do something for getting the land.

Glenshiel. William Mackay.

17,257. *Mr Shaw Stewart.*—The repairs would ultimately benefit themselves?—Solely benefit themselves; they were entirely for their own benefit.

17,257*a*. *Mr Sutherland.*—I understand you have not been long responsible for the management of this estate?—No, only a year last month.

17,258. So that practically you cannot give us very much information about it?—No, I do not know very much about the past history of the estate.

17,259. You gave us the distribution of the land on the Kintail estate,—11,000 acres in deer forest, and 14,521 in sheep farms, and 360 acres otherwise disposed of. That land, the 360 acres, is principally in the occupation of small holders?—Yes.

17,260. How many, do you know?—There are seventeen at Morvich, and ten at Invershiel; only I have to explain that, of the seventeen, there are two without cattle.

17,261. And you stated that 275 of these 360 acres were disposed of by the arrangement recently made?—Oh, more than that; there are 275 acres over which they have a right of grazing, and they have also got the big field at Morvich,—20½ acres, that they never had; they have got the carse,—40 acres; and they have got additional land at Ach-a'-ghiurain.

17,262. But all these are included in the 360 acres?—Yes.

17,263. And how many families do you say have got the 360 acres?—Well, there are twenty-seven holders. Some of them, I think, are bachelors, and some of them old maids.

17,264. That, of course, may be a result more than a cause?—No doubt.

17,265. That is a distribution of the land which I think you would not be inclined to justify yourself, and which I don't call upon you to justify, seeing you had not the disposal of it; but do you think it is a reasonable distribution of the land?—Yes, I do not think the estate could be put to better purpose.

17,266. From what point of view; from the landlord's point of view?—From all points.

17,267. Do you refer to those twenty-seven families on the 360 acres?—Well, I have already stated that, in my opinion, they are just as well off, if not better, than they would be if they had larger holdings.

17,268. Would that doctrine not apply to the lessee of the deer forest and the sheep farmers?—No.

17,269. Plenty land is good for them, but not for the families of the small tenants?—It may be good for suitable people, you know, suitable tenants.

17,270. What determines the suitability?—Various things.

17,271. Such as—?—Knowledge of sheep farming, knowledge of farming generally, capital.

17,272. Do you think the witness who gave his evidence about sheep farming to-day had not the necessary knowledge of sheep farming?—My opinion of them is that they have not.

17,273. They could not?—I don't think that they would succeed as sheep farmers.

17,274. Then may I ask who occupies the 11,000 acres that is deer forest?—Mr Bowlby.

17,275. Has he got sufficient knowledge to qualify him for such a large share of the estate?—He is a capital shot; he is a good sportsman.

17,276. That is the qualification?—That is the qualification.

17,277. Do you say there are no good shots in Kintail?—Too many, I am sorry to say.

17,278. But if it is a qualification, you cannot have too many of them?—That is not the only qualification.

17,279. Then you said you would prefer to see the people fishermen?—I should like to see them fishermen.

17,280. Why, may I ask?—Because the sea is very near, and it used to be a splendid loch this.

17,281. And then they would not ask the land?—No, I don't object to their asking the land.

17,282. What you object to is their getting it?—I have gone as far as I could; I have given them more than ever they had.

17,283. But you are quite prepared to justify the present distribution of land upon this estate of Kintail?—Oh, yes. Glenshiel. William Mackay.

17,284. And is it better than it was when you became factor for the estate?—I think so. I think perhaps the holdings were a little too small, and some had nothing at all.

17,285. But you think the limit has now been reached?—I think so. I recommended what I thought proper, and my recommendation was given effect to.

17,286. So you think the distribution of the land in the estate of Kintail is the best that could be devised?—I think so, upon the whole.

17,287. Then I don't know that you were speaking from experience with regard to the principal productions of the estate, they seem to be floods and landslips?—They are the most striking productions.

17,288. Have you ever seen a flood or a landslip?—I have seen the upper part of Glenlic almost one lake in October last year.

17,289. Have you ever seen the fen country of England?—Yes, and I have seen it flooded, but there is very little arable land there.

17,290. Have you seen the valley of the Shannon in Ireland?—No, I have not.

17,291. Would you be surprised to learn that it is sometimes a lake from end to end, and yet contains some of the best wheat growing land in Ireland?—And I suppose the valley of the Nile too.

17,292. So I suppose the flooding is not continuous?—Well, in Kintail, you do not know when the flood is to come; and not only that, but when I was dividing lands at Achaghiurain, I did not know of these floods, and I divided what I thought the best land among the cottars, the low, rich looking land, and they came to me afterwards and said,—'We cannot take that 'land, because it will be flooded in autumn, before we 'can get our hay off.'

17,293. And then are the floods worse in this valley you refer to than anywhere here about?—Yes, I don't know that you would get two glens so liable to floods on the west coast, for this reason:—The rainfall is very high, and the mountains are very steep; and the rain comes down on the mountains and flows very rapidly down to the rivers, so that the spates come suddenly, and then the channels are choked. You will find, if you take notice to-morrow, there are certain portions of the river Croe where the rocks come in and form what you might call a narrow neck, and the stream is obstructed and thrown back, and floods the land.

17,294. You are aware, I have no doubt, that we have heard this same objection in almost every place we have gone to from people holding your views?—You did not hear it regarding Glen-Urquhart, where I gave evidence.

17,295. Well, but we heard it in regard to Glen-Moriston?—The heights of Glen-Moriston are very much the same as this, but the glen is much wider.

17,296. You saw the people settled at Glen-Moriston, cultivating land along the banks of the river?—Oh, yes.

17,297. We hear it with regard to one valley, and we see the result there?—Well, but if they wish to see the result it would be worth the Commissioners' while to come here in September or October or January and see for themselves. I don't ask them to take my word for it at all; I saw it once, and it was quite sufficient.

17,298. In other words, you have stormy weather here in winter, and good weather in summer?—Yes, only the summer is exceedingly short, and they don't cut the grass till August, and don't get it off the ground till September or October, and if they are not very lively it is taken off in a different manner.

17,299. But you have heard the statement that a witness only saw one flood?—I did, I think his memory must have been at fault.

17,300. You who have no connection with this place, say that you know better than the man who is a native?—I have examined witnesses, and they themselves objected to taking certain lands because of the floods.

17,301. Were they in Glenlic?—No, in Glenshiel.

17,302. Now, with regard to the conditions of the

lease entered into with Mr Winans; the essential point was, if I am right, the deprivation of this right that the people had of being on the land there. Have you any objection to show us the lease entered into on the part of the estate and Mr Winans, respectively?—Not the slightest, but I do not quite understand the preliminary part of your question.

17,303. I will put another question. You remember the part which the chairman read out of that lease?—Of Mr Winan's lease?

17,304. Of the lease entered into between you and he cottars of Morvich?—Oh, yes.

17,305. The connection between the two I want to establish is this. Do you admit the construction of that case put before us by Mr Macrae?—No, if you look at the lease you will see that all the leases, which I will put in if you like, are on the same footing. That clause as to giving up their previous lands was framed by myself.

17,306. For what purpose, may I ask?—For this purpose.—Some of the cottars held lands before Whitsunday last other than the lands they now have. There was a general redistribution and division of the land, and that clause was put in with the purpose of making it perfectly clear that they were to give up the old lands and take their share by lot of the whole. The whole thing was put into one pot. That was the object.

17,307. Could you not have superimposed the new right upon the old one?—No, for this reason, that I wanted that each cottar should have the whole of his arable land in one place, not a spot here and a spot in another place.

17,308. Is it the fact that it was upon these rights they had before that the case was determined, as stated by Mr Macrae?—Oh, no. When the case was determined they had no rights whatever, so far as I can see. And in 1887 the lands were let to them on lease, which is very much the same as the present lease. The lease that your lordship has now read took away from them the arable lands which they had from 1887, and gave them new arable lands, possibly the same, if the lot fell accordingly; but in any case, the whole lands available were disposed of by lot among them all.

17,309. But could you give us the terms of the decision of the Court of Session?—I have never read the case, but it is open to all of you in the Session Cases.

17,310. The statement is, as you understand, that the decision of the Court of Session rested upon certain rights that the people had, and that those rights were taken away by this lease?—Well, I don't believe that that is the case at all. I do not see, as a lawyer, how the decision could possibly rest upon the plea put forth. But the process in the case can be seen, and the decision can be seen.

17,311. What I want explained is the object of that second part of the lease?—The object, I have explained, is simply to take from them the lands they had up to Whitsunday 1893. The case which Mr Macrae referred to was decided about ten years ago, long before I had anything to do with the estate.

17,312. And was it not founded upon immemorial possession of certain subjects?—No, I do not think so; because, according to the law of Scotland, immemorial possession without a written title is nothing.

17,313. I beg to differ?—I am talking from the legal point of view; you are talking from a theorist point of view.

17,314. I am talking from the constitutional point of view?—You will find that his lordship will agree with me on that point.

17,315. That is possible; all lawyers may agree. But you deny that the object of this agreement was to take away such right as the people possessed?—Most emphatically; and I add this, that I never heard of this action at the time except, of course, seeing the newspapers. I had not that action, or the alleged old rights of the people, in view at all.

17,316. But have you got the documents of this case?—No, I have never read them, and have never seen them.

17,317. But you will have in your possession a copy of the lease by which certain things were granted to Mr Winans?—I think I can give you the lease in favour of Mr Winans. I am certain I can.

17,318. Then I take it that generally you are not in a position to give us assistance in finding out land suitable under the question referred to us?—No, I am not.

17,319. *Mr Maccallum.*—Do you say that you are satisfied that the present distribution of the land among the people is the best possible?—I think so, under the circumstances.

17,320. And there are 11,000 acres of it under deer?—Yes.

17,321. That is Inchcro and Morvich?—Yes, with the mountain lands, you know.

17,322. Have you in view now that that land is withdrawn altogether from productive uses, all these 11,000 acres? They produce really nothing?—Oh, well, it is production in a sense.

17,323. What does it produce?—It produces rent.

17,324. That is for the proprietor?—Yes; and whatever goes to the proprietor is spent upon the estate, the bulk of it. Last year almost the whole rent was spent on the estate.

17,325. But the land itself though is laid waste; is not that so?—No.

17,326. Well, what does it produce?—It produces deer, and deer produce rent.

17,327. Well, is there any comparison now between the value of the deer that it produces and the value of the old products?—Do you mean the sheep stock?

17,328. Yes. Are the deer as valuable?—Well, the fact that 11,000 acres of almost the highest and most rugged land in Scotland is withdrawn from sheep farming does not affect the market, not to the extent of a penny. We have got far too many sheep in the United Kingdom at present.

17,329. I don't ask just now how far it affects the price of mutton, but you say it is the best possible use to make it a deer forest, and I bring under your view that there is very little produced now by these 11,000 acres, whereas formerly the land produced food supply.—It produced a little, and the last tenant of it, except the proprietor, became bankrupt. For the benefit of the people all round he made himself bankrupt. Sheep farming does not pay. I beg your pardon, it was not the last tenant, it was Mr Macrae.

17,330. Is it always the case that when the farmer fails that the land must be poor?—Not always.

17,331. Actually they fail although they may have very good land?—Oh, quite.

17,332. So that the lands of Morvich and Inchcro may be very good for all that for farming?—So far as the illustration goes.

17,333. So far as the fact of the failure goes, it does not show anything with regard to these lands?—It shows that that farm did not pay.

17,334. It did not pay him, but it does not show that the pasture of these lands is not good?—Oh, no; of course, the pasture can be seen.

17,335. Then you say it is high and rugged ground. Does it not come down to very near the sea-level?—Yes, but the great bulk of it, the most of the land at the sea-level consists of these two fields to which I have already referred.

17,336. We have heard about it from other witnesses, but there is a good deal of land beside the river Cro.—Yes, that is quite true, but it is meadow land, and very narrow; it is a narrow glen.

17,337. Then a witness before us to-day said that the land has deteriorated very much?—I believe so.

17,338. Since it was put under deer?—Under sheep.

17,339. Under deer, he stated; that having been laid waste under deer, it would not now winter so many sheep.—Well, I understood him to say under sheep; if he said under deer I do not agree with him, because grazing rather improves under cattle and deer, but not under sheep. [*Mr. Gordon.*—I think his meaning was want of burning.—Possibly parts of it required burning.]

17,340. But, having been laid waste and the stock withdrawn, that the land is not now so suitable for

Glenshiel.

William Mackay.

sheep farming, he said?—Well, the longer a farm has a rest from sheep the better it becomes. Sheep don't improve land.

17,341. Yes, but we have this opinion of the practical farmer, you differ from him?—If he referred to deer I differ from him.

17,342. Yes, he said that now, having been laid waste, and the stock withdrawn, that it would not winter?—Except this, that it is possible that the heather has not been sufficiently burned; there may be something in that.

17,343. But in any case, under this management, which you say is the best possible, this witness says that the land has very much deteriorated, and will not now carry the stock it used to carry when it was managed in a different way?—Well, then, I differ from him entirely.

17,344. But he knows the ground?—And so do I, a good part of it.

17,345. What experience have you had of it; you have not had such a long experience as he had?—Well, no, I am not such an old man, but I have gone over the ground.

17,346. You cannot talk of the old stock it carried?—No, especially about Kintail.

17,347. Then you say that the people have benefited by the rents paid to the landlord. Now, what benefit have these cottars in Morvich got from these rents?—Well, there is money spent in the district.

17,348. Did they get that work that you proposed to give to them?—No, they would not take it.

17,349. They would not take at £20 what cost you £60?—I did not mean that; I thought you meant the other work on the river embankment. I do not know whether some of them worked at the dykes or not. A contractor took it from me; I do not know whether they did the work or not.

17,350. But in any case it cost thrice what you offered them. Then this forest was rented I think for some years by Mr Winans?—Yes.

17,351. Did he by his occupancy benefit the people; did he buy any of their produce?—I do not know that he did; he had a number of keepers and watchers who lived in the place, and, I believe, lived right royally.

17,352. The keepers?—So I am told.

17,353. How do you mean?—They lived very well, very comfortably, buying produce.

17,354. From these cottars?—I do not know; there is not much produce that these cottars can sell.

17,355. Well, it does not matter how right royally they may have lived, if they did not buy from the cottars?—They must have bought from the district.

17,356. Are you sure they bought from the district?—They must have bought something from the district.

17,357. Has Mr Winans been here ever himself?—My information is that he was never in Kintail; I don't know whether that is correct.

17,358. And bought none of the produce of the estate?—No, he did not reside on the estate; there is no lodge.

17,359. *Mr Donald Macrae*, Plockton.—Mr Mackay mentioned that the last tenant of Morvich left bankrupt?—I corrected myself, the one before the last.

17,360. Would Mr Mackay give the name?—Yes, Patrick Macrae.

17,361. How many years is it since he left?—He left at Whitsunday 1871, so far as I can make out from the Valuation Roll.

17,362. Was it Mr Annat, Banker, Balmacara, who managed for the trustees?—Well, I heard that to-day, and Mr Maclennan, I think.

17,363. And Mr Maclennan, Lienassie?—Yes.

17,364. Was Mr Macrae's estate realised immediately after he left?—I do not know anything about the realization.

17,365. Would you be surprised if you were told that Mr Macrae's estate was realised, that the farm was found in thoroughly good going order, fully stocked; and that, after all the expenses of sequestration were gone through, every creditor got twenty shillings in the pound; and when Mr Macrae, the tenant, who left the country for other than financial reasons, came back, the surplus from the stock of Morvich enabled him to start as a big farmer in the county of Argyll?—I did not know that, but if that was the case I do not see what his object was in becoming bankrupt.

Glenshiel.

William Mackay.

17,366. In the event of that being a fact, would you consider it fair to say that the man left because he was bankrupt?—He left because he was bankrupt; his estates were sequestrated.

17,367. Was it because he was bankrupt; assuming that what I have said is true, would you consider it fair to say that he left because of financial difficulties?—Well, he must have been a madman if he went through the Bankruptcy Court without being insolvent.

17,368. I am not asking you what he would have been; would it be fair to say that he left because he was bankrupt, assuming that that was his financial position when he left, after paying twenty shillings in the pound?

17,369. *The Chairman.*—Mr Mackay is entitled to rely upon the public fact that the man was sequestrated. According to the law of Scotland, a man who is sequestrated may fairly be described as bankrupt?—That is what I had in view; he was sequestrated and there were trustees on his estate.

17,370. *Mr Sutherland.*—The inference plainly was to show that it was because sheep farming did not pay?—Certainly, and that is why I mentioned the fact.

17,371. *Mr Macrae.*—If Mr Maclennan, Lienassie, who is present, would support me in what I say,—that the estate paid twenty shillings in the pound, and left a balance sufficient to enable Mr Patrick Macrae, Morvich, to start as a big sheep farmer in Argyll,—would Mr Mackay withdraw the remark?—I did not expressly say that he left because the farm did not pay; my statement was that the last tenant, but one, became bankrupt, and that is a public fact.

17,372. But Mr Mackay tried to infer, or tried to make the Royal Commission believe, that this man left because of financial difficulties, and because the farm did not pay?—I stated that the man became bankrupt; it is for the Royal Commission to draw their own conclusion from the facts.

17,373. Did Mr Mackay wish the Royal Commission to understand that this man left, that he got into financial difficulties, and that he got into these difficulties because the farm did not pay?—My lord, I do not think I am called upon to state my wishes; I am called upon to give evidence, and I have done so.

17,374. *The Chairman.*—What he is asking you to do is to say whether you desire us to understand that that is the case?—I have already said, my lord, that I stated the fact of this man's bankruptcy to show that, so far as he was concerned, the farm did not pay; he did not succeed; that was my object.

17,375. Well, do you adhere to that?—As I have already said, the man must have been either mad or insolvent; I do not know that the statements made by Mr Macrae are facts.

17,376. Have you any knowledge on the point?—Nothing whatever, except the public fact that he was sequestrated.

17,377. *Mr Maccallum.*—Do you know whether he really lost money by farming?—I do not know anything at all about his affairs; nothing except that he became bankrupt.

17,378. *Mr Macrae.*—Does Mr Mackay know that there was a woman in it?—Well, there is a woman at the root of many an evil, Mr Macrae. I did not know of it. [*The Chairman.*—Did you ever know of that?—No, my lord.]

17,379. Mr Maclennan, Lienassie, will be able to support me. Who succeeded as tenant of the farm of Morvich after the estate was realised and a settlement of twenty shillings in the pound made to all creditors?—You are assuming the settlement, you know; Adam Brown succeeded Mr Macrae.

17,380. Did he give up the farm because of financial difficulties?—I don't know, I cannot tell you.

17,381. Would Mr Mackay be surprised to know that Mr Brown is a gentleman who has succeeded

enormously well as a farmer in this part of the country?—I know that he has got several farms, and that he is supposed to be a very wealthy man.

17,382. Who succeeded Mr Brown as tenant of the farm?—Mr Allan Mackenzie.

17,383. What rent was the farm let at?—The farm was let at £800; it is another question what did he pay.

17,384. No, no, I am in possession of facts.—You don't want information, except, of course, what suits your purpose.

17,385. I want to put a question to Mr Mackay. May I ask how many years had Mr Allan Mackenzie this farm?—I am taking my information entirely from the valuation roll; I have no personal knowledge of this matter. Three years.

17,386. Might I ask Mr Mackay if Mr Allan Mackenzie paid any rent to the landlord during these three years?—No, and I believe he lost money upon the farm.

17,387. He did not pay a single penny of rent?—I do not know that he did, but I cannot say definitely.

17,388. But he did not pay it?—No; but I do not know definitely. I know the farm did not pay under his management.

17,389. Did he manage the farm?—I think so. He had a manager under him, but he took a great interest in the farm.

17,390. Did he live here at all?—He came occasionally.

17,391. Did he live here at all?—I don't think he lived permanently here.

17,392. Did he live for a week at a time here?—I cannot tell you; I think he must have.

17,393. You know nothing about it?—I know nothing about it, except that he did not succeed; I know that.

17,394. So that he did not pay a penny in the pound to the proprietor?—I did not say that.

17,395. He paid no rent?—I did not say that.

17,396. Did the landlord lose a penny by Mr Patrick Macrae?—I cannot tell you.

17,397. And yet you called him a bankrupt?—I don't want to offend the man, if he is alive, or say anything against him; I am only repeating a public fact, that his estates were sequestrated.

17,398. Are you aware that Sir James Mackenzie justified the conversion of this farm and Inchcro into a deer forest in a controversy in the 'People's Journal,' a newspaper controversy with Mr Bruce, father of the rector of the Inverness Royal Academy,—is Mr Mackay aware that Sir James Mackenzie gave, as an excuse for making the farm a deer forest, that the last tenant, his own son (although he did not mention he was his own son) held the farm for three years and was so poor that he could not pay a single penny of rent during these three years?—I am not aware, but if Sir James Mackenzie said so I quite believe it.

17,399. Now, with regard to this lease, how much arable land has Mr Mackay given in that lease to each of the cottars?—To the Morvich cottars?

17,400. To the Morvich cottars of this park?—Will I go through the whole list, my lord, I have them all in this book.

17,401. *Mr Gordon.*—Excuse me just putting one question in regard to this area. Do any of these cottars still hold the land that they held formerly?—I do not know whether it has happened that they got the same land back again, because they got their present holdings by lot.

17,402. Who has land that they formerly held?—It is divided among the cottars themselves.

17,403. As part of the land they now have?—Yes; their holdings were increased.

17,404. Let us understand this. Do the people now hold more than this park?—Certainly. The park is an addition to what they had before. They had the lands before at Allt-a'-chruinn and at Invershiel and at Achaghiurain.

17,405. Now, could you give us the extent they hold of Achaghiurain, the land there and the park, and the number of cottars, and we will see exactly what they have? Can you give us the extent of the land they formerly held as potato land here, the additional land you gave them at Achaghiurain?—I don't know that I can give the former lands. The big park, which is an addition, extends to 20½ acres.

17,406. But what is it in addition to?—It is in addition to Invershiel.

17,407. What is that?—I think 8¾.

17,408. *Mr Watson*, Surveyor.—I think if you would allow me I could explain it. Previous to 1887 the cottars all along the loch here had practically no land at all except what they got from the farmers to plant potatoes and other things. In 1887 they got these parks round here, and the right of grazing on this piece of Invershiel, and the last holding they got is this big park; but their old pieces, that they had from the farmers, of course, they are deprived of.

17,409. *Mr Gordon.*—What will make it clearer to my mind is the extent that they formerly held, to which the big park was an addition.

17,410. *Mr Watson.*—Except the parks there will not be more than seven acres.

17,411. *Mr Gordon.*—That is 27 among seventeen people, or rather more than 1½ acre. [*Witness*]. And some of the seventeen people have got but little land. There are two of them who only got a rood each, and there is another who got only 1½ rood; they did not want more.]

17,412. *Mr Macrae.*—Might I ask Mr Mackay, with regard to these sixteen cottars at Morvich?—Seventeen.

17,413. Seventeen cottars,—that is the sixteen and the gamekeeper?—No, I think there are seventeen altogether. I daresay one of the Morvich people has got his potato land up here at Invershiel. Yes, I think he has.

17,414. *Mr Gordon.*—That is sixteen at Morvich?—Yes, only there is another who has got the grazing and hay ground there.

17,415. *Mr Macrae.*—How much arable land had those who renounced the lands they formerly had, and who got this park in lieu and who are under lease with regard to the park,—how much arable land have they each?—Well, I should require to go over the whole.

17,416. *The Chairman.*—Is it about 1½ acre?—It is over 1½ acre; it is about 1½ acre of arable land; then they have got the carse, which is 40 acres.

17,417. I understood you to say they had about 1½ acre and the carse each?—Yes, except one or two.

17,418. Yes, but I am stating it roughly?—Yes, I brought up a surveyor from Dingwall here, and he divided it into 1½ acre lots. The fact is that he divided the whole arable land among the lot of them.

17,419. *Mr Macrae.*—Reading as I do a copy of the missive of lease between the trustees of the late Sir James Mackenzie of Kintail, &c., Bart., and Donald Macrae, Dearg, 1893, endorsed Innes & Mackay, solicitors, Inverness, and dated this June or July, I find:—'4. A piece of ground, a piece of potato ground, 'extending to two roods or thereby.'—Yes.

17,420. 'Situated in said big park.'—Yes. What is the name of the man?

17,421. Donald Macrae, Dearg, 'a piece of potato 'ground extending to two roods or thereby, situated in 'said big park, which piece of potato ground shall be 'fixed and set apart by the said William Mackay, or 'by said factor or agent for the time being of the said 'first parties; it being declared and agreed to that the 'decision of the said William Mackay, or of said factor 'or agent for the time being, shall be final.'—Yes. I may mention that, instead of my deciding that, I allowed themselves to casts lots.

17,422. Two roods, as I understand it, means half an acre. [*The Chairman.*—Well, what is the question?] My question is, the amount in that clause fourth allotted to each of the seventeen in the big park half an acre?—For potato ground, but in addition to that they have an acre of arable land for their hay. My original intention was that it should be for hay; but they asked permission to plant potatoes in it if they thought proper, and I gave it to them.

17,423. I should like Mr Mackay to read the clause

Glenshiel. William Mackay.

in the missive of lease, in which he provides another acre for them.

17,424. *The Chairman.*—It seems to stand thus:—*First*, they get the right of grazing a cow; *second*, they get the right, in common with cottars or others, of cutting, manufacturing into hay, and carrying away grass from the big park, and so on. [*Witness.*—It is there the acre comes in.]

17,425. *Mr Macrae.*—But that does not correspond with the missive of lease.

17,426. *The Chairman.*—But what they get under this lease is the right of grazing, and also the right in common with the cottars and others of cutting, manufacturing into hay, and carrying away grass from the 'big park' at Morvich, lying between the public road and the sea, and also from the carse land between the big park and the sea, and that in such quantities as the said first parties may determine, and from such part or parts of said big park and carse land or either of them as may be fixed and set apart by William Mackay, solicitor, Inverness, and so on, it being declared and agreed to that the decision of said William Mackay shall be final; *third*, the piece of land at Seana-ghortan and pertinents connected therewith on which the said second party's dwelling house is erected; and *fourth*, a piece of potato ground extending to two roods, situated in said 'big park,' and then the second general clause of the lease provides for removal from the potato ground possessed by him, and from the other subjects presently occupied by him. That is the whole?—That is the whole. Will your lordship allow me to explain, while I am at this. After the leases were written out and signed, the tenants expressed their wish that instead of cutting hay here and there and everywhere in the park, each man's share of the park should be set apart for himself, and we found on measuring that there was exactly an acre for each man, in addition to the half acre for potato ground, and he has got that acre.

17,427. But doubtless you concede that the only land given or assigned under the lease is a piece of potato ground?—But as a matter of fact each has got the hay ground, an acre, and the tenants are in possession.

17,428. I am just now keeping within the four corners of the lease; according to the lease they only get a piece of ground extending to two roods, and a right of grazing a cow, and a right common to others of cutting hay?—That is so.

17,429. *Mr Macrae.*—I should like to ask Mr Mackay now, what does he mean by limiting them as to the quantity of hay they were to cut in the park? The limit is here in two respects:—first,—that they shall cut in such quantities,—there is no reference at all to an acre each. [*The Chairman.*—In such quantities as the said first parties may determine]. That is, that Mr William Mackay reserves the right to determine how much grass they shall remove. Will he explain how he can reconcile that with his other statement that they have an acre each?—As a matter of fact——

17,430. As a matter of lease?—Never mind the lease. As a matter of fact, as I have already explained, after that lease was signed they expressed their wish to have each man his hay ground for himself, and I granted the request.

17,431. *The Chairman.*—Are we to read the lease now, in the light of your explanation, as giving each lessee the right to an acre and a half of ground?—Certainly; to every man who has got the right to cut hay.

17,432. But is it a right to cut hay?—It is a right now to do whatever they like with the land. Some, as a matter of fact, have potatoes on it.

17,433. Then you said that the right they have under the second section of the lease coincides with the right to the potato ground under the fourth section of the lease?—Exactly; they are exactly on the same footing.

17,434. *Mr Macrae.*—That is to say, as I understand it?—They quite understand it themselves.

17,435. *The Chairman.*—You put the lease before us yourself, you know.—Yes.

17,436. *Mr Shaw Stewart.*—There is no limit to the quantity?

17,437. *The Chairman.*—Oh, yes, there is this limit,—that they are to cut hay in such quantities as Mr Mackay may determine.

17,438. *Mr Shaw Stewart.*—That has been superceded.

17,439. *The Chairman.*—By a verbal arrangement. [*Witness.*—Yes, and they actually cast lots for the acre lots.]

17,440. You controlled the lease by a subsequent arrangement?—Yes.

17,441. *Mr Gordon.*—Have you any objection to put a codicil on it?—Not the slightest; I have got it all down in this book already, how much each man has.

17,442. *Mr Macrae.*—Your lordship, I hope, sympathises with me. I am here in the interests of the cottars, and I am very glad we are coming to an amicable arrangement; very pleased indeed. [*Witness.* Will you allow me to say that this is not a new thing. In this book is a record of the lands taken on the 15th of April last, when the lots were cast. I see, first, ballot for drawing lots for potato ground; second, ballot for order of drawing for hay ground. And I have got them all numbered, and I may explain more; some of the acres, my lord, contain really more than an acre; lots 7, 8 and 9 of the lots have additions to them. Lots 14 and 15 not so good as the others, and they are wider; they are larger.]

17,443. Then am I to assume that Mr Mackay agrees to cancel that portion of the lease to this extent that each of the cottars is to have 1½ acre?—They have got it.

17,444. Am I to assume that each of these is to have 1½, and that—[*The Chairman.*—You are to assume that the right to the hay ground coincides with the right to the potato ground.]

17,445. But I follow it a little further, that each of them is to have this acre along with the half acre for potato ground, and that each of them is to be allowed to grow what crop he pleases on that acre also?—Oh, certainly. As a matter of fact, they are growing potatoes on their hay ground.

17,446. *Mr Shaw Stewart.*—And that is not an arrangement from to-day?—Oh, dear, no; it is from the 15th of April last.

17,447. *The Chairman.*—It is a pity you did not add a sentence to the lease?—Really it did not occur to me; we got on very amicably; we never had a question as to the arrangement. The original intention as to hay is expressed in the lease, but after the lease was signed that intention was departed from at the cottars' request.

17,448. *Mr Macrae.*—Are there not other parks in Morvich adjoining this park that could very easily, if the proprietor would so arrange, be given to these cottars as an addition, in order that they may have three acres each of arable land?—There is another park, an arable field, on the opposite side of the road from the big park. That is required for the purposes of the proprietor himself.

17,449. Has that park been out of cultivation for the last eleven years?—No, you will find that the greater part of it is under cultivation now. It was ploughed two or three years ago, and a hay crop put down; part is under corn, and part under potatoes.

17,450. Is there not another part that was not cultivated?—There is a waste part that I do not know was ever in cultivation. There is a lot of low meadow ground there.

17,451. A park?—Not a park; there are only the two enclosed parks.

17,452. Are there not three enclosed parks at Morvich, two besides this one?—I do not think there are. They are now enclosed together; the deer are shut out; I erected a deer fence last winter.

17,453. Are you aware that each of these cottars has only now, even with this arrangement, 13 acres each? [*The Chairman.*—It stands on the figures, you do need to calculate it; it gives something like 13 acres each].—Does Mr Mackay consider 11½ or 13 acres of pasture land there sufficient for the grazing of a cow?—And they have got the 40 acres of carse.

17,454. That is added. Yes, my lord, I think that that is more than enough; there is splendid grass in that place just now.

17,455. *The Chairman.*—Gentlemen, we can see this land ourselves, it is just at the door; I think it is unnecessary to take more evidence on this point.

17,456. *Mr Macrae.*—Mr Mackay heard one of the witnesses say that in his verbal arrangement with them he never mentioned that this gamekeeper was to be in company with them for his land and cows' grazing; whereas now, under this lease, the gamekeeper is put in along with the other cottars?—The gamekeeper was in possession before the cottars, and it was perfectly understood that he was to be continued; there is no other ground for him; he has only got two cows.

17,457. Has not the proprietor as much facility for giving other lands on this farm to his own gamekeeper as he had for this arrangment?—That is the proprietor's business.

17,458. *The Chairman.*—I cannot enter into that; the arrangement was made, and it was made at a time when the crofters were quite entitled to make whatever arrangements they chose.

17,459. *Mr Macrae.*—Might I ask why, at a time when he brought them under a stamped written lease, he made the tenants yearly tenants, that could be removed at the end of the year?—I just continued their old leases, my lord; they were tenants from year to year.

17,460. *The Chairman.*—You were entitled under point of law to do it?—Yes, but I simply continued the old arrangement, but giving them more land.

17,461. *Mr Macrae.*—Might I ask Mr Mackay whether he would consider it desirable to approach the proprietor with the view to conceding them the benefits of the Crofters Act, seeing the only barrier to their application for the Crofters Act was that they were not tenants at the passing of the Act?

17,462. *The Chairman.*—I asked that question before.—I don't think your lordship did.

16,463. *The Chairman.*—The question was whether you would be willing to advise the trustees to place them under the Crofters Act, and you said you thought the trustees had no power?—Quite so, I was just going to make the same answer now.

16,464. *Mr Sutherland.*—I wish to ask one question. Could you give us information regarding the tenure of this land; how does the land of the Kintail estate stand at the present time?—Do you mean the cottars?

17,465. No; the larger divisions in the deer forest and the sheep farm.—All year to year.

DONALD GRANT, Grantown, Factor for Glenelg—*examined.*

17,466. *The Chairman.*—Do you wish to make any statement?—Simply to state the extent of property that my constituent, Mr Baillie of Dochfour, holds here, and how it is applied. It is called the estate of Glenshiel, and the total acreage is 24,365, of which 12,315 is under sheep, and 12,050 under deer, cleared a number of years ago. The lowest part of the deer forest is about 600 feet above sea-level, and the altitude varies from 600 to 2000 odd feet. Included in that extent there are 103 acres arable divided between Mr Mitchell the tenant of the sheep farm, and Miss Mackintosh, the landlady of the hotel. These are the figures, and I shall be very pleased to answer any questions that may be put.

17,467. *Mr Sutherland.*—Have you a plan of the estate?—I have.

17,468. What is the name of the deer forest?—Cluanie.

17,469. *The Chairman.*—I do not propose to ask you any questions now, as I understand we shall have an opportunity of examining you at Glenelg?—Yes, I shall give evidence then.

[ADJOURNED.]

EIGHTEENTH SITTING.

GLENELG, INVERNESS-SHIRE, July 14, 1893.

Present:—

DAVID BRAND, Esq., Advocate, Sheriff of Ayr, and Chairman of the Crofters Commission, *Chairman.*
MICHAEL HUGH SHAW STEWART, Esq., M.P.
ANGUS SUTHERLAND, Esq., M.P.
REV. MALCOLM MACCALLUM.
WILLIAM MACKENZIE, Esq., *Secretary.*

DUNCAN MACCRIMMON, Crofter, Kirkton, Glenelg (66.) (Examined in Gaelic through an Interpreter.)

17,470. *The Chairman.*—Are you a crofter?—Yes.

17,471. Has your rent been dealt with by the Crofters Commission?—The proprietor put it right.

17,472. What was your rent before the proprietor adjusted it?—We were paying 30s. an acre for land, and £3 for cow's grass.

17,473. Do you remember your total rent?—£7 then.

17,474. And what is it now?—I have not the same land now that I had then, but I pay £5, 6s. now.

17,475. When was that settlement made?—Six years ago when Mr Baillie of Dochfour got possession of the estate. [*Mr D. Grant*, factor for Glenelg.—Nine years ago.]

17,476. You mean the present Mr Baillie?—Yes.

17,477. Was there a meeting here on the 10th of this month?—We had a meeting, but I am not sure which day of the month it was.

17,478. Was it a few days ago?—Yes.

17,479. Were you appointed as a delegate to give evidence before this Commission?—Yes.

17,480. How long have you been settled here as a crofter?—Since I was on my own hook, thirty-two years.

17,481. Are you under a lease at present?—No, and I never was.

17,482. Do you desire to leave your holding if another and better holding can be got, or do you wish to remain where you are?—I would leave very gladly to-morrow.

17,483. Is there land in this quarter suitable for holdings?—Plenty.

17,484. Where is it?—Up the glen where I was born.

17,485. You mean up the glen behind here?—Yes, up the Big Glen.

17,486. How far up does this land of which you are speaking go?—Between three and four miles.

17,487. Is there old arable land there?—Yes, plenty.

17,488. Is there much of that land under rotation of crop at present?—Very little; it is under sheep.

17,489. Now, when you say there is good land up that valley, is it on a farm?—Yes.

17,490. Whose farm?—Mr Mitchell, Ratagan's farm; it is his from within three miles of Cluanie down to the manse of Glenelg.

17,491. Is all the land to which you refer situated upon that farm?—Yes.

17,492. The whole of it?—Every clod of it.

17,493. Then there is no other farm in this quarter to which you ask our attention?—Yes.

17,494. Where is it?—Up the little glen.

17,495. What is the name of it?—The Little Glen (Gleanna-Beag.)

17,496. Whose farm is that?—The Master of Blantyre's.

17,497. Is there any tract there suitable for the settlement of crofters?—There were four tenants there before and there are none now.

17,498. Are the remains of their houses still there?—Some of the houses are there, and the remains of other houses.

17,499. Are there many remains of old cultivation upon Ratagan Farm?—Yes.

17,500. Have there been removals from that farm in past years?—No; it is in the time of Macleod that the first person was put out of the glen.

17,501. How far back is that?—I am not very sure.

17,502. Was Macleod in this quarter during the present century?—About the beginning of the century.

17,503. How many crofters are in the glen at present?—None.

17,504. Well, but I mean how many neighbours have you that are crofters?—There are about 40, but they have not all land.

17,505. How many have land?—16 or thereabout.

17,506. And how many cottars are there, or persons without land?—Very few.

17,507. Is there any general desire among the crofters or cottars to remove from their holdings, or is it confined to a few?—Many of them desire to shift to other land.

17,508. Are you able to say that they all desire?—They maintain now that they are desirous of going.

17,509. The whole of them?—Yes, the whole of them.

17,510. Have these cottars you mention land or are they without land?—Doubtlessly they are without land.

17,511. Have they land at all?—Some of them have, and some have not.

17,512. *Mr Grant.*—Will you allow me to explain, my lord. They are not, strictly speaking, crofters.

17,513. *The Chairman.*—But I am speaking of cottars.

17,514. *Mr Grant.*—But the class he represents; he is not himself a crofter; he lives in the village and has a cow's grass.

17,515. *The Chairman.*—Is he not under the Act of Parliament?

17,516. *Mr Grant.*—No, we allowed him to appeal to the Commission if he wished to; he is not under the Act.

17,517. *Mr Sutherland.*—That refers to your interpretation of the Act?

17,518. *Mr Grant.*—Yes.

17,519. *Mr Sutherland.*—But it has not been authoritatively interpreted?

15,520. *Mr Grant.*—In his case the Commission refused to fix the rent.

17,521. *The Chairman.*—Is there a decision in the case? (*To Witness*).—You never applied to the Commission, did you?

17,522. *Witness.*—Never.

17,523. *The Chairman.*—It seems to stand in this way, Mr Grant, that this man made no application to the Commission, and you or the estate were willing to allow the Commission to value it, but the Commission said they could not?

17,524. *Mr Grant.*—He had the land before, but I wished him to be put under the Act.

17,525. *The Chairman.*—But he is not a crofter under the Act.

17,526. *Mr Grant.*—He is not a crofter, he does not live on a croft.

17,527. *The Chairman.*—The only way in which it can be decided that a man is under the Act is, if the estate makes, or if the man makes, an application; it may be determined whether he is a crofter or not.

17,528. *Mr Grant.*—We did not proceed, as he did not want it.

17,529. *The Chairman.*—Your proposal, Mr Grant, was simply that the Commission should value the land to be assigned?

17,530. *Mr Grant.*—Quite so; that the rents should be judicial rents instead of rents fixed by us.

17,531. *The Chairman.*—That would not have made them crofters. But whether this man is a crofter, be it understood, we have nothing to say; he may be a crofter or he may not; this Commission has no jurisdiction to settle that. However, I am taking him as a crofter just now; he belongs to the crofter class. I suppose we may agree as to that.

17,532. *Mr Sutherland.*—Are you able to tell us exactly how many families are in Kirkton of Glenelg?—I cannot; if I was a while studying I could do it.

17,533. Could you tell us if there are 30 families?—There are not 30 families.

17,534. Are there 20?—There are just about 20.

17,535. Are you able to tell us where these 20 families came from when they settled there?—No.

17,536. Do you know if any of them came from the glen? [*The Interpreter.*—He said just now that some of them came from Skye.]

17,537. Was that when this land was in the possession of Macleod of Macleod?—I think Mr Grant had the land then. [*The Interpreter.*—He means Lord Glenelg, I suppose.]

17,538. Do you know where the people who were in the glen went to when they were put out of the glen?—When Macleod evicted them they went to America, because they could not live in this district; they could not live on one acre, which was all the land allowed.

17,539. *Mr Donald Macrae.*—He said something that was not interpreted?—Nobody in the country had two acres at that time, they had only one acre each.

17,540. *Mr Sutherland.*—Where did they live when they had only one acre?—They were living in their own houses, but going about throughout the world earning wages.

17,541. Was that in the glen?—The houses were down here when Mr Bruce sent them down.

17,542. And was it after that they emigrated to America?—Yes, Mr Baillie of Bristol sent them to America at his own expense, as they could not live in the place.

17,543. But that was after they were put out of the glen?—Yes.

17,544. Did you ever hear that the people petitioned that they should be sent away?—Oh, yes, I did hear that.

17,545. But they did not petition to be sent from the glen?—They never did; they would be very sorry.

17,546. So that the petition was sent in after they were cleared out of the glen and sent down to the houses here?—The petition was sent after they had left the glen, to Mr Baillie of Bristol, that he would pay their passage to America. They could not live in this part of the country in any other way on one acre.

17,547. But that had nothing whatever to do with the way in which they lived in the glen?—Nothing. There was nothing wrong with them in the glen.

17,548. You spoke about land in Glenbeg. But besides Glenbeg and Glenmore, do you know of any other land suitable for settlement in this neighbourhood?—I believe there are patches, but I am not sure.

17,549. Are you acquainted about Sandaig?—Yes.

17,550. Is there any land fit for cultivation there, in your opinion?—Yes, there is land that could be cultivated.

17,551. And would you be willing to show that land to us?—Yes.

17,552. *Mr Shaw Stewart.*—You spoke of some houses in Glenbeg which four tenants formerly occupied. Are any of the houses put to any use now, or are they all in ruins?—There is nothing there but the ruins of the original houses, but other two houses have been built for the Master of Blantyre's use.

17,553. And are now occupied?—The Master of Blantyre has a man there now.

17,554. Only one man in the two houses?—There is a shepherd in one house, and another man lives in the other through the kindness of the Master of Blantyre.

17,555. Supposing the crofters were able to acquire lands in the glen, would they be able to live entirely on their crofts?—It would depend upon the number that would be sent there.

17,556. What sized holding do you think would enable a man to live entirely on his croft?—He would require 10 acres of arable land, 120 sheep, 4 cows, and a horse.

17,557. Do you mean that he would have his sheep in common with others?—If it was given to two or

three each would have his own sheep without troubling anybody else.

17,558. Now, supposing there were two or three tenants with holdings such as you describe in Glenmore, would there be room for anybody else to live on their holdings?—Yes, although there would be a dozen of them.

17,559. There would be room for equal sized crofts with those you speak of?—Yes and more.

17,560. Then you think they would do very well?—I am sure they would if they got a reasonable rent.

17,561. Would you mind telling me what you think a reasonable rent would be?—There is no price for sheep or cattle at present; I think that with present prices, though a man had 100 sheep, he would be dear enough at £8 of rent.

17,562. Would they be able to build their houses themselves?—I don't know; they say that if they got the land they would put everything on it; they want nothing but the land.

17,563. That is, they would build the houses and stock the land themselves without help?—They tell me that it is the land they want now, and that they would do their own will then with it.

17,564. Yes, but I suppose they would have considered whether they were able to stock the land and build the houses themselves without help and have enough over to pay rent and maintain themselves?—We know that the whole of them could not do that.

17,565. Have you any idea where they would expect the help to come from?—I never asked them; I had no business with that.

17,566. Then you don't think they would be able to occupy this land to advantage without help from somewhere?—No, some of them could not.

17,567. *The Chairman.*—Suppose you had a croft 10 acres arable and grazing for 120 sheep and 4 cows and a horse, could you stock that land and put up the necessary buildings at your own cost?—I will do that.

17,568. Do you carry on any business in the village?—I was a mason.

17,569. How long is it since you gave up carrying on the trade of a mason?—I did nothing at it for two years.

17,570. But you were successful in your trade and made a little money?—Sometimes I did and sometimes I did not.

17,571. But upon the whole it was a success?—Without doubt I was making a little.

17,572. Now you said in answer to one question that there was room for a dozen crofters with such holdings as you described in Glenmore. How many altogether do you think the glen would accommodate with holdings such as that?—I could not tell that, but when the Commission goes through it they would form an estimate.

17,573. *Mr Donald Macrae.*—Would your lordship ask him if they applied through him to Mr Baillie recently for an extension of grazing.

17,574. *The Chairman.*—Was there an application made from this district for an extension of grazing recently?—I have been asking for it for the last six years and did not get it; for a portion of the land that I was born on. We paid over £4000 for it ourselves and other three tenants there.

17,575. *Mr Donald Macrae.*—And is the land quite near you?—It is just beyond the manse here.

17,576. How far is it from your house?—A mile and a quarter.

17,577. For what purpose did you want it?—Why, but to live on it.

17,578. What answer did you get?—I got no reply except that there would be a chance that I would get it; but the chances are passing and it did not come yet. That is the clean truth.

17,579. Did you write to Mr Grant himself, the factor, about it?—Yes, I did, and to Mr Baillie, and besides that I spoke to him.

17,580. Was a petition sent, signed by the whole of the people of the district?—No.

17,581. Have you seen that letter? (Shown letter, 11th March 1892, from Mr Grant to Mr Duncan Maccrimmon, Kirkton, Glenelg.)

17,582. *The Chairman.*—'Mr Baillie has received 'petition from you and others regarding the grazing of 'Cul-an-Duin. The matter will be considered when we 'go to collect rents bye-and-bye.'

17,583. *Mr Grant.*—That is not the grazing that he has been speaking of at all.

17,584. *The Chairman.*—Is this the grazing you have been speaking of, or another grazing?—No.

17,585. *Mr D. Macrae.*—Did you apply for this land at Cul-an-Duin by petition?

17,586. *The Chairman.*—But you don't need to ask that; we see that here.

17,587. *Mr D. Macrae.*—I wanted to refresh his memory. Is Cul-an-Duin lands close to you?—Near at the back of my house; it would not keep many people altogether; small enough for four.

17,588. Did you want that land for grazing?—For both.

17,589. Is that land of Cul-an-Duin very convenient for you?—Yes.

17,590. Who occupies that land to-day?—The proprietor.

17,591. *The Chairman.*—The land beyond the manse, is that on the farm of Ratagan?—It was taken from us when our rent was paid.

17,592. Is it on the farm of Ratagan?—It is now.

17,593. What is it you wanted to say about it?—It was taken from us when our rent was paid, and given to our neighbour, the parish minister, Rev. John Macrae.

17,594. When did that occur?—Forty years ago.

17,595. Was that in Mr Mollison's time?—No.

17,596. Before him?—It was a Mr Stavert that was factor.

17,597. You said that you and some others had it. Who had it along with you?—Roderick Macleod, Donald Macrae and John Macrae.

17,598. And you yourself?—The four of us.

17,599. Did you have it on lease?—Yes, we had a lease till a year before we lost it.*

17,600. And then it was given to the minister, Mr Macrae?—Yes.

17,601. Was that just an ordinary case of transferring a piece of grazing land from one lessee to another?—No, the minister got the entire land then, and when the minister gave it up Mr Mitchell, Ratagan, got it.

17,602. You simply lost land that you had held under lease, I suppose, as any other farmer may do?—Yes, we lost it on the expiry of the lease, but it was left one year longer with us.

17,603. What was the duration of the lease?—Nineteen years.

17,604. And what was your rent for this land?—£120.

17,605. And what rent did the minister give?—I never found out.

17,606. Did you hear that it was more?—I believe that he gave a little more; they were telling me so.

17,607. Now, I want to ask you about this land of Cul-an-Duin; on what land is this grazing of Cul-an-Duin?—The Master of Blantyre has the arable land, but the proprietor has the hill ground.

17,608. Is the land you petitioned for in the hands of the proprietor?—Yes.

17,609. Well, the letter here says 'the matter will be 'considered when we go to collect rents bye-and-bye.' When is the rent collection here, the autumn or winter collection?—About Martinmas and at Whitsunday.

17,610. Was there anything said by Mr Grant or by the estate management as to this grazing of Cul-an-Duin when the rent collection took place towards the end of 1892?—No.

17,611. Have you ever heard any more about it?—I heard others speaking of writing for it, but I took no more to do with it.

17,612. Did you hear any more about it from Mr Grant?—No.

17,613. *Mr D. Macrae.*—This is another document

* On 17th July the delegate wrote explaining that this statement was made in error. There was no lease. Angus Macleod, the next delegate signed the letter correcting the error.

Glenelg.

bearing upon the same subject. (*Producing another letter.*)

Duncan Maccrimmon.

17,614. *The Chairman.*—This is prior.

17,615. *Mr D. Macrae.*—Yes, I know, but the witness said they were asking for these lands back and fore for six years.

17,616. *Mr Grant.*—That is the lands above the manse.

17,617. *The Chairman.*—You can put that in if you like, Mr Macrae. It is a copy of a letter from Mr Grant to Mr A. C. Baillie, dated 11th April 1888.

17,618. *Mr Macrae.*—I underlined there an expression that Mr Baillie was very anxious to meet the wishes of the crofters.*

17,619. *The Chairman.*—Yes, but I am dealing at present with the end of 1892. (*To Witness*). Since the end of 1892 have you renewed the application for the grazing of Cul-an-Duin?—I did not ask it. It is a year since I asked it.

17,620. I forgot to ask you this about the land beyond the manse. You said that you and others gave £4000 for it. What do you mean by £4000?—We paid £4000 in rent for it during the time we occupied it.

17,621. Altogether?—Altogether, the four of us.

17,622. What was the rent of it?—£120. [*Mr Grant.*—He refers to his ancestors, not himself.]

17,623. You mean your predecessors and yourself gave £4000?—It cost the four tenants that while they were there.

16,624. There may be two leases.

17,625. *Mr Grant.*—Is there any stock upon Cul-an-Duin except the proprietor's now? Are you aware that there are ten cows grazed in consequence of this application?—The cows are there, doubtless.

17,626. *The Chairman.*—But are they crofters' or cottars' cows?—Yes, they are crofters' cows.

17,627. And do they graze in common along with the proprietor's stock?—They are among his stock, wandering as they like.

ANGUS MACLEOD, Cattle and Sheep Dealer, Glen-Bernera, Glenelg (39.)
(Examined in Gaelic through an Interpreter.)

Angus Macleod.

17,628. *The Chairman.*—What is your age?—So far as I know I am between thirty-nine and forty years.

17,629. Are you a crofter or have you a lot?—I have nothing but what I take out of the surface of the earth with my two hands.

17,630. Where is your house?—I am living with a brother of mine.

17,631. What is the name of the brother?—Donald Macleod.

17,632. What rent does he pay?—So far as I know it is £13.

17,633. And he has some land, I suppose?—Yes. [*Mr D. Macrae.*—I think the Crofters Commission fixed their rents.]

17,634. Did the Crofters Commission fix your brother's rent?—No, they were round the land; they examined the land, they did not alter the rent, but they gave them additional land to make matters easier for them.

17,635. *Mr Grant.*—We made a mutual application.

17,636. *The Chairman.*—And they got some additional land?

17,637. *Mr Grant.*—No, we gave them land before the Commission came.

16,638. *The Chairman.*—But the land upon which the Crofters Commission would have had to adjudicate if they had done so would have been the land *minus* the addition?

17,639. *Mr Grant.*—No, no. We gave them the addition before the Commission came and fixed the rent at £13. The Commission came and left the rent at £13.

17,640. *The Chairman.*—You have no land of your own?—No, not a clod.

17,641. How do you earn your livelihood?—I will be at everything as best I can; I will be shepherding and at daily labour and everything. Glenelg. Angus Macleod.

17,642. Are you anxious to obtain a holding for yourself?—I am very anxious to get possession of rights that my father left in the glen beyond the glebe.

17,643. The area where you live is 6 acres 3 roods 34 poles arable, no outrun, 865 acres of pasture, common to four; the present rents of the township of Bernera are exclusive of the additional hill pasture extending to 285 acres or thereby, the fair rents include the annual value of said additional pasture. Where is this land to which you have been referring?—Iomaire-a'-ghradain, Duncan Maccrimmon who spoke already was speaking about it. My father was there with his father.

17,644. Do you mean the land beyond the manse?—Yes.

17,645. Do you wish to obtain a holding at that place, or is it grazing land you desire?—I want grazing and arable land.

17,646. And a holding?—A home; yes, doubtless.

17,647. Can you put up the buildings on such a holding and stock the land?—If I get the land I will try.

17,648. But suppose you had to begin to-morrow, would you need assistance?—It would depend upon the time I was to get for buying stock and everything at once and putting up houses; if I got the assistance of timber, &c. from the proprietor.

17,649. May I take your answer then as meaning that you could not have your holding in order in a year without assistance?—I would like to know how much land; what would be the size of the holding before I would give a sketch of that.

17,650. Ten acres arable, 120 sheep, four cows and a horse. Do you think you could start a holding of that sort and complete it in a year without assistance?—Yes. I think that such a holding as that would be too small; it would not be worth anybody's while putting up houses for that out of his own pocket.

17,651. What holding have you in view then?—I would like 200 sheep, 15 acres of arable land, four cows, and a horse.

17,652. You are not a married man?—Not yet.

17,653. *Mr Shaw Stewart.*—Do you think that a crofter on a smaller holding than you have just mentioned would not be able to live successfully?—That would depend upon the years that he would fall in with, and how he would be situated as to rent.

17,654. Well, but we have had bad seasons and good seasons in the past, and I suppose we must expect the same for the future, must we not?—Doubtless.

17,655. Looking at the average, taking bad seasons and good together, do I understand that you think any holding smaller than the one you have mentioned would not succeed?—Oh, no, I don't think so.

17,656. But I understood you to say, a little time ago, that you thought such a holding would be too small; I mean a holding of the size mentioned by Mr Maccrimmon?—It would be too small in connection with the expense that the man would have in putting up houses, but if he got such a holding, with houses on it, he might do with it and perhaps even a smaller one.

17,657. Who is the tenant of the lands that you would like now?—It is on the farm of Beolairidh, and Mr Mitchell, Ratagan, occupies it as a tenant.

17,658. You spoke of your father's rights there; do you mean that Mr Mitchell has no right to occupy this land that he pays rent for?—Oh, yes, I think he has rights as long as he pays rent for it.

17,659. And you think also the proprietor has the right to lease the lands to Mr Mitchell?—Oh, it is very likely he has.

17,660. But if the proprietor has the right to lease the lands and the tenant has the right to take them, I don't understand why you think your father's rights still hold good?—I think that when a thing is taken from people by injustice and bad law the rights are stronger in that way.

17,661. You have not explained to us how they were taken away exactly, but I won't go into that. Supposing the lands in these glens were divided into these

* The sentence under-lined is as follows:—'Dochfour has repeatedly explained that he would willingly give land to the Crofters if it were at his disposal.'

sized crofts that you would like to see, who do you think ought to occupy them; how would the proprietor find tenants, would he put the lands up into open market?—I think it would be very honourable for him to give the first offer of them to the men of his country, of the district.

17,662. But who should he begin with; should he begin with you?—I would be very glad.

17,663. But perhaps others might not look on it in the same light. I want to know what scheme you have in your head for apportioning these lands if they were divided?—Divide the townships as they were originally, and put in as many people as they would be able to maintain.

17,664. Who can tell us exactly how the townships were originally?—There are men in the district who are older than I, and I believe it would be quite easy for them to answer these questions.

17,665. How far back in history ought we to look to arrive at the proper division of a township?—Some of them not very long, others very long; but there are men who know a lot about that yet.

17,666. Do you mean that within the last hundred years the land was divided into crofts of 15 acres of arable land, 200 sheep, 4 cows, and a horse each?—Oh, no, I am not saying that at all.

17,667. But that is the division that you want the lands put to?—When new things come, people would be making new plans.

17,668. Then you don't want us to go back to the old times and divide the land in the same way?—Yes, and I carry the country along with me.

17,669. But you tell us one moment that the land is to be divided into good sized crofts, and then you tell us they must be divided as they used to be, and you have also told us that they were not divided into big crofts, and I want to know which you want, the big crofts or the old way?—Both plans are somewhat similar, but I still say that if the townships are set apart and you don't put in them more people than they support they would maintain such a stock as I have indicated, every one of them, but not to put any more people than could afford that.

17,670. Would there be a great demand for such lands?—The desire is very great at any rate.

17,671. Then would not the proprietor find great difficulty in choosing the tenants to occupy these lands?—I don't think it would be so difficult as people maintain.

17,672. *Mr Sutherland.*—How many people are in Glen Bernera?—Four tenants.

17,673. How many families?—There are six houses that have smoke.

17,674. How much land have they got, do you think; can you give us any idea of the area of land these six families hold?—Two of them have not a clod at all.

17,675. And the other four?—6¾ acres or thereabouts.

17,676. Of arable?—Of arable; that is what they put under crop, but there is a little more for pasture.

17,677. What place did you say your forefathers had rights in?—My ancestors or my forefathers had rights in the heights of the Big Glen, and then they were sent to Iomaire-a'-ghradain, where my father was.

17,678. And how long were your forefathers there, can you tell us?—Hundreds of years.

17,679. And did they give the value to the land that it had when they left?—I don't understand.

17,680. Did your forefathers improve that land when they were there?—Yes, they put it in order altogether, from man to man, until the land was under crop up to half the hills.

17,681. And were they compensated when they were put out of that?—They were sent to the shore.

17,682. And who got the value that your forefathers left on the land?—The cheviot sheep got it, when township was put to township and given to a big tenant.

17,683. With regard to the question of the Highland township, are you aware that Lord Napier's Commission recommended the founding of townships throughout the Highlands?—I was hearing that they did.

17,684. Can you show us any land in this neighbourhood that is used as a deer forest or a sheep farm that in your opinion could be occupied to profit or advantageously by smaller tenants?—Is it over and above the land we are speaking of.

17,685. No, any land?—There are several good pieces in Scallasaig. There are several on Eilanreoch in the little glen, and at Sandaig, and in fact all over the district, when the land would be restored to its original use.

17,686. You know the lands of your own personal knowledge?—I am well acquainted with perambulating the ground.

17,687. And have you had experience in cultivating the land?—I have been trying it.

17,688. You are of opinion, are you, that the land that you refer to could be used in the way which has been indicated?—I am sure of it; when it was useful for that formerly, why would it not be so still.

17,689. And you are also of opinion that the people of this neighbourhood would be very willing to occupy land that way?—That is their own voice, at any rate.

17,690. *Mr Donald Macrae*, Plockton.—Your lordship might ask whether, while there are a number of people very poor, is it the fact that throughout the country, here and elsewhere, there are a large number of people, to his own knowledge, who have the necessary capital if the land was opened up?

17,691. *The Chairman.*—I will restrict the question to this district. Does it consist with your knowledge that there are a large number of people of the crofter class in this district who would be able to take holdings of the size that has been mentioned, and to put up the buildings and stock them themselves?—I am of opinion that there are some.

17,692. And is there a desire among these people in this district to obtain such holdings?—Yes, but I could not tell what size of holdings each individual would like.

17,693. Are the holdings that these people have in view holdings by which they can live without any assistance, or do they mean holdings which would require outside labour to help them to get on?—I don't understand the question.

17,694. I mean self-sustaining; when you speak of these holdings and the people that want them, do you mean self-sustaining holdings or holdings where they would require to go abroad and make wages?—I mean the self-sustaining holdings where they could raise their families and not have to go from home.

17,695. Come to your own case; the holding that you have in view, is it a holding by which you would subsist or would it merely be a home, you to get wages elsewhere?—I am of opinion that it should keep me always without going abroad.

DONALD MACLEOD, Retired Shepherd, Kirkton (58).
(Examined in Gaelic through an Interpreter.)

17,696. *The Chairman.*—You live in the village of Kirkton, I suppose?—Yes.

17,697. What rent do you pay?—No rent at all.

17,698. Is the house your own?—I am living in it; the proprietor gave me the house.

17,699. Have you some land? [*Mr Macrae.*—He was a tenant at one time. *Mr Grant.*—He never was a tenant].—I have about an acre of land.

17,700. Is this house, and the acre for which you pay no rent, an indulgence from the landlord for long services, or how does it happen that you pay no rent?—My brother and I were in Balvraid where our ancestors were, and that township was reduced to four.

17,701. *Mr Grant.*—I can simplify the examination. His brother was tenant of Balvraid when Mr Baillie succeeded to his property; he lived with his brother, who became bankrupt, and the trustee gave up the place. Mr Baillie gave the brother a free house and a cow's grass and I think an acre of land. The brother

died a few years ago and we have never disturbed the witness.

17,702. *The Chairman.*—You are described as being a retired shepherd. How long is it since you ceased being a shepherd?—I was only six years as a shepherd; it is about twenty years since I gave up.

17,703. Where did you act as shepherd; was it on the lands hereabout?—Yes.

17,704. How many hirsels had you?—I was in two hirsels.

17,705. Were these in Glenmore?—One of them was there.

17,706. And where was the other one?—In the Little Glen, on Ellanreoch farm.

17,707. You know the lands of Glenmore and the Little Glen very well, I daresay?—Very well.

17,708. Are there tracts of ground in Glenmore of the kind called old arable?—A great deal; there are large tracts.

17,709. In your judgment, for you have had large experience of this place, are these lands suitable for settlement of crofters now?—As suitable as I know in the Highlands.

17,710. Then do you say that these lands in average years could be cultivated to a profit?—Yes, I say they could, but they must get government money before they could bring the land into the condition in which the crofters left it.

17,711. In your opinion the land has gone back?—The land has gone back, and it has run out wild.

17,712. You say you would require government money; you mean with the view to settling in the new holding?—We would require that.

17,713. Would you require money for building?—I believe some of us would.

17,714. Would you?—Yes, I would.

17,715. Would you require money for restoring the land as you have been speaking of to the condition of tillable land?—Some would require it and some would not.

17,716. Would you require it?—I believe I would need it.

17,717. And would you require money for stocking it?—I would.

17,718. What size of holding do you have in view?—Is it for a family or for one man?

17,719. For one man who, like you, may possibly get married?—I confess that; the man who would have that in view would require such a holding as the man before me indicated.

17,720. What extent of government assistance would you require for a holding of that size, viz., 15 acres arable, a carry of 200 sheep, 4 cows, and a horse?—£120 I would try it with.

17,721. Now you mentioned Glenbeg; are you well acquainted with Glenbeg?—Yes, I know it well; I was born there and my father and grandfather.

17,722. Is there old arable land there?—There is a little.

17,723. How many crofters do you think could be accommodated there?—Is it one township or the old townships?

17,724. I am not speaking of the old townships. I have not sufficient knowledge of these. Without referring to a township at all, how many individual holdings do you think could be accommodated in the little glen of 5 acres or 10 acres or 15 acres arable?—Is it from top to bottom of the glen?

17,725. No, all the available old arable?—I think eight would be enough.

17,726. How many were there when there used to be crofters?—I don't know how many there were originally, but in my time there were four in the township where I was born.

17,727. What is the name of that township?—Balvraid.

17,728. Was that the only township there in your recollection?—Yes, in my time.

17,729. Your father had a croft there?—He had a fourth share of the township.

17,730. You lived in a cluster, did you?—Yes.

17,731. What rent did your father pay?—He was paying at first only £20 for his share, or £21, or thereabouts.

17,732. And was that a fourth share?—A fourth share.

17,733. Do you remember of that rent being altered?—It rose to £26 latterly.

17,734. As a fourth share?—Yes, and my brother was paying £26 for it latterly.

17,735. What stock did your father have for which he paid a rent of £26?—It is cattle they had at first.

17,736. Well, what cattle had he?—Each had 8 cows and a stirk or two.

17,737. Any horses?—A horse.

17,738. Anything more?—And about 50 sheep each.

17,739. Had the township a souming?—Yes, that was the souming, the stock was altered afterwards.

17,740. What alteration was made on the stock?—When the rent was raised to £26, it was hard on them to pay it, and the rent was continually rising. Some tenants wanted the place for themselves and to have the other three turned off.

17,741. Which of you wanted that?—One of the four.

17,742. Which of the four?—Duncan Macclure was the name of the man who was asking it.

17,743. Did he succeed in that object?—He got at first the half.

17,744. And did he put out one man?—The possessor died and he got his share.

17,745. Then did he afterwards get the other two?—He was asking them, but he did not get them.

17,746. Did he get them ultimately?—He did not. It transpired, latterly, that the factor and proprietor indicated to them that one of them must take the place.

17,747. Did one ultimately take the place?—Yes, but I must tell you that. When this was indicated, my brother and I, whose family had been there for at least two generations, thought it hard that the sole possession should be given to one who had only been a limited time there, and we endeavoured to get it ourselves.

17,748. And did you get it?—We got it.

17,749. How many years is it since you lost it?—Nine years last Whitsunday.

17,750. Now I would like to know how was that rent of £20 apportioned among the stock; what was the rent for a cow?—I did not find out the rent of an individual cow separately.

17,751. Was there a rent on the sheep, so many shillings the sheep?—That was not indicated either. The souming was made and the rent was put against it.

17,752. Do you know any other lands suitable for settlement besides those you have mentioned. Do you know Scallasaig?—Yes.

17,753. Is there land there?—Plenty.

17,754. How much?—Plenty; enough of land.

17,755. Do you mean by that that there is more land than the people could occupy?—I could not exactly say that, but there is enough that would do for all who want it here now.

17,756. And you would be willing to see a few strangers, I suppose, if they could be accommodated?—Any man.

17,757. Now, besides Scallasaig, is there any other place?—Sandaig.

17,758. Is there some land there?—Yes.

17,759. *Mr Shaw Stewart.*—Were you a shepherd to your brother?—The place would not pay otherwise; we were paying £132 for it, and it would not pay us to have a hired shepherd.

17,760. I am afraid your experience of sheep farming is that it was not very profitable to you and your brother?—We were keeping the stock in good order, but the rent was made so high that it was going beyond us. My brother and I paid over £1300 in nine years for it; rather more than that.

17,761. What was the extent of the grazing?—I never got it measured.

17,762. How many sheep had your brother when you had the whole ground?—At tupping time we had 458 ewes, besides hoggs. Glenelg.

17,763. So that the rent you speak of was not confined to the 50 sheep you told us of at first. Has the hill grazing about here deteriorated.—No. Donald Macleod.

17,764. Then what land was it you referred to that had gone back?—It is the old arable land that has deteriorated.

17,765. When you speak of government money, do you mean that government should give the money as a gift or to be paid back on interest, merely lending the money?—I am not wanting it as a gift.

17,766. That means, then, that you think the crofters should pay yearly interest on money advanced?—They would require to do that.

17,767. Do you think that crofters could pay yearly interest on the government loan, work the farm, maintain themselves and their families, and have any money over to pay rent for the land?—That would depend upon the rent that would be put upon it.

17,768. But do you think they would be able to pay any rent at all?—I think they would.

17,769. You are not sure that they could do it?—I am sure they could pay rent, for if they could not pay rent they would not want the land.

17,770. *The Chairman.*—You mean you would not take a holding of the kind you have been describing unless you could pay the fair rent, also pay interest on the government loan and maintain yourself besides?—I am thinking that the land should be put in order so that it would be suitable for that.

17,771. But suppose the land suitable; suppose skilled men were of opinion that the land was suitable with a reasonable amount of effort on your part; would you refuse to take such a holding unless you saw your way to paying a fair rent, paying interest on the loan and maintaining yourself fairly besides?—I would not refuse to take it even then.

17,772. Even although you could not?—I would then be indigent altogether; I would not know what to live upon.

17,773. Suppose you got a government loan, would you look forward to being able to repay the principal after a lapse of time?—As much as I could.

17,774. Till you paid the whole?—I would think that honest. Neither I nor anybody belonging to me ever got anything before that we did not pay for, and no proprietor has a farthing against us.

17,775. You wanted to make an explanation about your house?—Yes, about how we came into the house at Kirkton.

17,776. Well, just give the explanation you wish.—We were out of the land at Balvraid, we had no house where we could go; when we were going out my brother asked the factor where we were to go, as we had no place to go to. 'You look to that,' he said.

17,777. Was that Mr Mollison, or who was the factor?—Mr Grant. We built a house ourselves in the glen that cost us £60. We thought it hard that we should be on the roadside after having built a house that cost us £60 in the glen. When the factor said to my brother that he must look to that, I said the bayonet must go to my breast before I would go out of the house till I would got another one. Within a week word came that we would get a house in Kirkton.

17,778. And you have been living there ever since?—Yes.

17,779. How long have you been living there rent free?—Nine years.

17,780. Do you wish to say any more?—No.

17,781. *Mr Shaw Stewart.*—Didn't you say that you never took anything from anyone that you didn't pay for?—I said that we never had any land but what we paid for, and that no proprietor or factor had any money against us, and I still say so.

17,782. But you are living in a house now at the proprietor's expense?—Yes.

17,783. *Mr Donald Grant*, factor.—Did you hear me say to your brother that it was your look out if you would get a house.—Certainly, I was present and heard it said.

17,784. *The Chairman.*—Where was it said?—On the road in the Little Glen.

William Maccrimmon.

WILLIAM MACCRIMMON, Glen-Bernera, Glenelg (50.) (Examined in Gaelic through an Interpreter.)

17,785. *The Chairman.*—Are you a crofter?—Yes.

17,786. In Bernera?—Yes.

17,787. Was your rent fixed by the Crofters Commission or arranged by the landlord?—It was the landlord who did it.

17,788. When was that?—Since I went to the township, it is the proprietor who did it.

17,789. When did you go to the township?—About forty years ago.

17,790. Did the landlord within the last ten or fifteen years make a new settlement with you?—Yes.

17,791. What was the old rent and what is the new?—First we paid £16 and it is £13 now.

17,792. What stock have you got?—60 sheep, 7 cows (4 cows and followers), and a horse.

17,793. Anything else?—Nothing else.

17,794. Is that your souming?—Yes.

17,795. Do you wish to leave your holding?—Yes.

17,796. Why?—It is too small.

17,797. What acres arable have you; have you sufficient arable acreage to winter your stock?—No.

17,798. How do you winter them?—Buying hay and provender for them.

17,799. Have you to do that every year?—Yes.

17,800. Do you wish such a holding as would enable you to winter your stock without purchasing hay and provender?—Yes.

17,801. What size of holding would you desire, with the view of wintering your stock at home without purchasing?—200 sheep.

17,802. But what size of arable?—Is it the stock I have now?

17,803. Yes, the stock you have now?—As much more; about 12 acres, I have about 6 and I would like 12.

17,804. If you had 12 acres arable, would you expect to be able to winter your stock without purchase?—Yes, I could winter them, but although I could winter them I would be badly off myself.

17,805. How?—A man with so small land as that would not have enough to keep him.

17,806. Don't you think it would be safer for you to carry on with the stock you have got and an arable area sufficient for you to winter them rather than venture into a new holding?—No.

17,807. Then what is it you desire?—I want to get back to Suardalan, a place up the glen.

17,808. Is that an old township?—Yes, it is. [*Mr Grant.*—He is a brother of the former witness Maccrimmon.]

17,809. What size of holding do you desire to obtain at Suardalan?—What my grandfathers had.

17,810. What stock?—It would keep about 700 sheep.

17,811. You mean the whole place or your own croft?—I am not wanting the whole, but I would like 200 sheep.

17,812. And how many cows?—Six.

17,813. And a horse?—Two horses.

17,814. What extent of arable have you in view for that croft?—About 40 acres.

17,815. And would you be prepared to venture upon such a holding without assistance?—Yes, but I won't take the stock that is on it.

17,816. Do you think that it would be safe for you to do that, in view of the present price of sheep?—I am sure it would be safe.

17,817. Just explain why you think it would be safer for you to take a holding of 40 acres arable, and a carry of 200 sheep, 6 cows and 2 horses;

Glenelg.

William Maccrimmon.

than your present holding with double the arable?—Where there is a sufficiency of land, a man can have something off it besides a small patch where a man can have nothing off it.

17,818. In other words, you think that with a stock such as you indicate you would be more likely to cultivate to a profit and maintain yourself fairly than in your present holding, with double the arable?—Yes, I would be better off although I had my present ground for nothing.

17,819. Is this not the case, that in times when prices are low, a man with a small holding, if it is not too small, is rather in a safer position than a man in a large holding?—It would be a small holding, 200 sheep.

17,820. But is a man not safer with that than with a large holding when prices are low?—Yes, if one had such a farm as Mr Mitchell's. [*Mr Sutherland.*—The whole of his difficulty is the difference in the quality of the ground between the two.]

17,821. Suppose the arable of the two holdings to be much of the same quality; my question is, and answer it just as you feel the truth directs you, whether you think it would not be safer to go on with your present holding and double the arable, taking it of good quality, than having a large holding such as you have been describing, when prices are low?—I would take my chance of the other way.

17,822. But speaking as a practical man, and knowing the difficulties of the position when prices are low, would you be prepared to venture upon that new holding rather than continue on your present holding with double the arable?—Yes, and I will pay a year's rent in advance before I go in.

17,823. And you are prepared to put up the buildings and stock the land?—Yes, if I don't get any help for building a house from the factor; in any case I don't care much.

17,824. Now, besides that land you have mentioned, is there any other land you would like to invite our attention to?—I will take Iomaire-a'-ghradain if I get it, the north side of it.

17,825. Did you give this evidence before Lord Napier's Commission in 1883? You were examined by Lord Napier himself, apparently, volume 3, page 2065, question 32,453. 'Do you want more land?—Yes, we 'want more land; and now that the proprietor has plenty 'of land in his own hands, and is wishing to let it, we 'do not see very well why he should not give it out to 'those of us who could afford to take it, when we would 'be willing to pay at the same rate of rent as the large 'farms.' Then the question was asked 'What land 'has the proprietor in his own hands?—Eilanreoch.' Is that one of the places you have mentioned?—Yes.

17,826. Next, Professor Mackinnon asks 'What 'amount of land would you yourself be able or willing 'to take?—I would take about 300 or 400 acres.

'What would be about the rent of the place you 'would wish to take?—Between £30 and £40.

'That would be about the size of the place your 'father had long ago?—Yes.

'And you think the place for which he paid £16 'would now-a-days be worth £30 or £40?—Thereabout.

'*The Chairman.*—You would require to leave your 'present place if you got such a place as that?—I would 'be quite willing to do that. Three were ejected from 'this place in order to make room for us when we went 'there, and some would be only too glad to get back even 'at the present day.

'Can you say how those in your father's position 'were able to stand the shock of the potato famine?—'He never got any assistance at that time, although no 'doubt it gave them a heavy blow. Still they had suffi-'cient means to be able to do without assistance, and if 'they had been left in the land they would have been 'able to hold it. They were not a penny in arrears.'

17,827. Then Professor Mackinnon asks 'And did 'he always consider it a loss to have had to leave that 'place and go where he went to?—Yes.

'He would have preferred to remain where he was?'—Yes.

'Do you remember what amount of stock he would 'have when he left it?—About 12 milk cows and 100 'sheep and horses.'

Glenelg.

William Maccrim

17,828–30. Do you still adhere to that evidence?—Yes, I still adhere to it and I understand it.

17,831. I have no doubt you do; and you adhere to it?—Yes.

17,832. And now that you are asked ten years afterwards, you are still desirous of obtaining a croft or holding of the size you described and with the carry of stock you have mentioned?—Yes.

17,833. And if you got such a holding you would pay a year's rent in advance?—Yes.

17,834. *Mr Shaw Stewart.*—Did you hear what the other witnesses said about a government loan?—I am not wanting a government loan.

17,835. Do you think it would be a mistake for men to undertake farming with the debt of a government loan about their necks? I will put it this way; do you think that it would be better that such holdings as we have been speaking about should be occupied only by tenants who have got enough capital to stock themselves, or whether they would equally succeed if they had a government loan advanced to them?—It would be far better to give it to the man who could stock it for himself.

17,836. Do you think the effect of having to pay yearly interest back on the government loan would be a severe drawback to a man?—I have no doubt whatever of that. Besides the interest, he would probably have to pay the loan itself eventually.

17,837. Can you give me any idea of what you would consider a fair rent for the 40 acres arable, 6 cows, 200 sheep, and 2 horses up at Suardalan?—About £25.

17,838. I notice that you wish your holding to be of a considerable extent; do you think that it would be good for the other crofters in the glen if they obtained fresh holdings that they also should be of the same size?—No, I don't think they should have the same size.

17,839. Could you give me a reason?—A good deal of it depends upon how people were brought up from their youth.

17,840. Do you think that to occupy a holding such as you mention they should have considerable knowledge of farming?—It would be necessary.

17,841. Would it not be necessary also to have a knowledge of farming if they occupied smaller holdings?—They would do with less knowledge in a smaller holding.

17,842. Would the land be so well cultivated?—No.

17,843. Then to put the land to its best use, whether in small or large holdings, the occupiers in your opinion ought to have a good knowledge of farming?—Yes, they would require a knowledge of farming or they would not be able to work the land properly.

17,844. And they should have enough capital to stock it themselves?—Yes, I am of that opinion also.

17,845. *Mr Maccallum.*—As you know Glenmore well, could you give the names of the old townships in Glenmore?—I could not very well, but I would give them to-morrow. I have them in a book at home.

17,846. *The Chairman.*—Is your home far from here?—No.

17,847. As soon as your examination is over you could go and get your book and tell us the names?—Yes, I could do that.

17,848. *Mr Maccallum.*—And you could also give perhaps the number of tenants in each township?—I could not tell that. Mr Mitchell said Glenmore would maintain sixteen families.

17,849. And on the other side of Glenmore, Scallasaig, how many families do you think could be accommodated?—About eight to make them equal to the sixteen on the other side.

17,850–1. Do you anticipate that there would be any loss to the proprietor if these lands were made available for such holdings as you speak of?—I think the proprietor would lose nothing if it was made in large shares like that with four tenants to each hirsel; they would have money to put stock on it.

17,852. You think they would be able to pay as

high a rent as the large farmer for the whole?—Yes, I think they could.

17,853. And do you think there would be a keen competition by the people of the district for such holdings?—No, I don't think so. They are not in the district that would take it.

17,854. But those who are in the district are very anxious for such holdings?—No, not to get that much land.

17,855. Then you would recommend holdings of a size too large for the ability of the people in the district?—It is for myself I wanted the size I indicated, not for them.

17,856. Then can you not speak for others at all as to their willingness to take land?—I am not against their getting it at all, but I know they are not wanting that much land; very few of them or none at all.

17,857. Then the others would need to be helped, you think, before they could take such holdings?—Some of them, at any rate, would require to be.

17,858. Supposing that these lands were made available in such holdings as you were saying, would there be competitors from other districts for them?—Yes, if they would get it.

17,859. And would there be a better competition for them than for the large holdings?—I think there would be.

17,860. How is Scallasaig held at present?—It is in the hands of the proprietor.

17,861. How long has it been in his hands?—I think about six years.

17,862. And when the last tenant left was it advertised to let?—I don't remember.

17,863. Do you know whether it was advertised to be let in medium-sized holdings?—No.

17,864. And was there any application for it, do you know, by the crofters, for parts of it say?—I don't think they asked for any of it.

17,865. Did you yourself indicate that you were willing to take a medium-sized holding?—Yes, of the size I indicated now.

17,866. You made application to the proprietor through the factor, did you?—I was speaking to them about it.

17,867. The holding that you have at present you consider too small for you?—Yes, without doubt.

17,868. You got an addition made to it recently, did you not?—Yes.

17,869. And is it possible to add arable land to it; is there arable land in the neighbourhood of your present holding?—No.

17,870. When you got the additional pasture your rent was reduced, is that so?—No; we got the additional pasture without increasing the rents.

17,871. Did you not say that your rent was originally £16?—Yes.

17,872. And then it was reduced to £13?—Yes.

17,873. When did you get the addition?—When the Commission was here about two years ago.

17,874. Do you think that the crofters pay as high a rent for the lands they occupy as the large farmers?—More, higher.

17,875. They are more profitable to the proprietors than the large?—Yes, if they would get the money.

17,876. But the rent which they pay, is it not as good a rent for the land they hold as what the large farmer pays?—The small ones pay more per acre if they all did pay it, but the big farmers are more profitable as they pay their rent all at once.

17,877. Is it, then, within your knowledge that the crofters are deeply in arrear?—I think they are.

17,878. Have they been paying the fair rent fixed by the Commission?—Some of them, I think.

17,879. But you cannot speak positively?—No.

17,880. Can you speak of the Bernera crofters for instance, are they deeply in arrear?—I think they are.

17,881. But taking that into consideration that some of them have not been able to pay, still as a whole do you think that the crofters are just as profitable to the proprietor as the large farmer?—I do not think they are.

17,882. And the reason is that they are in arrear, is that the only reason?—That is why I think so; because they are in arrears.

17,883. And has the proprietor any great outlay on account of the crofters?—Since the young proprietor came he has put out a good deal of money on improving crofters' holdings.

17,884. Has he built new houses?—Yes, he has.

17,885. Has he built new houses for the Bernera crofters?—He did for one of them.

17,885*a*. And where are the other houses that have been built for crofters?—He built one down here for a crofter.

17,886. What is the name of the place?—Under the Bernera rock.

17,887. Is he a cofter?—Yes, Archie Chisholm.

17,888. What kind of croft has he got?—He has about four acres; he got a share of Galltar.

17,889. Can you tell us of any other houses built by the proprietor for crofters?—He built some in Kirkton.

17,890. How many?—Three or four of them, I think.

17,891. Were these built without any assistance from the crofter?—Yes, they were built without any assistance from the crofter.

17,892. Are there crofters that pay no rent here?—I think there are.

17,893. And you say that it is for crofters who pay no rent that these houses were built?—Yes.

17,894. And are these workers on the estate?—Yes.

17,895. These houses have been built then for workmen rather than for people of the crofting class?—It is crofters that went into them.

17,896. People who had land elsewhere, is it?—They have land still.

17,897. And pay no rent?—I think some of them don't pay rent for the house.

17,898. Could you give us the names of those who pay no rent and for whom houses were built? [*Mr Donald Macrae.*—Might I mention this point at this stage?—*The Chairman.*—No, no, I can't at present interrupt the examination of the witness.]—Donald Macleod, on the street of Kirkton. I heard that he was paying no rent for the house.

17,899. Any other?—I think there is Angus Macleod, he had a croft and I think he has got the house along with the croft, but I am not very sure.

17,900. What is his place?—In the street of Kirkton.

17,901. Any other?—I don't know; there are women there, I think, who have houses.

17,902. What does Donald Macleod do?—He had cow's grass; he is a mason.

17,903. What size of croft has he got?—An acre and grazing for two cows.

17,904. And Angus Macleod, what has he?—About the same.

17,905. And what does he do for a living?—He is a shepherd with the proprietor.

17,906. Then it is a shepherd's house that has been built in that case, is it?—No, it is not a shepherd's house.

17,907. Isn't he a shepherd with the proprietor, and that is his house?—He is stopping in the house, but there is no man stopping in the house as well as him.

17,908. But that is the house he has as shepherd, isn't it?—No, it is not a shepherd's house, because if another shepherd would come he would not get that house.

17,909. *Mr Sutherland.*—Were you appointed a delegate at a meeting at Bernera?—No.

17,910. So you are speaking your own opinion merely?—Yes.

17,911. And no person is bound by the opinion you express in your township?—I don't care whether they are or not.

17,912. So you came here to-day merely to advocate for yourself the possession of these lands in Suardalan?—What I came here to-day to ask for is any place in the district where I could get it.

17,913. For yourself?—For myself, and if you think I am not right I will show you a chair that was in Suardalan in the time of Prince Charlie.

Glenelg.

William Maccrimmon.

17,914. Now I gather that your opinion amounted to this, with regard to the holdings, that some people would be able to take larger holdings than other people through having more capital; is that so?—No, that is not my opinion.

17,915. Would you advocate the holdings that are to be made to be of the same size?—No.

17,916. Where were you born, do you say?—In Iomaire-a'-Ghradain.

17,917. How did you come to be in Bernera?—We were evicted from Iomaire-a'-Ghradain.

17,918. What was your father's name?—Archibald Maccrimmon.

17,919. Do you know why they were put from Iomaire-a'-Ghradain?—Yes, I know why.

17,920. Would you please tell why?—Because Mr John Macrae was for nine years asking the place, and Mr Horne gave it to him.

17,921. What had Mr Horne to do with it?—He was regulating the estate, and I believe he tried to take the estate from themselves, and no wonder he put us out of the township.

17,922. Do you mean from the proprietor?—From the proprietor.

17,923. Was that Mr Donald Horne, W.S., Edinburgh?—Yes.

17,924. Did you hear the evidence given by another witness before you with regard to the people coming here from Skye?—I don't think I was in at the time.

17,925. Did you ever hear that people did come here from Skye when Macleod of Macleod had the lands?—I don't think any came except for service, such as shepherds brought by big farmers who had farms here.

17,926. Do you think any persons came here from the island of Skye as the result of clearing the land there?—I did not hear.

17,927. Well, coming back to Bernera where you now are, what extent of grazing have you got? What are your boundaries?—Ardintoul was on the north side, and crofters are on this side.

17,928. Which crofters?—The crofters of Galltar. The innkeeper at Kyle Rhea is on the west side.

17,929. They don't go to the sea then?—Yes.

17,930. Behind the hotelkeeper?—Yes.

17,931. They hold their grazing in common in the township of Bernera, do they?—They don't hold it in common, each man has his own stock.

17,932. But they hold their grazing in common?—Yes.

17,933. And have they all an equal share of the stock?—Yes.

17,934. Is the proportion fixed by any estate regulation, or do you agree among yourselves about it?—The people themselves.

17,935. And do they all hold the same amount of stock on the common grazing?—Yes, one may have a few more or less.

17,936. And is it according to the rent he pays that he has stock?—They pay an equal rent.

17,937. And have equal stock?—They should have equal stock.

17,938. But have they?—One year a man may have more sheep and another year he may have fewer.

17,939. But they are all entitled to have the same number?—Yes.

17,940. But there are variations?—They can't keep to the same number.

17,941. Are you of opinion that their ground is overstocked?—No, I am not.

17,942. Could you give us, without any trouble, the amount of stock that is on the 856 acres I think it is?—60 each and not even that.

17,943. Is it 60 for each of the four?—Yes.

17,944. That is 240 for 856 acres, is that right?—I don't know; that is the stock, but I don't know how many acres there are.

17,945. Have they cows on it besides?—Yes, they have cows on it besides.

17,946. How many cows?—Seven each.

17,947. Twenty-eight cows?—Twenty-eight cattle-beasts.

17,948. And have they horses?—One each.

Glenelg.

William Maccrimm

17,949. And you don't think the ground is overstocked?—No.

17,950. It carries that stock easily?—Yes

17,951. And is the stock good?—Yes.

17,952. *Mr Donald Macrae,* Plockton.—Perhaps your lordship might ask him; it appears that he applied in the year 1883 before the Lord Napier Commission, he spoke about suitable lands in the hands of the proprietor on the farm of Eilanreach, and he refers to Sandaig; he might perhaps be asked what portion of Eilanreach he referred to when he spoke before Lord Napier's own Commission.

17,953. *The Chairman.*—You were asked by Lord Napier about Eilanreach. Is that a farm or a part of a farm?—It is a farm.

17,954. Who is the farmer, or is it in the hands of the proprietor?—The Master of Blantyre is the farmer.

17,955. Is there land there available?—There are bits of land.

17,956. Do you mean small patches or considerable tracts?—There are good large bits between the little glen and Sandaig.

17,957. Suitable for settlement of crofters?—Yes.

17,958. Are you employed on the estate?—No. Yes, I will be working for the estate and getting paid for it.

17,959. Why did you first say no and then say yes?—I meant that I am not working for the estate unless I take a contract.

17,960. Do you take contracts for work on the estate?—Yes.

17,961. What sort of contracts?—Rushes and ferns.

17,962. Do you mean cutting them?—Cutting them down.

17,963. Clearing the land of rushes and ferns?—Just clearing the land of them.

17,964. How many years have you been getting contracts of that sort?—I don't know, I don't remember.

17,965. A good many years?—Not many.

17,966. How many?—It will be six or seven years.

17,967. And how much do you make each year on the average from these contracts; of course, they vary no doubt?—From £9 to £12.

17,968. Are you in arrear yourself?—No, I don't think I am.

17,969. But I would like to know a little more distinctly, yes or no?—No, when the factor and I adjust matters.

17,970. Are you able to say, from your own knowledge, whether the crofters in this district are considerably in arrear?—I am not going to take any business about them.

17,971. But you have been telling us a great deal about that, especially in your answers to Mr Maccallum. Does it consist with your knowledge and belief that the crofters are considerably in arrear or does it not?—I know that some of them are in arrears, pretty heavily too.

17,972. *Mr Shaw Stewart.*—Are any other crofters employed on the estate from time to time besides yourself?—Yes.

17,973. And they find it some help to them, I suppose?—Oh, yes, they are getting help, but I was doing better before I was getting any work at all.

17,974. *Mr Sutherland.*—You stated that the crofters were in arrears and that the large farmers were not in arrears; could you tell us how you know that the large farmers are not in arrear?—Some of themselves, and the factor said so to me.

17,975. And is your knowledge regarding the arrears of the crofters also derived from the factors?—I take no concern with such a thing at all.

17,976. You merely stated it to us?—I said nothing of the kind.

17,977. Do you mean to say that you did not state here that the crofters were in arrears?—I did say that; no mistake about that.

17,978. *The Chairman.*—From what source do you derive your knowledge in stating that some of the crofters are considerably in arrear?—By the Commission when it was here last.

17,979. Any other source?—No.

17,980. Can you give us the paper you promised? (*Hands in document.*)

17,981. The townships that you give in Glenmore and Glenbeg are 'Iomaire-a'-Ghradain, Lowel, Orcharnarchan, Achchurn, Edinvaich, Knockfinn, Pittalmitt, Mylemore, Upper Myle, Leunakhan.' Is this your writing?—No.

17,982. 'Suardalan, Scallasaig, Beolairidh and Milltown.' Are these the whole?—Yes.

17,983. Where did you get this information?—I know the place since my birth, and I got somebody to write it for me.

17,984. Can you show us the localities of all these places?—Yes, I can show every one of them.

AUGUSTUS BAILLIE, Dochfour (31), assisted by DONALD GRANT, Grantown, Factor for Glenelg—*examined.*

17,985. *The Chairman.*—You are brother of the proprietor?—Yes. And you have been acting for some time in the management of this part of the estate?—No, not this part of the estate, I have just come here to represent him, that is all. Mr Donald Grant manages this part of the estate.

17,986. You have been assisting your brother in the management of the estates, but not this part?—That is so.

17,987. You represented your brother, I think, before the Crofters Commission?—Yes, but that part of the estate I did manage.

17,988. That is towards Inverness?—Yes, towards Inverness.

17,989. You have a written statement?—Yes, acreage and so on and definition of the property.

17,990. Kindly read it.—James E. B. Baillie, Esq. of Dochfour, the present proprietor of Glenelg, succeeded to the property in 1883. The extent was then about 43,000 acres. The extent has since been reduced by the sale of Arnisdale, the part of the property along the head of Loch Hourn, to about 28,000 acres. A large area is sterile and rocky. The estate consists chiefly of three grazing farms, viz., Beolary extending to about 6500 acres; Eilanreoch including Balvraid extending to about 12,300 acres; and Scallisaig extending to about 6000 acres. The first two mentioned farms are let to tenants; Scallisaig is in the proprietor's hands. The proprietor holds also a part of the grazing of Culindoun. The whole arable land now in cultivation or cultivated during the last thirty or forty years is about 355 acres. Of that extent about 200 acres are held by the larger tenants, including 50 acres in the proprietor's hands. The total tenancies are 69, and of that number 39 hold lots of 2 acres arable and under, exclusive of grazing, and 18 lots not exceeding 12 acres arable exclusive of grazing. In addition to this, 10 tenants hold 320 acres pasture in common; 23 tenants 130 acres; 4 tenants 865 acres; and 10 tenants have grazing for cows with the proprietor's stock at Culindown, at a rent of 10s. for each cow and follower. The grazing of Galder, extending to 340 acres, was recently let to tenants in that locality at the rent of £15. The proprietor made a considerable reduction on the rents of the small tenants shortly after he took possession of the property. The tenants were encouraged, irrespective of leases, to call in the Crofters Commission in order to have the rents judicially fixed. Nineteen applications were made, several of which were joint-applications by the proprietor and tenant, with the result that the rents were fixed at the valuation of the proprietor's factor, with very trifling variations.

17,991. How many cases were there of persons holding under lease placed by consent of the proprietor under the Commission?—[*Mr Grant.*—Will you allow me to adopt the statement and answer the questions as I know the details?]

17,992. Very well. How many holdings under lease were placed under the Commission by the consent of the estate?—None.

17,993. I beg your pardon, 'the tenants were 'encouraged, irrespective of leases, to call in the 'Crofters Commission in order to have the rents 'judically fixed.' What I want to know is how many of them came in under the Act?—Those that had leases didn't appeal to the Commission at all, they were encouraged to do it, but they didn't do it.

17,994. But, of course, the effect of their coming before the Commission you know, with the consent of the estate, would have been to put an end to the leases and place them under the Act?—We offered to let them be under the Act, we treated them as under the Act.

17,995. Are they under the Act?—Yes.

17,996. Those who have leases?—Yes, we regard them as being under the Act, but they never came before the Commission. The Commission went to Arnisdale.

17,997. I think that should be put right. You would be entitled at present to apply the section of the Act excluding leaseholders. The tenant holds nothing in writing to enable him to maintain that he is under the Act?—The leases have expired now.

17,998. But that does not matter; they were under lease, I suppose, at the passing of the Act. I think, if I might offer a suggestion, I would have that placed on a more definite basis?—We are willing to do anything that is reasonable.

17,999. They do not wish their rents dealt with, I suppose?—No.

18,000. Had they made applications?—No, but their neighbours made applications and we fixed the rents at the same sum.

18,001. It is a matter for the crofters and their advisers and not one that is before this Commission.—The majority of them have been transferred to another landlord since.

18,002. Of course, in that case you have no control over them. Is there any part of the Dochfour estate under forest?—Not of the Glenelg estate.

18,003. Well, I suppose we are dealing with the Glenelg estate at present. What was the date of the sale of the Arnisdale part of the property?—I think we gave possession two years last Whitsunday.

18,004. Is the remaining area of the Dochfour estate only 15,000 acres?—28,000 acres in Glenelg, that is exclusive of Glenshiel, which adjoins it.

18,005. How much in Glenshiel? Perhaps you gave us that at Glenshiel?—Yes, I did; it is 24,300 acres.

18,006. Now what proportion of the 28,000 acres is under sheep?—24,800 acres in the three farms specially mentioned.

18,007. That is on the Glenelg portion of the estate?—Yes.

18,008. Are these all the farms?—There are smaller grazings, the grazings held in common by the crofters.

18,009. But sheep farmers?—No, that is the only three.

18,010. What is the extent of land held by crofters under grazing?—2380 acres.

18,011. In the hands of crofters as hill grazing?—That includes patches of arable land.

18,012. The arable is but a small portion of it. In what year did you become factor, Mr Grant?—In 1884.

18,013. The previous factor had been Mr Mollison?—Yes.

18,014. And he had been factor for many years?—I understand he was.

18,015. You had no connection with the estate prior to 1884?—No, I knew nothing about it. I came in the latter part of 1883 to look at it, and fix the crofters' rents, but I did nothing till 1884.

18,016. Do you know whether there is a desire for land among the crofters here?—Yes, I believe there is.

18,017. Are you of opinion,—I am not speaking, of course, of the question of material damage or the like,—

Glenelg. Donald Grant.

but are you of opinion apart from that, that there is land which would be suitable for the settlement of crofters?—Very few, there is not room for many holdings on Glenelg, I mean, of course, that would be likely to pay.

18,018. Is there room for some?—There is.

18,019. I understand there is a willingness on the part of the estate to meet the reasonable claims and demands of crofters?—There is; Mr Baillie has always been very willing.

18,020. You wrote a letter, I see. Mr Macrae, as representing the crofters, has handed me what bears to be a copy of a letter, dated 11th February 1888, Royal Bank Buildings, Grantown, in which you say 'Glenelg. 'Dear Mr Baillie, I have your note of 9th inst. with 'petition. Dochfour has repeatedly explained that he 'would willingly give land to the crofters if it were at 'his disposal.' Does that expression represent now the mind of the estate upon the matter?—It does, but they have got a good deal since then.

18,021. Kindly let us know, for our information, what they have got since then?—They have got about 1200 acres.

18,022. Of grazing?—Of grazing.

18,023. Which crofters got the benefit of that?—There are four crofters on Bernera, there are ten at Galder and ten who have certain rights of grazing at Cul-an duin.

18,024. That is rights of grazing over the landlord's farm?—Over the land in his own possession.

18,025. Speaking roughly, as to these 1200 acres, what additional carry of cattle or sheep stock will it afford to crofters?—Well, I should think it would afford and they have added to their cattle some 40 cows.

18,026. Since they got the land?—Yes, since I came here, and I should think there is an addition to their sheep stock of 400.

18,027. I take these as approximate figures of course; 40 cows and 400 sheep among how many crofters?—The number of tenancies are given in that statement of Mr Baillie's.

18,028. 'The total tenancies are 69, and of that 'number 39 hold lots of 2 acres arable and under, 'exclusive of grazing, and 18 lots not exceeding 12 acres 'arable exclusive of grazing. In addition to this, 10 'tenants hold 320 acres pasture in common; 23 tenants '130 acres; 4 tenants 865 acres; and 10 tenants have 'grazing for cows with the proprietor's stock at Culin-'doun at a rent of 10s. for each cow and follower.' Adding that up gives the correct figure, I suppose?—Yes.

18,029. Is it your opinion, reverting to your nine years' experience as factor for this property, that there is need of more land on the part of the crofters?—Well, it is a very difficult question; so long as a crofter—

18,030. Look at it for a moment from the crofters' point of view, and then answer?—Oh, the crofters have no doubt themselves, in their own minds, that they would be much benefited by land.

18,031. And I daresay you share that opinion?—No, I do not.

18,032. Why?—I would be inclined to give them what they want, to see what they would do with it; but I have had some experience of crofters elsewhere, and I find that if a crofter has more land, if he has land that interferes with his wage-earning time, it does not pay; unless he has as much land as will occupy his whole time. I think the crofts that they would lay out for themselves would not be large enough, and I am doubtful whether they could provide capital for their crofts. Then from the estate point of view there is an objection to planting crofts upon some of the places mentioned by the witnesses. I have no doubt the land is very suitable and would make very good crofts, but you would cut up a farm of 6000 acres and deprive the tenant of that farm of the wintering.

18,033. Could there not be experimental settlements made with crofters, and leave sufficient wintering to the farmer?—There is not arable land enough, as you will see when you see the ground. The extent of grazing land is much in excess of anything arable that would keep the sheep in winter, and the result is that all the large farmers send their young stock to winter in the east, in Aberdeenshire and elsewhere.

Glenelg. Donald Grant.

18,034. Is that so here?—All the large farmers send their young stock away.

18,035. To winter in other counties?—In other counties. We do it ourselves, and my experience is that if we did not we would lose more than the wintering in mortality.

18,036. To what extent is wintering carried on here; is it carried on to any extent?—We keep the ewes in this country.

18,037. But not the hoggs?—Not the hoggs.

18,038. Of course, the crofters winter their stock as best they can?—They do, and I have no doubt the mortality is very heavy in consequence.

18,039. Leaving out of view for a moment the question of availability of the land, are you, from your experience, in favour of a croft carried on by the wage-earning crofter or of a croft (I am speaking of this locality) which would be large enough in fair years to enable him to live by his holding?—I am in favour of a croft that would be large enough to support a family.

18,040. A man and wife and say four or five children?—Yes, the family going out as they are able to do work.

18,041. You are of opinion that such a croft with fair average chances is quite a possible thing?—Yes, quite.

18,042. In this district?—Yes.

18,043. And that there are men who might be trusted to make the experiment?—I would not say that; I would not say that they have the experience.

18,044. They cannot have the experience, you know; that is impossible. But they have as much knowledge towards that end as you could expect from the crofter?—As much as I could expect from people that had not had the opportunity.

18,045. All the crofters here at present, I suppose, are wage-earning crofters, they don't depend upon their holdings?—Well, the four at Bernera, one of whom your lordship examined, Maccrimmon, don't do much work other than attend to their crofts.

18,046. The crofters of Bernera?—The crofters of Bernera.

18,047. These are rather larger crofts?—They have more grazing, they have an average of about 7 acres of arable land, but they have a good deal of grazing, and I don't think they do much besides.

18,048. And they depend upon their stock for their maintenance?—They do, and I have no doubt that, like other crofters or parties holding land to the same extent, that they are losing money, losing capital within the last two or three years.

18,049. In times like this, when prices are low, who suffers most,—the man with a small holding upon which he can live in a fair year or the man with a larger holding?—The man with the smaller holding if it occupies all his time.

18,050. Suffers?—Suffers more than the man with the large holding, as it occupies more of his time in proportion to the return from it.

18,051. You would rather, therefore, in such a case, speaking of yourself, have a larger holding than a smaller?—I would not approve of any croft,—beyond an allotment which would be a very profitable thing for a workman, because he could labour it after working hours—of less than 20 acres arable and a corresponding pasture.

18,052. That is to say, such an extent of pasture that would carry a stock that 20 acres arable land could winter?—Yes, except the young stock.

18,053. The rent is always a delicate subject, what rent would you put upon that?—Well, in fixing the rents here I was very much guided by the circumstances of the people that I had on the crofts.

18,054. Not entirely upon the value of the land?—No. But the rents here are all fixed at lower rates than any other place that I have fixed rents.

18,055. Indeed?—Yes.

18,056. The lowest rents you have fixed?—Yes, they are as low as any rents I have fixed. I don't know that they are cheaper after all, because the weather is against them here, so much wet.

18,057. Is this a wet place?—It is; on the average I believe they will not have more than three quarters of grain to the acre, whereas down in other parts of Inverness-shire they will have four or four and a half.

18,058. You mean corn?—Yes, and the labour is more expensive here than where they will have the four or four and a half quarters.

18,059. You have no fishing villages here?—No, except Kirkton; they do a little fishing at Kirkton.

18,060. That is to say for their own use?—Chiefly.

18,061. But no one here lives by the fishing industry?—I don't think it.

18,062. They live by their holdings and by earning wages?—Yes.

18,063. Do the crofters here get much work from the estate?—Well, we try and avoid taking in a stranger to do any work we have to do. They are very good tradesmen on the estate, Maccrimmon here and one or two masons and joiners do our work.

18,064. And you employ them as much as you can?—Not only employ them, but we sometimes do work, from the estate point of view, that really—

18,065. You make work?—Yes, make work.

18,066. Now you have mentioned a farm Beolary 6500 acres, and Eilanreoch, 12,300 including Balvraid, and Scallasaig is 6000 acres?—Yes.

18,067. That is a total area of 24,800 acres, a very considerable extent of territory?—Scallasaig is in our own hands, where there are about 50 acres arable. I have been over the whole place, and I am not aware that there is any old arable land there.

18,068. You mean land under cultivation?—Yes, land that ever was in cultivation.

18,069. But I always distinguish sharply between arable land in cultivation and what is called old arable?—Oh, we have not 50 acres in cultivation.

18,070. How many have you in cultivation?—About 35.

18,071. How many have you in cultivation in Eilanreoch?—Eilanreoch is let to a tenant; the arable land there will be about 70 to 80 acres.

18,072. In cultivation?—Or grass.

18,073. But I mean under rotation?—Oh, I don't know that; my extents are taken from the estate plans, and the present tenant may have changed the mode of working it.

18,074. He could not go against his lease?—We are not particular about conditions.

18,075. Are you able to say, then, how many acres of land under cultivation are on the farm of Eilanreoch?—I should think about 50 or 60.

18,076. And at Beolary?—Only the shepherds' crofts and grass for the sheep; probably about 20 or 30. These are mere estimates.

18,077. I am not taking them as accurate figures, I see your difficulty in stating them, but leaving all that land out of view, would not it be possible,—nay, would not it be quite practicable for skilled men, to take land from these farms, one or more of them, and settle crofters there without material damage to the letting value of the remainder of the farm?—No, I don't think so.

18,078. Well, I will put the question in this way. Would it not be possible to do so in such a way as still to leave a large farm which might be worked to profit?—No, I don't think any tenant could be got for Beolary if you take 80 acres of the low land that is arable now or could be cultivated from it.

18,079. I don't speak of land under cultivation. I speak of old arable, or land which, whether old arable or not, a skilled man would think of putting the plough into?—I don't think a tenant would take the farm at almost any rent. I may mention, with reference to the arable land of Beolary that some of the witnesses spoke about, I think it very likely that about the beginning of the century,—there was a great extent of arable low ground which you will see as you examine the ground, but the bed of the river has apparently risen some four or five feet, and it is now quite wet, growing very little but rushes and strong grass, and the first thing to do, if it was to be brought under cultivation, would be to lower the bed of the river, which would be attended with an expense that nothing would pay.

18,080. You are aware, of course, that there is a prevailing desire,—I don't confine the question to this district,—but there is a prevailing desire among those who belong to the crofter class to get new holdings and to get additions to their present holdings?—Yes.

18,081. And you say that is a natural desire?—It is.

18,082. And a desire which those in authority might fairly consider the best means of acceding to?—Yes.

18,083. In a legitimate way, I mean?—Yes.

18,084. Well, then, how would you do it?—You would require to get a considerable tract of arable land, either to purchase or to lease and let out as crofts, and I don't think you could expect crofters to take 20 acres of arable land and build houses upon it without assistance.

18,085. Might not some of the crofters here be trusted to venture upon considerable holdings without assistance?—If they could afford to build houses upon a croft of that size and stock them, they would be able to take a much larger holding with the houses on it.

18,086. You mean a farm?—A farm; and that would pay them better than a croft.

18,087. A £60 to £80 farm?—Yes, the same money would do it.

18,088. What is the rent of Beolary?—£420, I think it is.

18,089. And the rent of Eilanreoch?—£610 including Balvraid.

18,090. And the rent of Scallasaig?—It is entered in the valuation roll at £400.

18,091. Of course it is in the proprietor's own hands?—In the proprietor's own hands.

18,092. That is a total of £1430 from farm rents. Would it not be worth while for the proprietor—I am not suggesting that he should do it at present—to turn one of these farms, as they are of considerable extent, into crofters' settlements?—Scallasaig is not capable of being so turned; the extent of the arable land is so small compared with the pasture land.

18,093. Then what do you say to the other two?—That would be my objection to the other two, that if you take three or four crofts off Beolary you destroy the whole.

18,094. But my question is, would it not be worth while for the proprietor to consider as to turning the whole farm into settlements of an adequate size, having regard to the persons, the district, the climate and the quality of the soil?—He has been considering it; the difficulty just now is that they will not let at all.

18,095. Of course I know this is a bad time and prices are very low, but has he been considering that closely?—He has been considering the question of extending the area of the land under crofters.

18,096. I am putting the thing theoretically; it is quite a matter for himself and you?—Yes.

18,097. In what direction has he been considering the question of extending that area?—We have Cul-an-Duin in our own possession, and in reference to that letter I may mention that ten parties have got permission to graze cows on it. We have not given permission to the particular person who applied for it, because he had more cows than the others already; but we are willing to give permission to them if we find out that they have capital to stock it.

18,098. That is to say, you are willing to continue that policy as you find that it can be done fairly to yourselves and to them?—Yes, and we are willing to reduce the value of them if they are able to stock.

18,099. There was a great deal said by one witness about arrears. Are any considerable number of the crofters here in such a degree of arrears as would warrant you in complaining?—Well, they are in such a

Glenelg. Donald Grant.

degree of arrears,—and I don't blame them, because times have been very bad,—but they are in such degree of arrears that in the case of the larger crofters I daresay we will have to wipe off some of them. The arrears have increased since the judicial rents were fixed.

18,100. Increased since the judicial rents were fixed?—Increased since the judicial rents were fixed.

18,101. Is that exceptional or is it general?—It is pretty general.

18,102. You put that down to the bad times?—Bad times entirely.

18,103. It is not due to any improper spirit?—Not at all; they are a most industrious class of crofters.

18,104. *Mr Shaw Stewart.*—There is a great deal of land in this property under sheep, and the proprietor has a large farm under sheep. I should like to know something about the capabilities of this part of the country for wintering sheep. Can you winter hoggs here?—Well, we have not been trying it for some time.

18,105. Why?—Because the mortality is so heavy. I found that we could not stand any rent at all if we wintered the hoggs here.

18,106. And you send them away to Aberdeenshire?—To Aberdeenshire and Easter Ross and the Black Isle and other places.

18,107. Then do you think the mortality would be very great if they tried to winter hoggs in this part?—It would; that is my impression. It is very great now even as we do it; the mortality in the Scallasaig stock of hoggs from the time that they are lambed until they came home from the wintering varies from three to five per score, and the mortality of the stock after that is at the rate of six per cent. That is to say, if we put in 700 odd hoggs a year old, we are only able to turn out 400 cast ewes,—a drop of 300 in about four years.

18,108. Then crofters taking up new grazings would have to consider not only the expense of stocking their land, but also the loss they would have to meet owing to the exceptional mortality from the disadvantage of wintering here?—They would, and I think that is one of the things that are not taken sufficiently into account. I have no doubt that in the case of the Galder crofters who have sheep stocks and who are wintering them at home, that is one of the sources of their heavy loss, the mortality. I know they devote their whole time to their crofts, and they are very industrious crofters. If the price of wool and stock were very high that would make them pay.

18,109. *The Chairman.*—You do not attribute the mortality to careless management?—No, I do not.

18,110. *Mr Sutherland.*—You say this property is divided into two parts, one in Glenshiel and the other in Glenelg, did I get the figures right?—I spoke of the Glenshiel one the other day. Mr Baillie did not refer to it just now.

18,111. The statement of Mr Baillie is now that the extent of the Glenelg property is 28,000 acres, and he gave the distribution of that land to be 24,800 acres in large farms, which leaves a balance of 4000 acres roundly speaking?—Yes, 3425.

18,112. Well, then, the distribution of that land is that two men and the proprietor himself have got the 24,800 acres, and all the remainder of the population have got the 4000 acres?—That is so.

18,113. Now could you give us any idea of what the population is that is in occupation of the 4000 acres, how many families for instance?—I have given you the number of tenancies, 63.

18,114. Is that the whole?—Yes, 63.

18,115. That is to say, then, that in the possession of the three families there are 24,800 acres, and in possession of the 63 or 67 there are 4000 acres?—That is so, but that may not include the whole of the population, because there are some who have got no land.

18,116. But broadly speaking is that a distribution of the land that you would be inclined to justify?—I was not at the distribution of it.

18,117. But you are maintaining and justifying the present distribution of it so far as I understand?—I am justifying the present management of the estate; but as to the time the distribution was made, I am not prepared to speak.

Glenelg. Donald Grant.

18,118. But that is included in the management, isn't it?—It is.

18,119. And looking at it broadly—I don't wish you to answer the question if you commit yourself in any way, but do you think it is unreasonable that there should be some dissatisfaction from that distribution?—Perfectly reasonable from the crofters' point of view.

18,120. And from the public point of view generally?—The public don't know much about it.

18,121. But they have to do with it a very great deal. Then you said, I think, that since 1884, 24 crofters have got 1200 acres?—About that, I am speaking roughly.

18,122. And you also said, I think, that on account of that extension they have added 40 cows and 400 sheep to their stock?—Well, I don't know what they have added. I am speaking of what it is capable of carrying.

18,123. But I thought you gave us what they had actually added to their stock?—What they ought to have added, but there is an overstocking, I have no doubt about that.

18,124. Now how many sheep are allowed commonly for the grazing of a cow; what is supposed to be the equation?—From 7 to 10 I should think.

18,125. I think 10 is the common rule that we have got here. In laying down sheep for the 40 cows that gives us how many sheep?—400 sheep.

18,126. And that added to the other stock they had would give how many, 640 sheep altogether?—Yes, but a good deal of the land let for cows' grazing is not adapted for sheep grazing.

18,127. But for the present purpose that does not matter much. That gives a stock of 800 sheep. For 1200 acres is that about the allowance of sheep in this country?—That depends entirely upon circumstances.

18,128. It is a very great deal less than one acre?—Yes.

18,129. And is that the rule?—I don't know the rule, because you can't get two localities the same.

18,130. Are not you overestimating the amount of stock or benefit they would get from getting 1200 acres?—No, I don't think so.

18,131. Then you maintain that a sheep can be maintained for the whole year, a stock sheep, upon less than an acre of land?—There is a sheep to one and a half acres, but it depends entirely upon the land.

18,132. But is the land that has been given to them of a nature that one and a half acres would maintain a sheep throughout the year?—I think so; a great deal of it is. I think they have more than that.

18,133. So it is about an acre to a sheep, and is that the rule for those large grazing farms you have spoken to?—No, I don't know there is any fixed rule.

18,134. Have you any idea how many sheep they have got an acre?—A sheep to two acres or one and a half acres.

18,135. So the farm of Eilanreoch, for instance, would have 24,000 or 28,000 sheep, is that so?—No.

18,136. Is not the acreage of Eilanreoch 24,000 acres?—No, Scallasaig.

18,137. It is my mistake 12,000 sheep, and as a matter of fact has it got 12,000 of a sheep stock?—I think there is a stock of about 5000 on Eilanreoch, between 4000 and 5000, and there must be, I should think, nearly a couple of thousand acres of Eilanreoch that would not summer a dozen sheep, the top of Ben Scriol.

18,138. Is that a greater or a less proportion of poor land than the crofters have got in poor land?—They have nothing like that at all.

18,139. Nothing as bad as Ben Scriol?—Not the least like that; the highest of the crofters' land is not more than 200 feet above the level of the sea.

18,140. But height does not always determine the character of the land?—It does in this case.

18,141. That is two acres in Eilanreoch and one and a half for the crofters per sheep?—Yes.

18,142. I did not gather the grounds of your saying that the people were under the Crofters Commission, that they were crofters?—We wished to put them all under the Crofters Commission, we had no objections to those who had leases applying to the Crofters Commission to have their rents fixed.

18,143. And the fact that they are not under the Crofters Commission is due to themselves?—Due to themselves.

18,144. Then you fixed the rent, and you stated that with regard to these rents they were sustained by the Commission?—Practically, yes.

18,145. But if they were not before the Commission how were they sustained by the Commission?—Several of them were guided by the case of others,—*e.g.*, some ten crofters with the same extent of land applied to the Commission.

18,146. What did the Commission sustain?—The old rents, with the exception of 1s. in some cases and 2s. in others.

18,147. In other words, they did not decrease the rent that was payable before, is that it?—The difference in the 19 cases that the Commission decided was for the benefit of the estate—the old rents amounted to £66 and the new rents £67, 15s.

18,148. So that was an increase?—An increase of 15s. on one witness, William Maccrimmon.

18,149. May I ask when this £66 rental was fixed by the estate management?—£66 was fixed by me in 1884.

18,150. And the cases went before the Commission in?—In 1891.

18,151. And were there no extensions of holdings involved in this?—The extension of holdings took place between the two times, the extension at Camusban in 1884 and up here was arranged before the Commission came.

18,152. And are the extensions included in the £66?—The extension of Camusban was.

18,153. And the conditions were perfectly equal that were before you and before the Commission?—Perfectly equal.

18,154. And it was sustained?—It was sustained. I may mention that the reduction made in 1884 was 50 per cent.; I reduced the rents 50 per cent.

18,155. So that you anticipated in that respect the work of the Commission?—It was long before there was any talk of the Commission.

18,156. It was subsequent to Lord Napier's Commission though, was it not?—Yes, it was subsequent to the Commission but before the Crofters Act passed.

18,157. Then, talking about the increase of arrears since the fixing of the judicial rents, I don't think you lay great stress upon that, that it is anything very abnormal, do you?—Well, taking the times into account, I do not, because I find it is the same elsewhere.

18,158. May I ask you this one question just upon that point; do the arrears amount to a year's rental?—Of the crofters' rent?

18,159. Yes.—Yes, they do.

18,160. One year's rental of the area you have in your mind?—Yes.

18,161. Have you got a particular area of this estate in your mind?—All occupied by crofters.

18,162. Then you say the glen we saw to-day here is unfit for cultivation?—A great deal of it.

18,163. But do you think a proportion of it is capable of cultivation that would enable tenants to utilise the remaining pasture to advantage?—Not the whole of it.

18,164. So you think the proportion of grazing and arable land is not distributed in the quantities that would be suitable?—Not suitable for the purpose, but, as I said before, I think there was a great deal of arable land there eighty years ago that could not now be brought into cultivation without deepening the river.

18,165. And how was it under cultivation before; has the river bed risen?—I am satisfied it has.

18,166. How has that happened?—Well, I was not present when it rose.

18,167. But how, you will have a reason?—The small gravel would be carried down by the successive floods.

18,168. Wouldn't it be carried to the sea?—No.

18,169. Are not the same agencies at work that were at work eighty years ago?—I have no doubt.

18,170. And how do they work differently now?—I don't know, except it be an accumulation through time; there may have been landslips in one year that would fill up the bed of a river for several miles that may not happen another year; there may have been a sandbank, or many things.

18,171. There may be many things?—I have no doubt.

18,172. But do you mean to assert for a fact that the level of the river bed has changed over eighty years?—My impression, and I think it would be your impression when you see it, is that the bed of the river has considerably changed.

18,173. Higher now than it was?—Yes, that is quite a common thing in rivers; any person who knows anything about streams knows that this is quite common.

18,174. I know something about streams and I never knew that. Is that the only condition that is changed?—I don't know any. I am attributing the wetness of the ground now to that change.

18,175. But have we not seen land in cultivation on that glen, on the river level?—I don't know.

18,176. Quite close to the bank?—If it was quite close to the river, the river would have overflowed. You will find a deep drain on the one side necessary to carry away the water.

18,177. But surely, passing up the road close to it, any person can see it for himself?—No, I don't think he can from the road.

18,178. Is that the only condition that has changed that would render it unfit for cultivation?—I am not sure that that is the only cause of it.

18,179. What other change has occurred?—I am not aware of any.

18,180. Granting even that, have you not seen rivers embanked?—I have.

18,181. You have seen the river Spey, I have no doubt?—Yes.

18,182. Isn't it a fact that along the course of the Spey there are embankments made?—Yes.

18,183. And do they afford practical security or protection?—They do.

18,184. Could that not be done in this case?—In the case of the embankments on the Spey they protect an area of land that it pays to protect; the narrow strip along the Elg river or whatever it is called is not extensive enough to warrant the outlay.

18,185. Then is it solicitude for the welfare of the people who would be settled there that makes you urge that objection?—I am not called upon, I think, to answer that question.

18,186. Well then, supposing the people themselves were willing to undertake all these risks, would it not be an element in determining that they should be allowed?—Yes, if they quite understand what they are.

18,187. Then, if the land were taken up, would not the relative proportion of arable to cultivated land that exists in the large farms exist in the small ones?—I am not sure I follow your question.

18,188. There is a certain amount of arable or low-lying land which enables the present large holders to utilise the pasture to advantage?—Yes.

18,189. Would that proportion not be maintained in any redistribution or any subdivision of it?—It would be very difficult to do, because it is not so much the summering of the sheep as the cutting of the grass on these patches. They keep the sheep off it in summer, they hay the grass and they have the grass for the sheep in winter; that is what we do on Scallasaig.

18,190. But my point is this, that there would be the same proportion still that there exists now between arable and grazing land upon these farms?—Yes, if you divide it, if you divide the pasture land in proportion to the way you divide the arable land, it could not be otherwise.

18,191. So that the conditions as to the total area would not be affected by any redistribution of the land?—No, but you have to take into account that these

Glenelg. Donald Grant.

crofters settled upon 20 or 30 acres could not afford to have all their land in grass as the large tenant has. They would have part in corn and part in turnips to feed their cattle, and they would only have one fourth of it in grass.

18,192. In other words, you would hope and expect that these small tenants would have corn and grass to feed cow stock?—That is what I understand is crofting cultivation.

18,193. Is it the fact that large tenants have not got these?—They have not.

18,194. They don't raise them?—No, they don't, I don't think they raise any turnips or potatoes except for their own use.

18,195. Because they have not got cattle?—They have not got the kind of cattle, the crofter would have milk cows.

18,196. But do you think it would be a good thing if there were more cattle raised upon this land?—Possibly it might; the land would be perfectly useless now if they didn't graze a certain number of cattle in the winter. Mr Mitchell, I should think, will have 100 head of cattle on Beolary summering, and we have 40 on Scallasaig.

18,197. Is that a recent thing, the rearing of cattle upon these sheep farms?—No, it is not.

18,198. How long has it been in practice here?—In this country it has been since I came, and I have always done it here in the proprietor's own farms.

18,199. Is that because the grazing is superior?—It is because the grazing would get too strong if the cattle did not keep it down. It is not that any profit would arise from the cattle; it is a necessity to improve the quality of the grazing.

18,200. Then you believe, and I think rightly believe, that the quality of the grazing deteriorates by having sheep, and sheep only?—Yes, where the land is very wet like Scallasaig and Beolary.

18,201. And is it your opinion that it still more deteriorates when deer only are upon the land?—After deer have been on the land it may be unfit for sheep for a year or two until the rushes are cut or until the rough grass is eaten by cattle.

18,202. But the natural tendency for land not in the occupation of cattle is to get rough and wild?—It depends on the quality of the soil, and whether the soil is wet or damp; but my impression is that sheep grazing is deteriorating very much in the Highlands.

18,203. Then, with regard to these cattle, may I ask if you house them at night?—We do not.

18,204. They are outdoors always?—Outside always.

18,205. And do you suffer no mortality among them on that account?—We do not, we take away the young cattle.

18,206. And do you keep them there all winter?—We keep the milk cows there all winter.

18,207. Without putting them in houses?—Yes.

18,208. And they live throughout it all?—They live through it all. We hay part of the grass, and we give them access to the stack, in the spring, along with a little artificial feeding.

18,209. But as a matter of fact have they not a milk value apart from the value of the grazing?—They have.

18,210. The trouble is greater with regard to sheep, I suppose?—Yes.

18,211. But it is not so great as if you had kept them for dairy purposes?—Nothing like it. We never come near them on the hillside, and they are nearly as wild as deer sometimes.

18,212. But does that not suggest to your mind that if the land were kept for rearing cattle it would be better for the ground itself and would give a better return?—I don't know for the better return. We leave the cows and the calves together till the end of September, and the value of the calf then, after getting milk from its mother, is from £3 to £3, 10s. That is all we have for grazing the cow all the year round and for the keep of the calf for some months.

18,213. But you have the maintenance of the pasture in good order, have you not?—Yes, that is what I say; the profit we directly derive from the cattle is a mere nothing.

Glenelg. Donald Grant.

18,214. Have you heard of the rent of grazings going down, I mean sheep farms, because the pasture had deteriorated?—Yes.

18,215. And do you know it is a fact?—I believe it is a fact that the grazing over all the Highlands has deteriorated very much.

18,216. And the power of the land to maintain stock has decreased very much?—It has.

18,217. And is it your own opinion that if they kept cattle among these sheep it would maintain it?—No, it would not.

18,218. Why?—Because I think it has arisen from the ground being overstocked, and that overstocking began when the price of wool was very high and it has never been much reduced. My theory is that you cannot take so much mutton and so much wool every year off land if you do not put so much back upon it, without deteriorating the capabilities of the soil.

18,219. But would not the cattle put back the very elements required on the land where the sheep would not?—You could not keep the cattle on the high land where the sheep are.

18,220. But you are wintering your cattle here?—We do on the low ground where the grass is.

18,221. Isn't it by grass becoming wild that the pastures deteriorate in the other places you have mentioned?—No.

18,222. On what account is it?—By the sheep eating it, and nothing going back upon the soil.

18,223. Is that not the same conditions as would apply to your ground here?—It would, to the high ground.

18,224. But you said the pasture was kept in good order by your having cattle?—Yes, the pasture the cattle was on, but that is a small part of it.

18,225. But the cattle go pretty high in summer?—You would see them coming along the road about 300 or 400 yards up.

18,226. They are nearly as high as we had to go to-day, but they go higher in summer than in winter?—Oh, yes, they wander about a good deal.

18,227. I wish to ask you one question with regard to the rent paying capabilities of different classes of occupiers. What is your own opinion regarding that; do you think or do you know that there is any great difference between the rent paid per acre by the small occupier and the large occupier?—I think the rent paid by the large occupier, where the holding is very large, must be less per acre, because he has a greater proportion of pasture and rough soil which is comparatively useless.

18,228. 'Must be,' but you surely know something of your own long experience?—On the average that is precisely the difference. I think the rent per acre of the large grazier is less than the rent of the crofter, but as I said there may be a large grazing like Eilanreoch with 2000 acres included that are perfectly worthless.

18,229. Are you talking just now of this estate or of the state of the Highlands generally?—The state of the Highlands generally. I would never give a crofter such lands as these; it is only when you have a very large extent that you must include such waste land. If, for instance, you are letting 2000 acres for sheep grazing, you must have a lot of land that is perfectly useless. If you give him 200 acres you are supposed to give him land every acre of which is good.

18,230. I quite follow that with regard to the theory, but is it not your opinion with regard to the practice that the crofters all over the Highlands have invariably the worst land?—No, that is not my experience; I am speaking from experience of the east coast lands where the crofts produce good crops.

18,231. But is it not the fact that it is because their lands are good that they have been cleared off them?

18,232. *The Chairman.*—They are not under the Act?—No, they never applied.

18,233. In what county are they situated?—Partly in Inverness and partly in Morayshire.

18,234. *Mr Sutherland.*—But I was referring to the

motive for clearing the people off the land first when the sheep farms were made. Is it not generally the case all over the Highlands that the people were cleared off the land because it was good land and they were put on to worse land?—I am not prepared to answer that.

18,235. But has it not been publicly given by those who did it as the reason?—I am not aware.

18,236. So you maintain that the crofters have better land than the large sheep farms?—No, I do not; I maintain that the average croft land is better; that is to say, that the sheep farmer pays less per acre, taking the whole area, than the crofter does, and I account for this by saying that the land let to the crofter is, taking it altogether, better than the average large farmer's land.

18,237. Then what it amounts to is this, that the crofter has better land than the large farmer?—No, I don't say that as to arable land, but I say the whole of the grazing that a crofter gets is of some use, while a great deal of the grazing that the big farmer gets is poor although it is included within a ring fence.

18,238. But there must be a general character that the land has on one hand and on the other?—Yes.

18,239. And how do they compare?—I gave you an instance of it here, where we have a number of crofters. I am not aware that any crofter has grazing 400 feet above the sea. The large farm let to the Master of Blantyre has, I should think, 1000 acres at the height of 3000 feet above the sea.

18,240. And how many thousand acres has he in the bottoms of glens?—Not very many.

18,241. Are there no glens at all upon his farm?—There is one, and the grazing is very good, at least the lower part of it.

18,242. The grazing is exceedingly good and could be made arable. Do you know that the crofters have as good as that anywhere?—I don't admit that there is much of the Master of Blantyre's grazing that could be made arable.

18,243. I am only taking that because it is the one you chose?—Well, I say very little of it could be made arable; I don't think the witnesses to-day maintained that.

18,244. But take some of the others up here?—Well, that is a matter where there is a difference of opinion.

18,245. Then what sort of land have they got in some of the townships down about here, Galder for instance, is the land there good?—No, it is not.

18,246. Would you compare it with any of those large farms you have referred to?—There is very little bad land on it, it is nearly all green.

18,247. And how much do they pay per acre, do you know, in that township?—They have 300 odd acres and they pay £15. Part of it is down near the sea.

18,248. 1s. an acre; have you any idea what Eilanreoch pays per acre?—A rent of £600, and his acreage is 12,000.

18,249. That is just the same amount?—But then his arable land is included in that.

18,250. And is theirs not?—No, there is no arable land in Galder.

18,251. No arable land at all?—No.

18,252. The Master of Blantyre has got arable land and these have not?—Except that he has a couple of thousand acres that are practically worthless.

18,253. But he has arable land and they have none at all?—They have arable land elsewhere, but not at Galder.

18,254. How much have they got in the other place, does it make the conditions equal?—I think so, and they certainly never complained to me, I allowed themselves to fix rent.

18,255. Then I take it that your general opinion is that you cannot do anything to help us in the work that has been delegated to us to do, to point out such land as we are looking for?—Well, I would explain my opinions to you about land in this district. I only give my own opinion; others may differ from me.

18,256. But your opinion is that there is no land in this estate of the character that has been remitted to us to find?—There may be up the glen, but nothing to the extent that is supposed. I think you will see that when you go up. Glenelg.

18,257. *Mr Maccallum.*—You fully admit that the grazing in the big glen is excellent?—It is. Donald Grant.

18,258. And also, I suppose, you admit that it was once held in townships?—As to that I don't know.

18,259. You heard what was said about Iomaire-a'-ghradain?—Yes.

18,260. And Suardalan?—Yes.

18,261. And that they were put out of them without having been in arrears?—I know nothing about that; the men said so to-day, but they were talking of their ancestors, not from their own knowledge.

18,262. Yes, but you don't doubt in the least that there were townships there?—I see the marks of houses there, but I have not seen the remains of any houses that would warrant any tenant in claiming compensation for them.

18,263. It has not been so recent, I suppose, that they could claim any compensation. You don't suppose that they lost these holdings because of having been in arrears or having failed?—I have no reason to think so.

18,264. And you find that witnesses, for instance from Bernera, think Suardalan up in the glen far better than Bernera?—Yes.

18,265. Do you agree with that opinion?—I don't know.

18,266. But you have been talking about the glen and giving us a description of it?—We were talking of the big glen; Suardalan is away far up from it.

18,267. But it opens into the same glen, doesn't it?—I was never at Suardalan; I have been through the big glen but never at Suardalan.

18,268. Which farm is Suardalan on?—On Scallasaig.

18,269. But you were telling us of the available land in Scallasaig, and you say you never were at Suardalan?—We were talking of the big glen; you began to ask me questions about the big glen.

18,270. Yes, but in reference to the questions that were asked you already; you were asked as to the available land in Scallasaig, and you tell me now that Suardalan is in Scallasaig and that you were never at Suardalan?—I was never up the high glen at Suardalan, but I have seen it from other parts.

18,271. So you can't tell us particularly about it?—Well, I have seen it from a distance, and I think when you go there you would not recommend the cultivation of 10 acres of it.

18,272. How can you tell that when you have not been there?—I am only preparing you for it.

18,273. How can you prepare me when you were not there?—That is a very good reason for my not answering.

18,274. But you say you were preparing me?—Just ask me the question.

18,275. Was that what you said in answer to my question?—I say when you go there you will find that there are hardly 10 acres fit to be cultivated. You need not take my opinion of it now, but go and see it.

18,276. But I am only pointing out this, that you don't know from personal examination of the land?—I don't know from personal examination of the land.

18,277. Then the arable ground, you say, is principally on the banks of the river in the big glen?—In the big glen.

18,278. But is there not a good deal on the hillsides that might be cultivated?—Yes, I think it is quite possible there might be some.

18,279. The soil is deep and the grass upon it just now is very good?—Yes.

18,280. And there is no reason why that land should not be made arable, is there?—No, except that I think it would not pay.

18,281. But you find steeper land elsewhere cultivated, don't you?—Yes, but I don't know steeper land elsewhere that it would pay to bring into cultivation at the present time.

18,282. And the grazing is so good in this glen, I suppose that an acre of it will support a sheep?—Well, I don't know that, I have just told you or ought to have told you that it is very rough grass.

Glenelg. Donald Grant.

18,283. You are anxious, I think you indicate, to form farms of a medium size that would be self sustaining if properly worked?—Not the least anxious; I said they might be made.

18,284. Perhaps I am putting it too strong, but you think that such holdings as these at any rate would be profitable both to the landlord and to the tenant?—More profitable to the tenant than a smaller holding.

18,285. And it would be more likely to pay rent to the proprietor?—That is just a question.

18,286. It would be more able, you think, to pay rent?—Well, the more comfortable a tenant is the more likely the landlord is to have his rent.

18,287. But you have not taken any steps to form such holdings as these, I suppose?—Not here.

18,288. And there was a holding in Balvraid that has been consolidated with Eilanreoch, I think, since you came?—There has.

18,289. Now did you try to let that as a separate holding?—I did, and I did let it.

18,290. And for how long was it?—The tenant took it upon a lease, and he was only three years in it when he found the mortality so heavy that he had to give it up. I accepted his renunciation and was obliged to let it along with Eilanreoch.

18,291. You did not try to let it after that?—No.

18,292. And you did not try to make it into smaller holdings at all, as it was occupied before? We were told that this Balvraid was once divided into four parts?—Yes.

18,293. You did not try how that would suit?—I did not, because I was satisfied that if it did not pay a practical man who took it as one holding it would not suit in four holdings. It is pretty high.

18,294. Then you say one of the chief difficulties which the large farmers have is the wintering of the hoggs, but don't you think that the land would winter better if more of the land was cultivated? If Scallasaig, for instance, were cultivated, and Beolary, would they not winter the hoggs better than when left wild?—Probably, but I am not aware that 20 acres of Scallasaig could be cultivated.

18,295. At any rate I think you admit that?—I admit that land in cultivation will keep more sheep than wild land.

18,296. And you don't see any reason why some of the hill slopes might not be cultivated?—The only reason is that it would not pay.

18,297. But if they were cultivated they would winter the hoggs better?—Probably.

18,298. And the river side might be drained and also cultivated, might it not?—I doubt very much if the ground could be drained in the big glen until you lower the bed of the river.

18,299. You think that is the practical difficulty?—I think the bed of the river in many places is as high as the average of the land.

18,300. But formerly you say it was cultivated?—Apparently.

18,301. And may it not be the reason why the Bernera people are able to winter their sheep that they cultivate their land?—No, I don't think it. I think they are committing a great mistake in attempting to winter their sheep at home.

18,302. But would they be able to winter their hoggs at all if they did not cultivate?—I don't know that they would. Bernera is very low, nearly at the level of the sea.

18,303. Is not the big glen very low also?—Part of it.

18,304. Is not the whole hollow of the big glen low?—Yes, but that is too rough for wintering.

18,305. But has not the roughness of it arisen from want of cultivation?—Probably.

18,306. So that, if tenants were settled upon these lands and cultivated them, they might be able to winter their hoggs after all?—Quite possible, but I don't think it would pay them. Quite apart from the quality of the grazing, I don't think the climate would admit of its paying them.

18,307. Then as to the reductions that have been granted on the large farms, would you kindly give the highest rent for these three farms since you became factor; Beolary for instance, what was the highest rent paid for it?—There would be a reduction over them all of probably 40 per cent.

18,308. Can you give me them separately?—I don't know that I can; I can give you the present rents, but not the former rents.

18,309. You cannot supply me with the former rents?—No.

18,310. *The Chairman.*—Is your main objection to the settlement of crofters in these lands we have been speaking about, the injury that would accrue to the larger farms?—That is one, and the other is that I doubt very much if crofts would pay. I think the crofters here overestimate the value of sheep as a stock.

18,311. Well, but we have been having some bad years, and last year was a very bad year?—I have been giving the average of mortality known to myself, which is very heavy even although we winter them elsewhere.

18,312. Don't you think that in average times, and apart from the question of material damage to the farm from which the land is taken, the experiment might be made of settling crofters on these lands very hopefully?—Yes, it might.

18,313. I want to call your attention to the terms of the order, I think perhaps there has been some mistake accidentally made about the Bernera crofters. The order made by Mr Macintyre was this:—'The Commissioner having heard parties and considered the minute for the applicant and the minute for the tenants of Galder, Glenelg, whereby there is referred to the Commission the fixing of the line of march between the lands occupied and possessed by the crofters of Bernera and the lands occupied and possessed by the said tenants of Galder; finds and declares that the line of march between the respective lands of these persons is as marked A, B, C, D, and coloured black on the plan or tracing produced finds and declares that the area added to the lands possessed by the crofters of Bernera in respect of this line of march extends to 285 acres or thereby, and not 385 acres or thereby as stated in the foresaid Minute; ordains parties respectively to adhere to their own side of the said line of march' (page 166 of the Report for 1890–91). Now I ask your attention to our note on page 114 of the same Report speaking of the Bernera crofters, whose area of common pasture is given as 865 acres. The note says:—'The present rents of the township of Bernera' that is the old rents, 'are exclusive of the additional hill pasture extending 'to 285 acres or thereby.' Then we say—'The fair 'rents include the annual value of said additional 'pasture?'—Yes, I gave them the additional pasture before the rents were fixed at all, at their former rents.

18,314. I don't know that that is what you said before?—Yes, it was. The first note you read is explained by this plan. I was for giving them more pasture, and the Galder crofters objected. I made the Galder grazing out of the land coloured yellow, and the Galder people objecting, we referred the matter to Mr Macintyre, who drew this line.

18,315. This took 100 acres off the Bernera people and gave it to the Galder people.

18,316. And your rent was fixed on the footing?—That they were to get that pasture without any additional rent and the additional bit that they did get.

18,317. And the fair rents include the value of the addition?—Include the value, and they were in possession of it at the time Mr Macintyre was here.

18,318. *Mr Sutherland.*—But did they pay any rents before that for it?—No.

18,319. Then the new arrangement made by the Crofters Commission was influenced by this addition of pasture?—No, the Crofters Commission were called in to adjust the march; that was the object of it. Mr Macintyre was informed that we did not want extra rent for it, and I understood that he went to the march and took off the 100 acres; the Galder crofters claimed the whole of that hill, and I objected to that because

they were really crofters who attended to their crops and really did little else, whereas the Galder crofters did something else, and he then—

18,320. *The Chairman.*—But the rent fixed by Mr Macintyre includes the value of the additional pasture? —Yes, and the rent fixed by me included the value of the additional pasture.

18,321. That is not what is said. Observe the note, Mr Grant. Perhaps we are at cross purposes. 'The present rents of the township of Bernera' that is your rents 'are exclusive of the additional hill pasture?'— That is not so.

18,322. You say this note is wrong?—The note is wrong. The rent of £13 included the additional pasture. I made no change in the rent and they were possessed of that when Mr Macintyre came.

18,323. The present rent of Archibald Maccrimmon, say, is £13, the fair rent is £13, 15s. Well, on the face of it that looks like a raising of the rent?—Yes.

18,324. But the note explains it by saying that the present rent is exclusive of the 285 acres, and the fair rent is inclusive of the 285 acres?—The other rent included more than the 285 acres.

18,325. Then this is wrong?—That is wrong. I was not with them.

18,326. Of course, the interlocutor simply fixes the line of march 'Declares that the line of march between 'the respective lands of these persons is as marked A, B, 'C, D, and coloured black on the plan or tracing pro- 'duced; finds and declares that the area added to 'the lands possessed by the crofters of Bernera in 'respect of this line of march extends to 285 acres or 'thereby, and not 385 acres or thereby as stated in the 'foresaid Minute; ordains parties respectively to adhere 'to their own side of the said line of march; and finds 'and declares that the said additional lands herein dealt 'with form parts of the holdings of the said crofters of 'Bernera, under and in terms of the Act.'

18,327. So that what we make here rightly or wrongly is that your rent was a rent exclusive of that land, our rent is a fair rent inclusive of that land?— The rent was £13, and when I gave them the additional land, before the Commission came, I told them there was to be no additional rent. I told Mr Macintyre in presence of the crofters here (I did not go with him to the hill) that we did not want any additional rent.

18,328. How long had they been having that additional pasture from you at a rent of £13?—That season.

18,329. Then the rent you exacted for that season, when they had the additional pasture, was the same rent as the estate had exacted before, when they had not that pasture?—The same rent.

18,330. *Mr Donald Macrae.*—Might I ask Mr Grant how many acres were added to Bernera. I think he said 285? [*The Chairman.*—285 is the correct figure.]

18,331. Then to Galder?—It is all new, they had none of it before.

18,332. How much did the estate add within recent years to the grazings of Galder?—The whole of it.

18,333. The extent of it, how many acres?—285 and 340.

18,334. 285 acres was added to Bernera, was it 385 that was added to both?—285 to Bernera and 335 to Galder. There is 340, but there is a small croft kept out of it.

18,335. Might I ask the name of any other township that got an extension of grazings within recent years? —All the Kirkton people.

18,336. How many acres did the Kirkton people get?—I was estimating it. They know it themselves. I think they graze some 16 cows on it.

18,337. Have they it within boundaries or have they the right of grazing along with the proprietor's stock? —It is exclusive grazing; it is just a club, they pay so much per cow.

18,338. How many acres might I ask would that be? —I really don't know the extent.

18,339. Would it be 200?—No, I don't think it is so much, but it is splendid grazing.

18,340. Will there be 100?—No, not 100.

18,341. Will we put it down at 80?—I should think it would be about that.

18,342. Might I ask whether any other extension of grazing has been given?—I am estimating part of Culandoun.

18,343. How many acres?—I can't say; I am estimating by the number of cattle. It is a joint grazing with ten cows and their followers.

18,344. Have the tenants who have got that grazing the exclusive right?—No, they have not. There is a great extent in Cul-an-duin, 600 or 700 acres.

18,345. They have no extension of grazing that they can call their own absolutely?—Well, they have that.

18,346. How many acres?—I should think the whole will be 600 or 800 acres. [*The Chairman.*—They have not that under the Act?—No.]

18,347. Have they that exclusively for themselves? —No.

18,348. How much of it have they for their exclusive use?—None but the arable land adjoining.

18,349. Is that all the extension of grazing within recent years?—There is all, the crofts are getting, I should think, about 300 acres.

18,350. That makes 1000 acres?—I was only giving it as a rough estimate. I could give the exact acreage.

18,351. And you think that 200 acres more have been given otherwise?—Well, I may have forgotten 200 or 300 acres at Camusban village.

18,352. When did the Camusban tenants get that? —In 1884.

18,353. How much land had they before that each? —An acre each arable land.

18,354. Had they any grazing?—No grazing.

18,355. Had they any cows?—No.

18,356. How many families were there?—I think there were 23 families when I went to fix rents.

18,357. Without a single cow?—Not a single cow.

18,358. For how many years was that so?—I don't know.

18,359. Had the Dochfour estate 23 tenants there before without a single cow?—I don't know anything about how it stood before I went there, but I found they had no cows, and I found means of getting pasture.

18,360. Did these Camusban tenants make strong representations to the estate for some grazing?—They did.

18,361. Before they got grazing?—I am not aware. I went there in 1884 and gave them this grazing.

18,362. Did they make strong representations for an extension of their arable holding before the Arnisdale portion of the property was sold?—Not until negotiations were going on for the sale of it. We could not, because it was let to a tenant, Mr Milligan; all the arable land except what they occupied on Arnisdale was let.

18,363. Did Mr Birkbeck express a very strong desire as to the arable land, that he should be allowed to buy the property without buying the arable land; that you should have the tenants and that he should have the arable land they were applying for?—Mr Birkbeck offered for the whole of the arable land, the whole property, but excluding the crofts and the crofters houses at Camusban, and that offer was unconditionally accepted.

18,364. So that you have these people now?—And Mr Birkbeck has the land.

ARCHIBALD FRASER, Camusban, Loch Hourn (51). (Examined in Gaelic through an Interpreter.)

18,365. *The Chairman.*—You are a Camusban crofter?—Yes.

18,366. What rent do you pay?—£1.

18,367. Was your rent dealt with by the Crofters Commission?—Yes.

18,368. What was your rent before the Commission dealt with it?—£2 for an acre.

Glenelg. Archibald Fraser.

18,369. You got additional grazing?—Shortly before the Commission came we got some.

18,370. How much?—I can't tell.

18,371. What stock have you been able to keep since you got the grazing?—15 to 16 cows, but it is barely sufficient for half the number.

18,372. But was that stated as the souming of the ground when you got it?—Some of them had it first, and it is latterly that the others got it. [*Mr Macrae.*—Their land was so small that they had no stock at all.]

18,373. Had you no stock at all?—No.

18,374. Do you graze your stock at present upon Mr Birkbeck's ground or upon Mr Baillie's ground?—Mr Baillie's ground.

18,375. Do you wish additional ground?—We are needing it very much.

18,376. Can you point us to ground that would be suitable?—There is in the glen recently acquired by Mr Birkbeck on the one hand, and on the other hand on Mr Baillie's ground at Sandaig.

18,377. You want both?—There are so many in the township that one of the parts would not be sufficient.

18,378. Is it additional grazing that you want?—Both arable and grazing.

18,379. Is Camusban a fishing village?—Yes.

18,380. All the crofters there go to the herring fishing?—Every one of them.

18,381. It is situated on Loch Hourn?—Yes.

18,382. Which is a good herring loch?—As good as there is anywhere about.

18,383. Is there any desire on the part of the crofters of Camusban to leave the place and get holdings elsewhere, or do they desire an extension of arable and grazing with their present holdings?—Those who could not remain would be willing to remove; trampled upon the top of each other as they are.

18,384. It is a congested township?—Very much so.

18,385. What is the population of the township altogether?—More than 100 persons.

18,386. And how many fires?—26.

18,387. I suppose you take your rents out of the sea and not out of the land?—Certainly.

18,388. What is the average stock kept by each crofter of Camusban?—The most of them have a cow each, but some have none at all.

18,389. Have they any sheep?—They have a few sheep; they got a park and a bit of hill grazing from Mr Birkbeck which is a great help to them.

18,390. You have no horses?—No.

18,391. Is this arable ground that you would like to get near you?—Yes, plenty.

18,392. Marching with the township?—Yes.

18,393. Who occupies that at present?—Mr Macmorran.

18,394. Is he a farmer?—Yes.

18,395. What is the name of his farm?—Arnisdale farm.

18,396. Is there any other farm marching with the township or does Arnisdale march with the whole of it?—Mr Birkbeck's forest is on the east of them.

18,397. What is the name of that forest?—The Arnisdale forest.

18,398. *Mr Macrae.*—I might explain that the land he refers to is on Mr Birkbeck's property to the east, and then the farm of Eilanreoch bounds with him on this side. They are on Mr Baillie's property and the lands he speaks of are on Mr Birkbeck's.

18,399. *The Chairman.*—Your crofts are on Mr Baillie's property, but the land you are referring to is on Mr Birkbeck's property on one side and on Eilanreoch on the other?—Yes.

18,400. *Mr Shaw Stewart.*—How many of the population of Camusban are fishermen?—Every able-bodied man.

18,401. And has the fishing been pretty prosperous?—Not much for a few years back.

18,402. *Mr Sutherland.*—Is the fishing very precarious?—It is precarious.

18,403. And if you got a holding that would sustain yourself and your family would you leave the fishing altogether and take it?—That is what took me here to-day for myself and the township I came here.

Glenelg. Archibald Fraser.

18,404. Were you appointed at a meeting of the people of Arnisdale to come here?—Yes, and I was very unwilling to undertake the duty.

18,405. You are speaking their opinions as well as your own?—Every one like myself.

18,406. *Mr Donald Macrae.*—Your lordship might ask him if he knows Sandaig.

18,407. *The Chairman.*—Do you know Sandaig?—Very well.

18,408. *Mr Macrae.*—According to your opinion, how many acres of old arable land are in Sandaig?—There are over 100 acres.

18,409. Have you any idea of the number of tenants who were there at one time?—I cannot answer that question.

18,410. Did you hear in what circumstances they were?—I never heard anybody that was there complain.

18,411. Did you see some of the tenants who were there?—I don't remember any of them.

18,412. *Mr Donald Grant.*—I want, my lord, to put a question to him to correct a mistake he made. He says he paid £2 an acre, when did he pay that?—Before Mr Grant became factor for Glenelg.

18,413. How far is Sandaig from Camusban?—Six miles.

Donald Campbell.

DONALD CAMPBELL, Crofter, Camusban, Loch Hourn (29).

(Examined in Gaelic through an Interpreter.)

18,414. *The Chairman.*—Are you a crofter?—I am a crofter.

18,415. Do you pay a rent of £1?—15s.

18,416. What was it before?—My uncle had it and it was 15s. to him ever since he got it.

18,417. What rent did your uncle pay?—In his later years he was paying 15s., but before that he was paying £1.

18,418. You heard the evidence given by Mr Fraser?—Yes.

18,419. And do you concur in it?—Yes.

18,420. Are you much in need of additional land?—Yes, in real earnest.

18,421. I believe that. Have you only one cow?—I have no cow at all.

18,422. Have you any stock?—None on Mr Baillie's land.

18,423. But anywhere?—I have seven sheep on Mr Birkbeck's ground.

18,424. That was ground that Mr Birkbeck assigned to the Camusban crofters some time ago?—Yes.

18,425. Are you fenced in from the forest?—Yes.

18,426. Would you desire merely to get additional arable and grazing, or would you like to leave your holding and get a new settlement?—I will do either if I be made better off by leaving.

18,427. Would you be willing to give up the sea if you had a crofter's holding?—I would.

18,428. Have the Camusban crofters, since you remember, felt the want of land?—Yes.

18,429. Are you a married man?—No.

18,430. *Mr Shaw Stewart.*—Do you fish regularly?—No.

18,431. How have you made your living?—When there is no fishing in Loch Hourn I will be working away elsewhere in other places.

18,432. Do you go far from home for work?—Sometimes I go far from home and sometimes I don't.

18,433. Do you get work near home?—I sometimes get employment on Lord Burton's land in Glen Quoich.

18,434. And when you go far from home where do you go for work?—I was once or twice down near Inverness.

18,435. And have you got capital enough to help you with a new holding if you got it?—No.

18,436. *Mr Donald Macrae.*—Might I ask you if when Mr Birkbeck was tenant of Arnisdale, and as soon as they came to understand that he was to buy the estate, did the tenants of Camusban approach Mr Birkbeck and give him notice that in the event of his buying the estate they would expect that they would get the farm of Arnisdale adjoining their holdings?—Yes.

18,437. And did you go in a deputation and did you also write to that effect?—We did both.

18,438. And as soon as you heard that Mr Birkbeck bought the property, did you, the whole of you, put in an offer for the farm?—We did.

18,439. Did you make the offer for the whole of the land of the estate or for the home farm?—We made the offer for the land that has been given to Mr Macmorran, the farmer who is there now.

18,440. What rent did you offer for it?—£45.

18,441. Did you expect from what passed between you and Mr Birkbeck before then that you would be likely to get the land?—We did expect.

18,442. *The Chairman.*—I must interpose this question. What did Mr Birkbeck say that led you to this expectation? [*Mr Macrae.*—I have that in letters here, Mr Birkbeck's own letters].—Mr Birkbeck told us that if he got the estate he would make our condition more comfortable than it was before.

18,443. *Mr Macrae.*—And in point of fact you got word that that land was let to another?—Yes.

18,444. That land now lies between you and the deer forest?—Yes.

18,445. So that under the Crofters Act they are excluded from applying for that.

18,446. *The Chairman.*—When was it let?—Over two years ago.

18,447. They are not excluded; that lease does not exclude them.

18,448. *Mr Macrae.*—It is below the £100 rent. [*To witness.*] What rent does the proprietor get from Mr Macmorran?—I don't know.

18,449. *Mr Birkbeck.*—May I ask the witness one question as to that?

18,450. *The Chairman.*—Certainly.

18,451. *Mr Birkbeck.*—[*To witness*]. Is it of your own knowledge that I was offered £45 a year for the land?—Yes, it is.

18,452. In writing or by word of mouth?—The offer was written, but I am not certain whether to Mr Birkbeck or to Mr Malcolm.

18,453. Was the offer which you believe was made to me for the land at £45 for, as you now state, Mr Macmorran's farm or to include the land which they now hold?—It was for Mr Macmorran's ground they offered as we had the prospect of getting the other ground at any rate.

18,454. *Mr Macrae.*—Might I put in these documents? This is the petition I think.

18,455. *The Chairman.*—But it is not signed?

18,456. *Mr Macrae.*—That is simply the copy. John Macgillivray, secretary of the local Land League, was the correspondent. That is the copy he kept of the petition, and these are the replies.

18,457. *The Chairman.*—We will take these documents.

18,458. *Mr Macrae.*—And put in as evidence along with the statement of the people. Here is another document on the same subject.

18,459. *The Chairman.*—Mr Birkbeck's letters are of 21st March 1890 and 12th Feb. 1891. The first letter is as follows:—

20 Berkeley Square, London,
21st March 1890.

Mr John Macgillivray,

Sir,—I have received the petition from the crofters of Camusbane and Corran forwarded through you.

Should I purchase the Arnisdale farm, the subject of the petition would have my most serious consideration, as were the crofters my tenants, I should desire to make their position more comfortable than at present. But, as far as I can see, it is not probable that I shall purchase the farm. I shall be glad if you will communicate this letter to those who have signed the paper.—I remain, yours &c., Robt. Birkbeck.

The next letter is in the following terms:—

20 Berkeley Square,
12th February 1891.

Mr John Macgillivray,

I have addressed the enclosed letter to yourself, Mr John Maclean and Mr Archibald Macgillivray as being the members of the deputation from Camusbane who came to see me last July.—I shall hope shortly to be in a position to carry out my intentions,—Yours faithfully,
Robt. Birkbeck.

The letter enclosed was as follows:—

20 Berkeley Square, London,
12th February 1891.

To
Mr John Macgillivray,
Mr John Maclean, and
Mr Archibald Macgillivray.

Before leaving Loch Hourn last autumn I informed Mr John Macgillivray that I was exerting all the influence I possessed with Mr Baillie to induce him to provide his tenants at Camusbane with a further extension of land.

I regret to say that all my endeavours on their behalf have proved fruitless, although I went so far as to break off the purchase negotiations in the hope of inducing Mr Baillie to comply with my request.

Finding Mr Baillie resolved not to grant them any land belonging to the Arnisdale farm, I have now included in my purchase the piece of ground which I had been desiring Mr Baillie to retain for his Camusbane tenants; and I propose, on obtaining legal possession, to convey the same—namely, the field nearest to Camusbane, and the portion of the hill above the field, to trustees for the benefit of Mr Baillie's existing tenants at Camusbane, the latter paying the trustees only a low rent, which rent the trustees will, after providing for public burdens, &c., apply to the upkeeping of the Free Church at Arnisdale.

The Master of Blantyre and the Rev. D. Maclennan, the Free Church Minister at Glenelg, have kindly consented to act as trustees to the Deed of Trust, which, of course, will contain all necessary conditions.

I hope thus to confer a two-fold benefit on Camusbane—1st, by enlarging the present insufficient holdings, and 2nd, by assisting towards the maintenance of the church, to the building of which I had much pleasure in subscribing. Robt. Birkbeck.

Then, on 20th April 1891, the crofters forwarded Mr Birkbeck a communication, of which the following is a copy:—

Camusbane, Arnisdale,
Glenelg, Inverness-shire.,
20th April 1891.

Robert Birkbeck, Esq.,
20 Berkeley Square, London.

Sir,—We, the undersigned, beg very respectfully to remind you that in September 1890 we had the pleasure of waiting upon you at Arnisdale, when our position as crofters and cottars was very clearly made known to you.

We then begged very earnestly of you, should you purchase the Arnisdale farm, to give us the first chance of the arable land and hill pasture extending from Millburn to Ault Hoo.

Glenelg.

Donald Campbell.

Now, as we are given to understand that the arable land together with the hill pasture above, extending from the burn at Arnisdale school to Ault Hoo is to be let at a yearly rent, we beg respectfully to tender you the following offer for the arable land and hill pasture above mentioned.

We hereby offer you a yearly rent of £45, same to be paid regularly, for the arable land and hill pasture above, extending from the burn at Arnisdale school to Ault Hoo; and earnestly hope our offer may be accepted, which would be the means of raising us from our present distressed position to a better and more comfortable position.

The reply received from the factor, Mr Malcolm, was as follows:—

Estates Office,
Invergarry, N.B.,
30th April 1891.

Mr John Macgillivray,
Camusbane, Arnisdale.

Dear Sir,—Mr Birkbeck has sent me your letter to him of 20th instant, and relative offer; and I have received your letters to myself of 24th instant and relative offer.

With regard to your offer of 20th instant I have to inform you that the land therein referred to has already been let to Mr Macmorran.

I will have to write you later regarding your communications of 24th instant. If the fence goes on, and you are able to show that there are among your offerers practical fencers capable of doing the work properly, I am sure Mr Birkbeck will be very willing to afford you every chance of securing the job.—I am, Dear Sir, yours truly, George Malcolm.

Robert Birkbeck.

Robert Birkbeck, 20 Berkeley Square, London (57) —*examined*.

18,460. *The Chairman.*—Do you wish to read a statement?—I should like to read a short statement, but before I do so I would like to refer to this offer that was made of £45 for the land. I am very sorry I have not got that offer with me, I did not know it would be referred to. I have it at home; my memory fails me as to whether it was £45, but the offer, to the best of my belief, was certainly to include not only Macmorran's farm, but also the land belonging to me on Camusban to which they have made reference. I can send you down the offer, which will speak for itself.*

18,461. If you please.

18,462. *Mr Sutherland.*—Is that the land that you subsequently gave them?—My belief is that the offer, be it £45 or less, was made to me for Macmorran's farm and for the land which is now held by the Camusban crofters. I am afraid this statement is rather crude; I thought I should not be called upon till Tuesday, and I have had little time to prepare it. The extent of Loch Hourn Head and Arnisdale is about 15,000 acres, of which 13,800 or thereabouts are forest. The remaining 1200 acres consist of a small farm, land allotted to the Corran crofters, and about 260 acres conveyed to the Free Church for occupation by Mr Baillie's crofters at Camusban. These figures are as near as I can tell from the six-inch ordnance map. I bought the place in the autumn of 1890 from Mr Baillie of Dochfour, having rented the shooting, which only consisted of a few stags, for seventeen years previously. The whole was then a sheep farm held by Mr Milligan, who was not disposed to renew his lease shortly expiring. Mr Baillie sold me the place clear of sheep. Since I acquired it I have expended in improvements over £6000, and these improvements are still going on. At Corran there are 16 crofters. When I obtained possession Corran was two rows of hovels and cow-byres mixed up together, with the manure and ash-heaps piled up at the doors, the refuse of the upper row of houses and cow-byres draining through the lower row, the upper row standing on a higher elevation a few yards above the lower row. I have never seen even in the outer Hebrides or Ireland so insanitary a place. The sea at high spring tides often flooded the lower row, hardly a house was watertight, the roofs and walls being equally rotten and in damp weather the floors were literally mud. The whole village has now been rebuilt, the lower row being completely done away with, new slated houses built a short distance away, and the best houses of the upper row rebuilt with slated roofs. Each house has now a garden attached, enclosed with wooden railings. All the cow-byres are demolished and the surplus stones used for a sea wall. A row of 16 cow-byres was built draining into a burn, so that the drainage could not possibly come near the dwellings. Each house has a neat shed for peats, nets, &c., so that the houses may be kept tidy instead of the nets hanging up in the living rooms. The improvements at Corran cost between £1300 and £1400, and a stipulation was made with the contractor that he should employ Corran labour for all unskilled work. The Corran people were very badly off for land, and three of them had none at all. I have given them all the land capable of tillage on their side of the river, including the best field in Arnisdale, and have added a considerable piece to their hill pasture and about 12 acres of meadow land to their home grazing, enclosing all with wire fence. At the time the former proprietor gave them the old grazing, an abatement of £25 per annum was made on the sheep farmers' rent in respect of the grazing then given to Corran. The rents have at the same time been reduced, with the exception of two or three who formerly paid nothing. Some previously paid £3, 5s.; now they vary from £1 to £2, the total for the 16 being £21, 2s. 6d. or an average of £1, 6s. 4½d. During the negotiations for the purchase a deputation of Mr Baillie's Camusban crofters, who had heard of the probability of my buying, came to ask me to give them some land. Although Camusban does not belong to me, being beyond my march, knowing how badly off for land they were, I have conveyed to two trustees of the Free Church 7 acres of very good arable land and 250 acres of excellent hill pasture, on trust, to be let at a low rent to Mr Baillie's Camusban crofters, the rent to be applied by the trustees to the support of the Free Church at Camusban, which congregation is entirely composed of the inhabitants of Camusban and Corran. I may perhaps mention that the land so conveyed was valued at £25 per annum. At Kyles More, 4 miles farther up the loch, there are three cottages to which is attached all the land there capable of cultivation. I have one farm tenant at Arnisdale, Mr Macmorran, who has been mentioned, paying a rent of £51 per annum. I think it would be acknowledged that this is a size and class of farm which it is very desirable to encourage, as a step above the crofters' holding. The arable land is all at Arnisdale. With the exception of the garden and hay round my house at Loch Hourn Head—about 6 acres—there is absolutely no land on the property capable of being cultivated. In the forest there are, I think, only two small patches not exceeding half an acre each, which have ever been under cultivation. Although the forest runs down to the sea the whole length, the ground is very steep and rocky, rising all along within half a mile of the sea to 2000 to 2300 feet, and the highest peaks to 3000 and 3400 feet. Besides the improvements already mentioned, I have employed a good deal of labour in the formation of paths, fences, &c., and I am continuing to do so, and I think that nearly all the money I have expended in various ways has been paid to local or county tradesmen and workers. I have only to add that I do not think there is room on the place for more crofters. I do not know where they could be put or how they could live. I reside at Loch Hourn Head for six months in the year, and know what the climate is. The rainfall averages over 100 inches per annum. Last September 19 inches fell, and I have several times known even this exceeded. I have seen the hay out and rotting in October and November. I think I may fairly claim that at all events as far as the Corran crofters are concerned, their

Glenelg.

Robert Birkbeck.

* See Supplementary Statement, p. 438.

position has been greatly benefitted by the change from a sheep farm to the deer forest, and if the commissioners will look over the forest I think they will be convinced that no more advantageous use could be made of the land. (Signed) Robert Birkbeck.

Loch Hourn Head, 14th July 1893.

18,463. *The Chairman.*—Are you of opinion that the Camusban and Corran crofters, even with the addition you have made, are in need of more land if it can be legitimately obtained?—I would ask you to separate Camusban from Corran.

18,464. Well, take Camusban.—It is not on my property, and I am not prepared to answer any questions about that. It is not on my property.

18,465. No, but you know about it?—I live within ten miles of it.

18,466. And you know it, you have passed it very often?—I have passed it very often.

18,467. And are you not willing to say whether, in your judgment, it would be a good thing to extend their holdings, arable and grazing, if it could be legitimately done?—Certainly, if it could be legitimately done.

18,468. What do you say with regard to the Corran crofters: do you think they would be the better of additional land?—No, I think not. I think I have given them all I can, all there is on their side of the river; there is no more to give them, and I think they have as much as they can manage.

18,469. How then do they live? Is it mainly by fishing?—By fishing and by their crofts, the small amount they have.

18,470. And is it your opinion that they have as much land already as, having regard to their main industry, they can properly work?—Yes, I do, certainly I do. At the same time I am bound to say if I had more land there I would give it to them.

18,471. If you had more land you would give it to them?—If I had more available land.

18,472. Because you think they need it?—No, I don't think they do, but I think they would like it. I would do anything I could in reason for them.

18,473. What is the character of the land in the forest nearest to either of these townships?—It is very steep and rocky.

18,474. The whole of it?—The whole of it. As I have said in my paper, I don't think there are two acres there that you could dig up. Taking the whole extent of the forest, I don't think I could find two acres in patches of a rood here and a rood there that could be dug up.

18,475. *Mr Sutherland.*—What are the boundaries of the forest, Mr Birkbeck, I don't follow them there?—Perhaps I had better come and show you them on the plan.

18,476. I think you could describe them. Does it extend westward to the sea?—Southward to the sea.

18,477. And how far westward?—To above Corran. (*Points out boundaries on plan.*)

18,478. Then you gave us particulars of the rebuilding of these cottages. May I ask upon what conditions they were built; did those who have got these cottages now subscribe any part of them?—Not a sou.

18,479. You defrayed the cost?—Every sixpence.

18,480. Paid for the labour?—Every sixpence.

18,481. And the expense of building?—With one exception. They had no place to keep their nets or peats; I thought they ought to have some sheds for nets and peats. Those who were able and willing to put the stones together, built the walls of it. I asked them to do it, and they did it gladly. I found the roofing which has now been put on. The houses and the cow-byres they laboured for, but they did it for daily pay, the contractor paid them. I had a contract with an Inverness builder to build these cottages, and made a stipulation with him that he should employ Corran labour, because I wanted to benefit them as far as in me lay.

18,482. But the skilled labour was paid for?—All the labour, skilled and unskilled, was paid for by the contractor. At least I hope so, as I have paid him.

18,483. How many of these cottages and cow-byres have been erected?—There are sixteen of them altogether.

18,484. Sixteen cottages or sixteen cottages and byres?—Sixteen cottages and sixteen cow-byres.

18,485. And you think that the sanitary conditions of the place are very much improved owing to the building of these houses, do you?—I don't know whether I will have the pleasure of showing you the place yourself. That is a photograph of not the worst of them, showing what they were like formerly.

18,486. And have you a photograph of the new ones?—No, I have not.

18,487. And these were the houses that you found them in when you purchased that property?—Yes.

18,488. Have you any idea of the length of time in which they lived in these houses?—No, I know nothing about it.

18,489. Nor about the conditions upon which they lived in it?—I know nothing whatever about it.

18,490. Are you aware whether they paid rent for living in these houses before?—I am aware that a certain number of them had not paid rent for several years prior to the Crofters Commission, simply by the courtesy of Mr Grant.

18,491. But are you aware that others did pay rent?—I cannot tell you that.

18,492. And how do you know about those who did not pay the rent?—Because Mr Grant at the time of the Crofters Commission, kindly sent me some statistics about them.

18,493. And didn't he give in the statistics the names and numbers of those who had paid rent?—No, I didn't ask him for them.

18,494. And are you aware how these old houses had been built? Have they been built in the way you have done now, or were they built by the people themselves?—I can tell you nothing about that.

18,495. You live there yourself, I think you said, for six months of the year?—Yes.

18,496. And, therefore, know something about the climatic conditions; what months, may I ask, are those during which you generally live there?—I come about the 1st of May and I stay till November, till the weather is too desperate.

18,497. Is it so bad as to drive you away?—To drive my wife away.

18,498. Is it, then, the state of the climate that compels your family to leave there, or other engagements?—The climate solely. I ought to say the sun sets when I leave in November before one o'clock afternoon, at Loch Hourn Head.

18,499. Is it the latitude that determines that?—No, the mountains.

18,500. So closed in?—So closed in.

18,501. But you have never lived the winter through there, have you?—I have been there in the winter.

18,502. What sort of weather did you find there in the winter, may I ask?—Very terrible. Sometimes deep snow, sometimes the loch frozen over pretty far down, and sometimes very wet.

18,503. Did the weather differ very essentially from the weather you encountered in coming here in other parts of the country?—In the winter?

18,504. Yes.—Yes, I should say it certainly differed from England.

18,505. I thought you were comparing it with England. But in going to Loch Hourn Head from England, you pass through other parts of Scotland?—Oh, I know Scotland better than England.

18,506. And do you think the weather is very much worse here in winter than in other parts of Scotland?—Most decidedly. The amount of wet that falls in the winter is four times what it is on the east coast.

18,507. And does it interfere, then, in your opinion with the operations of agriculture and farming?—Not in the winter.

18,508. The autumn is the worst season, is it?—The autumn is certainly the worst, the wettest.

18,509. Do you say you have seen hay rotting in

Glenelg.

Robert Birkbeck.

the month of September?—In October and November, the beginning of November.

18,510. May I ask what year you saw that in?—I cannot charge my memory with that.

18,511. Was it last year, may I ask?—Certainly not.

18,512. The year before that?—I think it was.

18,513. Did you see it on more than one occasion?—Oh, yes, several times, I have seen it in October and I have once seen it in November.

18,514. You would not go so far as to say that that is the rule?—The hay is very late indeed in this country.

18,515. But they make hay, don't they?—They do, and you see it now under very exceptional circumstances. I have been thirty-three years more or less on the west coast here, and I have never seen the like.

18,516. But have not the people got to live through the climate, such as it is?—I suppose they have.

18,517. And if they were changed to better circumstances, such as you have done, would they not be better?—Most certainly; I always say if you wish to benefit crofters, send them down in God's name to the Lowlands, where they have a chance.

18,518. But even in the Highlands they have been evicted by the action of such a man as you?—No, I have not moved one of them.

18,519. But if they say they would be better if they had more land, even of the character of the land they have got, don't you think something should be done to meet that demand?—Do you mean speaking generally?

18,520. Yes?—Certainly, I think so. My sympathies are very strong indeed for the crofters.

18,521. And, speaking generally again, is it your opinion, from the knowledge you have got of the Highlands of Scotland, that the people could be transferred to better land than they now hold and where they could get more of it?—Certainly, in the Lowlands I have seen beautiful land.

18,522. Yes, but I am talking of the Highlands?—No, I know none.

18,523. There is no spare land for them in the Highlands at all?—I don't say that.

18,524. But I was asking you regarding the Highlands of Scotland. Don't you think that within the area of the Highlands alone, some land could be got by which they could better their condition?—Certainly not, as regards migrating, but giving them more land if possible near them.

18,525. Near where they are now?—Near where they now are.

18,526. Then you imply by that that there is at present plenty in the best possible situation?—No, I don't say so.

18,527. May I ask why you object to migrating them?—Because I believe a man cannot go and build his house and drain his land and provide everything in a new place.

18,528. Are you aware, and I suppose you have no reason to doubt, for you would not be personally aware of it, that they were shifted from one place to another frequently before, and no houses whatever built for them?—Certainly, I know that; at the beginning of the century.

18,529. Then do you think that with recent facilities, I mean the improvements that have taken place in the condition of the people themselves, they would be in a better position now to make new homes if they were migrated than they were at that time?—I doubt it very much. One hundred years ago people lived in very different circumstances from what they do now. I believe they had little more than their oatmeal; now I think they have very much more than that.

18,530. Therefore should it not be easier for them to start new homes?—No, I think more difficult. I think human nature requires more every year you go on.

18,531. They have more necessities?—I think so, I know I have.

18,532. No doubt, and the conditions in every class of society have been very much changed since that time?—Very much.

Glenelg.

Robert Birkbeck.

18,533. And you think then that the necessity was created by the fact that they were able to supply it?—Which necessity?

18,534. The greater necessities you have now. I think you said that the greater necessities they have now would be an obstacle that they had not to encounter before?—Yes.

18,535. What creates the greater necessity now?—The greater facilities for bringing the food, I won't call it luxuries, but bringing extras down.

18,536. That is exactly what I was saying. Don't you think, then, that with these improved conditions they would be better able to make new homes than they were in the beginning of the century?—No, I doubt it.

18,537. *Mr Maccallum.*—Is the land that you have now practically the old farm of Arnisdale?—It was the old farm of Arnisdale that I bought.

18,538. As occupied by Mr Milligan?—Yes.

18,539. And you afforested 13,000 acres of it?—I have. No, I ought not to say I have. I bought it as a forest; it was cleared before I got possession of it. It was cleared in October and I entered in the subsequent spring.

18,540. It was cleared in view of your purchase?—Certainly.

18,541. Do you know the old rent that was paid for the farm by Milligan?—Yes.

18,542. Would you kindly state it?—Yes, I can tell you. He paid £825 a year. Certain abatements were made to him amounting to £200 a year for the last four years under his lease, I believe; I am speaking from hearsay evidence.

18,543. And what is the forest returned at in the valuation roll?—When he left he said it was certainly not worth £400 a year.

18,544. That was on account of the changed conditions, the lower prices, I suppose?—I presume so.

18,545. And there was no idea that he lost by the farm?—He told me he did.

18,546. In the later years though, I suppose?—I have no doubt it was in the later years.

18,547. You have no reason to suppose that it was not profitable at one time as a sheep farm?—I have no doubt; he is one of the most successful sheep farmers in the country.

18,548. And you have now a small farm called Arnisdale?—Yes.

18,549. Comprising, I suppose, the arable part of the old farm?—Part of the arable portion, most of it.

18,550. Now would it not be quite possible to use this land that is now a forest, to use it as a club farm in connection with the arable land? Supposing there were tenants settled there as a club farm getting all the arable land, could they not use the land or part of the land that is now afforested for pasture?—I think that anyone holding the arable land could employ the amount of hill land that is attached to it, but I very much doubt the profitable employment of more hill land than that. There are 700 acres, I think, now of hill land attached to the farm that Macmorran holds, and about 230 to the Corran crofters.

18,551. But still, with practically the same amount of arable land, the whole of it was managed formerly?—Certainly, by sending thousands of sheep down the low country. The sheep died there by the hundreds in the winter.

18,552. Do you know that of your own knowledge?—Yes, by seeing the carcasses.

18,553. And you have seen them in great numbers lying on the hill side?—In great numbers in the spring.

18,554. And do you think that the death-rate, or have you any reason to suppose that the death-rate on that land was worse than the death-rate on other farms in Glenelg?—In Glenelg; I cannot tell you. Mr Milligan always told me that the death-rate was excessive.

18,555. But you cannot say that the death-rate there was above the average of lands around?—I know nothing of what the average death-rate is on other farms.

18,556. And so you could not give any figures as to deaths with regard to Arnisdale?—Certainly not.

18,557. But, speaking in a general way, you think a great number died?—The death-rate, Mr Milligan always informed me, was excessive, and I have seen a great many die there.

18,558. Now, when the farm was used for sheep production, don't you think it was more profitable for the country as a whole than having it as a deer forest?—Certainly not.

18,559. Then is the produce of the forest now as valuable as the produce of the sheep farm?—Certainly.

18,560. The deer that is raised there are as valuable for a food supply as the sheep stock?—For a food supply? You never mentioned that.

18,561. I mention that now. Are the deer as valuable for a food supply as the sheep that were reared on these hills?—Certainly not.

18,562. No comparison at all between the two?—No, certainly not.

18,563. What else does it produce now?—Nothing.

18,564. Then, with regard to the rent of this low farm, you say that Mr Macmorran pays £51 a year, is that correct?—Certainly.

18,565. And is there a house?—Yes.

18,566. What would be a fair interest on the money expended upon building that house?—I can't tell you what it would cost to build a house. I spent something in restoring, in improving it.

18,567. Do you think it would cost £1000?—Oh no, a couple of hundred or £150.

18,568. With all the buildings that are upon it?—No, he has very large farm premises which were attached to the old farm of Arnisdale and quite unsuitable to his present place and partly unused.

18,569. I am asking what the whole of the buildings would have cost?—I can tell you what I insure them for, I think I insure them for £700, the farm square and his house.

18,570. And he has all that in his possession for £51?—Yes.

18,571. So that when you count the interest on the buildings you have little or nothing for the rent?—The buildings cost me nothing, they came with the land.

18,572. But when you count what was spent upon the houses, I don't mean by you, but what was spent on them, there is very little return for the rent. If you take into account the expenditure on buildings in Mr Macmorran's possession there is very little for the land?—I take it there would be about £30 a year, but I think it is an unfair inference, because the buildings were not built for that farm; they were built for a farm of 15,000 acres.

18,573. But I am just talking of these buildings as they are. Do you think that these buildings were put up for £1000, all the buildings?—Yes, I should think for considerably less; labour was much cheaper when they were put up. I very much doubt that square and his cottage having cost—if I might appeal to Mr Grant he is a much better judge and knows them too—I should have thought £400 probably, when they were put up, was the outside cost of them.

18,574. Of all the buildings?—I should think so. I take it that square must have been put up fifty years ago, but I am speaking quite at random.

18,575. That would leave about £20 for the land after deducting interest?—No, you don't take interest at 5 per cent.

18,576. How much would you count?—3 per cent., and I wish to goodness we got it.

18,577. But interest on that?—Interest on buildings spent on the farm.

18,578. What would any person building a house consider a fair interest for his money?—For a farmhouse?

18,579. Yes.—I should say 3 per cent. was all you would look to.

18,580. Well, that leaves about £30 for the land. Then the Corran crofters said they offered you for the land £45?—No, I did not say so. It was stated by one of the witnesses that £45 had been offered by the Camusban crofters.

18,581. But you think it was less than that, do you? —I have not looked at it for three years, but I was under the impression it was less than that, but I will send you the paper to speak for itself. I think I have it still. I am sure I have it.

18,582. *Mr Shaw Stewart.*—You don't usually separate the value of a farmhouse and of the land for which it is built?—I should not think of doing it.

18,583. You take the farmhouse and the land together, don't you?—Certainly.

18,584. I think you said that the conversion of the sheep farm into a deer forest was an advantage to the neighbourhood?—I think so.

18,585. To the crofters living near?—I think so.

18,586. Would you give me one or two reasons why you think so?—One reason is that many of them have told me so.

18,587. In what way do they benefit?—They have got more land than they ever had before. No sheep farmer will give up the low land, his best land, to the crofters, and I think their circumstances are very much better for the new houses.

18,588. Do they get work on the hill as gillies?—No, none of them.* I should be only too glad to give them the work, but they are not inclined to work away from home. I sent down a fortnight ago to Cambusban and Corran and offered 24s. a week to any man who would go up and work on the hill—I am bound to say they have to live in a tent, it is a rough place to live in—but I could not get one.

18,589. *The Chairman.*—And had he to find himself?—Oh yes. They club together.

18,590. And do you put up the tent?—Yes, the tent was put up. I think I must explain a little. The march fence was being put up by Mr Baillie and myself at joint expense under contract, the contract is now finished and there is a small part that was not included in the contract and that part is being fenced in with a Galloway dyke and a fence on the top and we get the benefit of their old encampment.

18,591. *Mr Sutherland.*—You were the sporting tenant of the land when it was a grazing farm?—I am sorry to say I was.

18,592. Now, what was the sporting rental of it at that time?—It was 360 odd pounds. I paid £400 and the landlord paid the taxes.

18,593. That would be more than £400 then?—I beg your pardon, if the landlord gets £400, and has to pay the taxes, it is considerably reduced.

18,594. Yes, but so far as you were concerned it was £400 to the tenant?—I considered I paid £360 of rent and £40 of rates.

18,595. That is £400 practically?—£400 was the total.

18,596. You said that the grazing rent was £825, I think?—Originally; it was £600 at last.

18,597. Did you hold it as a sporting tenant at any time when it was £825 for the grazing?—Yes.

18,598. Then the total rent would be £1300 gross rent?—The gross rent would be £1200. I make £800 and £400, £1200.

18,599. It was over £800?—It was over £800 and £360.

18,600. That is £1265?—It is £1185.

18,601. £1200 or thereabouts?—Yes.

18,602. And what is the value of it at present?—I am afraid not much.

18,603. Is it less than that?—I am afraid very much less.

18,604. So that it is actually of less value now than it was before?—I am afraid so. I am afraid Scotch property has gone down very much during the last few years.

18,605. *Mr Maccallum.*—But could you not give the figure it is returned at in the valuation roll?—Yes, certainly. I gave it you as near as I could but I have got the valuation roll here. Deer forest £600, house £40, that is my residence, Macmorran's rent £51, crofter's rent £21, total £712. As you are

* See supplementary statement, p. 438

Glenelg. — Robert Birkbeck.

taking down that £600 may I say a word about it?

18,606. Surely?—I complained bitterly about the rating of £600 as too high. I never expected to kill more than 25 stags. They are taken at £20 a stag. I think every assessor in Scotland now takes them at £20 a stag, that is £500.

18,607. Then you consider that a fair rent for the deer forest would be £500?—No, not a fair rent, a fair value now. Every landlord looks to get what he can, and you must not ask me to put a low rent on.

18,608. But the value of it, fairly estimated you say, is £500?—You must not ask me to be buyer and seller. When I had to argue this out before the assessor I made it as low as I could, and I made it £500, and I think I should not be asked any further about that.

[On 3rd August, Mr Birkbeck contributed the following supplementary statement:—

I desire to correct one of my answers at Glenelg on 14th July—viz., that none of the Corran crofters were in my employment as gillies or otherwise.

My keeper at Arnisdale is a Corran man, and held a croft there; I provided him with land on the farm and added his former holding to the Corran crofts. A son of one of the Corran crofters is employed for some months to bring the letters, as the post only comes as far as Corran. The two gillies, who are in my permanent employment all the year round, belong to Caolas More on the estate. I may add that I provided for all the permanent employees of the sheep farm of Arnisdale when it was afforested; the manager, Macmorran, now holds a small farm from me, one of the shepherds I gave a croft to, and the others are provided with all the year round employment; there was only one shepherd who did not remain, and he was helped and has found employment elsewhere.

One of the Camusban witnesses gave evidence of an offer in 1891 of £45 per annum by the Camusban crofters for the land now rented as a farm by Mr Macmorran. Being at the time unable to recal the precise facts, I promised the Chairman that I would refer to my papers and send the Commission a statement on the subject. I find the offer by the Camusban crofters was dated 20th April 1891, and that Mr Malcolm, my factor, replied by letter dated 30th April, saying that the land referred to had been already let on lease to Mr Macmorran. I find the date of the agreement with Mr Macmorran was 1st April 1891.

I wish also to give some further explanations respecting my purchase of the land adjoining Camusban.

From the report in the "Scotsman" of the examination at Glenelg on the 14th July, I fear I misheard Mr Macrae's question to Mr Grant, which is thus reported in the "Scotsman:"—"Did Mr Birkbeck express a 'very strong desire that he should be allowed to buy 'the property, that you should have the tenants and 'he should have the arable land they were applying 'for?" *A.* "Mr Birkbeck offered for the whole, but 'excluding the crofts and the crofters' houses at 'Camusban, and that offer was unconditionally 'accepted." Mr Grant was perfectly correct in his answer, but as I understood the question, Mr Macrae asked—"Did Mr Birkbeck express a strong desire to '*exclude* from the purchase the land which the Camus-'ban crofters were applying for?" This was precisely the case, and had I understood the question as reported, I should have cleared the matter up at the time. The facts were as follows:—My final offer for the estate was dated 15th July 1890; before it was accepted on July 25th I intimated, through Mr Augustus Baillie, that I had learned that the Camusban crofters claimed a portion of the land adjoining the crofts, that I therefore desired to exclude that portion from the purchaser and that the value could be settled by arbitration. The Camusban crofters considered that more land had been promised to them by Mr Baillie's late factor at the time of Lord Napier's Commission, as soon as the sheep farmers' lease should have expired; I was not aware of this at the time that I made my offer to buy the land in question from Mr Baillie, but after learning it, and before my offer was accepted, I had an interview with Mr Augustus Baillie, when I entirely understood that my proposal to exclude this land, in order that Mr Baillie might give it to his Camusban crofters, was accepted and agreed to. I should certainly at once have withdrawn my offer had I not understood this. On 12th August my offer was accepted, I refused to complete the purchase unless the land in question was excluded from the purchase, and not until the following January, after an action had brought against me to enforce the purchase, was I most reluctantly compelled to give in. Feeling, however, that the Camusban crofters were in great need of further land, I presented the land in question to the Free Church for their benefit, as mentioned in my statement read at Glenelg. ROBT. BIRKBECK.]

3rd August 1893.

Glenelg. — Robert Birkbeck.

[ADJOURNED.]

NINETEENTH SITTING.

BALMACARA, LOCHALSH, July 24, 1893.

Balmacara

Present:—

DAVID BRAND, Esq., Advocate, Sheriff of Ayr, and Chairman of the Crofters Commission, *Chairman.*
MICHAEL HUGH SHAW STEWART, Esq., M.P.
ANGUS SUTHERLAND, Esq., M.P.
GEORGE GORDON, Esq.
HENRY MUNRO, Esq.
WILLIAM MACKENZIE, Esq., *Secretary.*

KENNETH MATHESON, Glaick, Balmacara (56)—*examined.*

Kenneth Matheson

18,609. *The Chairman.*—You have a croft at Glaick near Balmacara?—Yes, Glaick, Balmacara.

18,610. And you are a steamboat ferryman?—Yes, but I have not a croft. We are only paying for the grazing of a cow. There are four of us in that same place.

18,611. What rent do you pay?—We pay £1.

18,612. Have you some land?—No, we have not; we have nothing to feed the cow at all during the winter.

18,613. But you have summer grazing?—Yes, summer grazings.

18,614. You and other three are in the same position?—Yes.

18,615. Have you a garden?—Well, I have a garden, but I am paying for that garden separately, I have a lease of it.

18,616. What do you pay for the garden?—5s. [*Sir Henry Macandrew.*—He has a feu of the house and garden.]

18,617. Do you pay separately for the grazing of the cow?—Yes.

18,618. What do you pay for the grazing of the cow?—A pound note.

18,619. In addition to the rent of the house?—Yes.

18,620. What extent of land have you for grazing?—The extent of land for pasture is big enough, I can say that; but after all it is nothing, because it is nearly altogether stones and ferns, and does not turn out anything at all for the benefit of the cattle. [*Mr Watson.*—They have about 15 to 20 acres between them of wooded pasture.]

18,621. Is it wooded?—Yes.

18,622. Is it behind the ferry?—Just above the houses at the ferry.

18,623. What is it you wish to say to us?—I would wish if we could possibly get one park, to enable us to plant potatoes and to feed the cow in the winter.

18,624. You want potato ground and additional grazing?—Just so.

18,625. In saying so do you express both your own view and the view of the three others in the same position?—I think there are some of them here who can speak for themselves.

18,626. But you don't wish to leave your holding?—No.

18,627. How much do you make out of your ferry? Oh, indeed, it is very little for all that I can do, unless I was turning myself to other things.

18,628. But you have a regular allowance as ferryman, I suppose?—Yes.

18,629. And you turn your time to account otherwise?—Yes.

18,630. Can you give us any idea of the extent of land you wish to get for potatoes?—Yes, about two acres each; that is as much as we would wish to have.

18,631. Of arable?—Yes.

18,632. And the extent of additional grazing?—Well, if we had that altogether we would put up with it; between the grazing and the potato ground.

18,633. If you had two acres additional arable and the grazing you possess already, you would be satisfied?—Oh yes.

18,634. Well, can you point us to land that would be got that could be made arable?—Well, it is the nearest park to our own place, and I can say it is not the best park at all.

18,635. What farm is it on?—It is on the farm of Mr Methuen.

18,636. That is on Balmacara farm?—Yes.

18,637. And it is close to your house?—Well, it is the closest one to our place.

18,638. There are four of you altogether?—Four.

18,639. What are their names?—One of them is Donald Matheson, and Hector Mackenzie, and Samuel Macrae, and myself.

18,640. What feu-duty do you pay?—I quite forget, indeed, just now. [*Sir Henry Macandrew.*—10s.]

18,641. A rent of £1, a feu of 10s., and £1 for the grazing?—Yes.

18,642. Your annual payment will be?—I pay taxes along with that too.

18,643. Of course, what do your taxes come to, some shillings I suppose? [*Another delegate.*—They are very high in this parish, 4s. 6d. I think last year; 2s. 3d. on proprietors and 2s. 3d. on tenants.]

18,644. Is it about 4s. 6d. a year altogether?—I pay upwards of 17s. or 17s. 6d. for taxes and dues.

18,645. In one form or another?—Yes. [*Mr Watson.*—He pays £1 for his cow's grass and 10s. feu-duty, so that £1, 10s. is all his rent, not £2, 10s.]

18,646. *Mr Shaw Stewart.*—Have you come only to speak for the land in your neighbourhood, or have you any evidence to give of land in the Lochalsh parish?—No, I don't think I have any evidence to give of that kind.

18,647. *Mr Sutherland.*—Is there a farm of Kyle near you?—It is five miles from us.

18,648. *Mr Gordon.*—Where is this land that you mentioned?—It is hardly a quarter of a mile below the bank.

18,649. What is the name of the field?—I never heard any particular name to it except that we always call it in Gaelic Mairi Bheag's Park, that is Little Mary's Park, above the road.

18,650. Is it under cultivation at present, or what?—Yes, it is.

18,651. It is worked as part of Mr Methuen's farm, part of the cultivated land?—Yes.

18,652. What crop is in it?—Corn.

18,653. *Sir Henry Macandrew.*—I think he is mistaken as to who occupies the land. Mr Finlayson's land runs between you and Mr Methuen's?—Yes. This is the nearest part to Mr Finlayson's, that is the nearest land to me, Mr Finlayson has the nearest one to that.

18,654. The nearest park of Mr Methuen's, not the nearest cultivated land?—Yes, the nearest cultivated land. Balmacara. — Kenneth Matheson.

18,655. *Mr Gordon.*—And you would have to go through Mr Finlayson's land?—No, there is a public road.

18,656. *The Chairman.*—Is there anything more you would like to say to us. As I understand, your case is this, that you feel much the want of a patch of arable land, and if you and your three neighbours could get two acres or about that extent you would be content with your holding?—Yes.

18,657. And does that, do you think, express the view of the other three who are along with you?—Yes.

18,658. You don't represent them, but you believe that is their views also?—Oh, that was their view.

18,659. Had you a talk about it among each other?—Yes, we had.

DONALD MATHESON, Glaick, Balmacara (55)—*examined.* Donald Matheson.

18,660. *The Chairman.*—You are a labourer at Glaick?—Yes.

18,661. Your house is close to Matheson's, I suppose?—Yes.

18,662. And do you pay a feu-duty of 10s.?—No.

18,663. You pay no house rent?—No.

18,664. And do you pay £1 for a cow?—Yes.

18,665. You heard Matheson's evidence, I suppose?—Yes.

18,666. And does it represent your views?—Yes.

18,667. You would like about two acres arable?—If you please.

18,668. But you would be satisfied if you had that?—Yes.

18,669. Have you one cow?—Yes.

18,670. *Mr Sutherland.*—Did you ever think of applying to the Crofters Commission?—No.

18,671. Did you apply to the estate officials for any land?—Yes. [*Mr Watson.*—He applied for these cow's grazings and they got them.]

18,672. *The Chairman.*—When did you apply for the cow's grazings?—Long ago for cow's grazing, and last December for arable land.

18,673. You have had the grazing for ten years?—Yes, and for thirty years.

18,674. What did you apply for last year?—For arable land, to Sir Henry Macandrew.

18,675. You have only been paying rent for the cow for about ten years. I think before that you were paying it direct to Mrs Lillingstone?—Yes.

18,676. We quite understood your case?—Very good.

18,677. *Mr Sutherland.*—Do you know any land suitable for the purposes we have in view in this neighbourhood; land that is at present given over to grazing that could be advantageously cultivated by small occupiers; do you know any such land?—No. [*Mr Sinclair.*—His English is not so good as the other man's.] The land that the other man was wanting I would be satisfied with.

ALEXANDER MACRAE, Avernish, Lochalsh (51). Alexander Macrae.
(Examined in Gaelic through an Interpreter.)

18,678. *The Chairman.*—Are you a crofter?—No.

18,679. Are you a cottar?—Yes, at the present time, but I was a good while paying rent to the proprietor formerly.

18,680. And do you pay no rent now?—Nothing.

18,681. Have you any land?—None.

18,682. Are you desirous of obtaining land if it can be got?—Oh yes.

18,683. Can you point us to the land that you have in view?—There is plenty of land; I don't select any particular place, but if you want it I can mention it.

18,684. Yes, I would like you to mention it?—I belong to Kintail; perhaps it might make a difference?

18,685. No, no, if you can tell us about land in th

Balmacara. — Alexander Macrae.

neighbourhood of your present house?—Auchtertyre is the nearest place.

18,686. What kind of land it that, is it farm ground?—All sorts of land arable and sheep land in Auchtertyre.

18,687. That is the farm of Auchtertyre along the road?—Yes.

18,688. Now, is it arable you want or grazing, or both?—I would be thankful for a little of both kinds, arable and pasture.

18,689. You would have to pay a rent, of course?—Yes, I don't expect anything else.

18,690. What rent are you willing to pay?—I would pay £10 or £12 if I got its value.

18,691. I am assuming that. What size of holding would you have in view for a rent of £10 or £12 a year?—3 cows and 100 sheep, according to the sort of land it might be.

18,692. And an extent of arable corresponding, I suppose?—According to that.

18,693. To enable you to winter your stock?—Yes.

18,694. Would you pay £10 or £12 for that?—Yes, if the land would be good enough to be value for it.

18,695. And would you be able to pay that without assistance?—Yes.

18,696. May I ask you do you carry on a trade?—I have no great trade, the chief thing I do is dealing in herring, buying it and going selling it throughout the country, since I was compelled to give up my service. I was a shepherd.

18,697. How long have you been engaged in your present occupation, buying and selling herring?—Five years, since I came to Avernish.

18,698. *Mr Sutherland.*—How many families are in Avernish?—Fourteen families.

18,699. Could you give us any idea of the amount of land they have? [*Sir Henry Macandrew.*—I will give you that.]

18,700. Could you give me it now? [*Sir Henry Macandrew.*—Yes, 43 acres of arable and 295 acres of pasture.]

18,701. Now, as you are at it, Sir Henry, would you kindly give me the area of the farm of Auchtertyre? [*Sir Henry Macandrew.*—45 acres arable and 1448 acres pasture.]

18,702. How many families are residing on Auchtertrye farm?—There are seven, including a poor-house or boarding-house where there are a lot of paupers.

18,703. How many of these seven families have got land?—The farm of Auchtertyre, and Mr Sinclair has a small croft.

18,704. Have the people of Avernish any sheep?—No.

18,705. Is the township of Avernish adjoining Auchtertyre farm?—Yes.

18,706. Is there arable land, land that could be made arable, on the farm of Auchtertyre not at present under cultivation?—Oh yes, at Portmore.

18,707. Is there any waste land on Auchtertyre farm that shows signs of former cultivation?—Yes, plenty.

18,708. And that, in your opinion, would be suitable for cultivation now?—Oh yes.

18,709. You have stated that you were a shepherd?—Yes.

18,710. Where were you a shepherd?—At Kishorn.

18,711. Do you know the land in that neighbourhood well?—Very well; I was eight years there.

18,712. Do you think that, if there was an opportunity given for the people of Avernish who have got no land to settle in such a place as has been indicated, they would be willing to do so?—There is only one other man and myself who have no land, and the other man is a pauper.

18,713. Do you think that those who have too little land in Avernish might be willing to take more if they got it?—I can't say just now, but I heard them asking it when the last Commission was here.

18,714. Was that the Napier Commission or the Crofters Commission?—The Crofters Commission.

18,715. They asked for land from the Crofters Commission, is that what you say?—They were wanting it from the factor. [*Sir Henry Macandrew.*—They made no application to the Crofters Commission, they wanted grazing for a horse each; that is all they ever asked for.]

Balmacara. — Alexander Macrae.

18,716. *Mr Shaw Stewart.*—Could you stock the land yourself without help?—Oh yes.

18,717. And do you think the other crofters of Avernish could do the same?—I can't say anything regarding them, I have not been long there.

18,718. I understand you gave up shepherding on account of your health, not on account of difficulty of finding a shepherd's place?—Yes, I was not able to perform the work.

18,719. And if you were quite well again you would have no difficulty in finding a shepherd's place?—I will not be able any more to act as shepherd, and will never ask it. My body is strong enough but my feet have been giving me trouble.

18,720. *Mr Gordon.*—You say you would want 100 sheep and 3 cows and a horse, is that so?—Yes.

18,721. What would the value of these animals be?—I can't say, it would be according to the value of stock at the time.

18,722. Have you as much money as would purchase them in the meantime?—I believe I have, that is not very great to-day.

18,723. Could you build your houses besides that.—Yes, I would do so.

18,724. Is any one else from Avernish here to-day besides yourself?—Yes.

18,725. How many are here from Avernish?—Only one that I saw.

18,726. What is his name?—Ewen Matheson. And there are two others.

18,727. Are you speaking for yourself to-day, or on behalf of Avernish township?—For myself altogether.

18,728. *Sir Henry Macandrew.*—Where did you pay rent?—In Kintail.

18,729. In Inverinate?—Yes.

18,730. When did you leave it?—Thirteen years since I left it.

18,731. Are your mother and your sister in the croft yet?—My mother is dead, but my sister is in the croft. I remained till my mother died.

18,732. And then did you give up the croft to your sister?—Yes, because I could not keep it. I was paying over £9 for 3½ acres of land.

18,733. Had you any grazing?—Yes, pasture for 2 cows and 20 sheep.

17,734. How did you get to live at Avernish?—Because the crofters there gave me an empty house that was there, I could not get a place anywhere else.

18,735. Did you just take possession of the house without anybody's leave?—I got orders from the crofters.

FINLAY MACRAE, Duirinish, Lochalsh (60)—*examined.* Finlay Macrae.

18,736. *The Chairman.*—You are a crofter in Duirinish?—Yes.

18,737. What rent do you pay?—£6, 10s.

18,738. Was your rent dealt with by the Crofters Commission?—Yes.

18,739. Did they make any change upon it?—I was paying £8 before that.

18,740. Your old rent was £8 and your fair rent is £6, 10s.?—Yes.

18,741. The extent of the holding is 6 acres 1 rood arable, and the hill common is 757 acres divided into ten shares, of which you have one. There is no outrun, the croft is returned as being all arable? [*Sir Henry Macandrew.*—That is a mistake; they have an outrun in Duirinish.]

18,742. Yes, there are 757 acres of hill grazing but no outrun? [*Sir Henry Macandrew.*—I beg your pardon.]

18,743. Do you wish to obtain additional land?—Yes, I have a statement here.

18,744. Was this written out by you or by your son?—Yes, by me and the other tenants that are in the place.

18,745. But who wrote this, was it your son?—My son wrote this to our dictation.

'The township of Duirinish is held as a club farm 'in ten shares, each paying a rent of £6, 10s. sterling, 'as fixed by Crofters Commission and having as hold-'ings 6 acres arable land and a tenth part of 750 acres 'hill pasture.

'Our particular grievance is that being obliged to keep 'horses and rear young cattle, we have not sufficient 'pasture for summer grazing, so that we have to send 'our young cattle at great risk and expense to the Isle 'of Skye and other places. Last year we approached 'Sir Henry Macandrew on this grievance, and he very 'kindly gave us permission to send our horses into an 'enclosed piece of pasture in connection with the farm 'of Achnadarrach, and immediately adjoining our hill 'pasture.

'The unanimous desire of the township is that, if the 'Royal Commission see it practicable to break up the 'farm of Achnadarrach, the said piece of pasture be 'extended to provide grazing for the young cattle also, 'and annexed to our township under a fair rent.'

18,746. Does that set forth your views?—Yes.

18,747. The farm of Achnadarrach marches, I suppose, with your holdings?—Yes.

18,748. Who is the farmer?—Is it in the hands of the landlord?—Yes.

18,749. And is it a grazing farm?—Some of it.

18,750. And some of it arable, I suppose?—Yes.

17,751. Is there a house and steading?—Yes.

18,752. What extent of additional grazing is your township desirous of getting from this farm?—I could not tell you.

18,753. What would the carry of it be?

18,754. What stock have you got at present?—About 100. I could not be sure. The township stock is 60 cattle.

18,755. You want additional grazing for 100 sheep?—For the small cattle that we keep.

18,756. Would you like to give your evidence in Gaelic?—Yes. Young cattle that we were in the habit of sending off to other places, distant places.

18,757. What carry are you desirous of getting?—Three young beasts each.

18,758. That would be 30 cattle?—Yes.

18,759. Thirty yearlings?—Yes.

18,760. That is all you want?—Yes, and for the horses.

18,761. Have you a horse each?—Yes.

18,762. You say a great risk and expense, what does it cost you at present to send animals to the Isle of Skye, horses and young cattle?—According to the place we send them to.

18,763. What did it cost you last year?—I paid for the three beasts last year and the horse £3, 10s.

18,764. For winter keep?—For summer keep.

18,765. Suppose you got that additional grazing, would the arable you have be sufficient?—Yes, we would endeavour to do with what we have of arable if we got the pasture.

18,766. And you would be quite willing and able, I daresay, to pay the additional rent which this land would require?—Yes.

18,767. *Mr Sutherland.*—You say that Duirinish pasture is managed as a club farm. How long has that been so?—It was much larger at first, but they were gradually reducing it, and twenty-nine years ago they took off and left what we have now with us.

18,768. How far did your grazing extend before it was curtailed?—We had the hill, part of the deer forest up at Patt.

18,769. The townships had summer grazings?—Yes.

18,770. When did they lose these pastures?—Long ago.

18,771. Could you tell us how they managed these pastures when they had them up in Patt and Monar?—Three townships had the moor between them. They used to send herds along with their cattle.

18,772. And was that used for summer grazing purposes?—Yes.

18,773. What has become of the land now?—It is under deer to-day.

18,774. And did they get any land anywhere else when that land was taken from them?—No.

18,775. When was the club farm management introduced?—Some time before Sir Alexander Matheson bought the estate.

18,776. Could you tell us how many years ago that was?—About forty years.

18,777. Do you say there was any extension of their grazing at the time?—Forty years.

18,778. Did they get any additional grazing at that time?—Nothing.

18,779. It was the old grazing put under the club management, was it?—Yes.

18,780. Are you of opinion that it is a better system of management than the one that previously existed?—I can't say, as ever since I remembered I have been on the same system.

18,781. Equal shares of the grazing?—Yes, they have it in common.

18,782. Is the stock held individually or in common?—Every one has his own sheep stock. [*Sir Henry Macandrew.*—They had a club sheep stock, but they gave it up some years ago.]

18,783. Then regarding the farm of Achnadarrach which adjoins yours, who occupies it at present?—The proprietor.

18,784. And does the proprietor work it with a manager there on the ground?—Yes.

18,785. So it is not occupied by a resident farmer?—No.

18,786. Does their grazing adjoin the Balmacara farm?—Yes, we adjoin it.

18,787. And is there land there that would suit your purpose also?—Yes, there is land that would benefit us if we got it.

18,788. Land suitable for occupation by small cultivators or other occupiers?—Yes.

18,789. Is their complaint that they have too little pasture in proportion to their arable?—Yes.

18,790. And that they are not in that way able to turn out their stock to the greatest advantage?—Quite so, that is the reason that we send our stock to the Isle of Skye.

18,791. They have got, I think, only 75 acres apiece in connection with 6 acres arable, is that so?—We don't know how much we have; they were taking it from us bit by bit. [*Sir Henry Macandrew.*—800 acres pasture.]

18,792. The official return says 757, and we have to take it. Do you consider 75 acres of pasture too small a proportion for 6 acres of arable? I am talking of what they have?—Yes, too little.

18,793. Can you show us the land that you refer to that would be suitable for enlarging their grazing?—We only asked what would be suitable to be attached to what we have.

18,794. Can you show to us the land you consider suitable?—Yes, if you go to see it.

18,795. *Mr Shaw Stewart.*—Are you speaking to-day as a delegate?—For the township.

18,796. About the grazing acreage, there are 757 acres in the roll and 600 acres in your statement; which is correct?—We allow that the official statement is correct we don't know exactly. We only make a random statement by guess.

18,797. So the statement should be amended in that particular?—Yes.

18,798. *The Chairman.*—I would advise you to withdraw this and stand upon your statement given now, because there are two or three mistakes in it; there is a mistake about the area and there is also a mistake about club farms, and it is not signed or dated. I think you should allow your case to stand upon what you now say. You want to break up the farm of Achnadarrach, is that not so?—We wrote to the proprietor himself a few years ago and never yet got a reply.

18,799. No, but I understand you could only obtain the land you want by breaking up the farm of Achnadarrach?—We would take the whole of Achnadarrach if we got it.

Balmacara. Finlay Macrae.

18,800. Can you give me the rent of Achnadarrach farm?—I don't know the rent or the value.

18,801. Do you think that the crofters who might occupy the farm, if it was broken up, could pay the same rent for it as if the farm were let to a single tenant?—Yes, and more.

18,802. And does the same relate to Balmacara. Do you suggest that crofters should take the whole of Balmacara farm?—I don't know as to that.

18,803. With regard to the stock that were grazed in the summer in Monar, do you remember that yourself?—Yes, and I used to go myself with them.

18,804. What did they do in winter with the stock that they grazed there in summer?—The low ground, the land we had ourselves, would support them in winter.

18,805. Is that the land you have now or had you more then?—Yes, but another township has been cut off since that time.

18,806. Therefore, if you had the same grazing in Monar now, you have not the land to winter the stock on at present?—I believe we have. We send cattle to Skye yearly for summer grazing.

18,807. Have you got land enough now among you to winter all the stock you used to graze in the summer at Monar?—Yes, of arable land.

18,808. How many cattle could you winter on the land you have now?—Four cows and two stirks we keep, and we have to send others to the Isle of Skye or any place we get.

18,809. You would have to send some away?—We have at present to send some away every year.

18,810. I want to find out this. You sent a certain number of cattle and sheep to Monar in the summer, and I want to know how much of that proportion you used to send, could you winter now on the low ground you have at present?—Three or four beasts additional to what we have.

18,811. You could winter them?—Yes.

18,812. I understand that on the land you have now you can only winter three or four more beasts each?—Yes.

18,813. When was the club system given up on the grazing you have?—Fourteen or fifteen years ago.

18,814. Why was it given up?—That the land would not support them.

18,815. Why did you give up the system of keeping the stock on the club system?—The land would not support them because tenants were at that time put all round us.

18,816. *Mr Munro.*—Supposing you got this additional land at Achnadarrach, have you counted up the cost of the additional money that you would require to stock it?—Yes, some of us would be able to do it.

18,817. How much would it be?—We did not sum up how much it would come to; we could not be sure of that till we knew the price of the stock we would have to put on.

18,818. Could you specify a probable sum?—It would not come to any big sum at all.

18,819. Could you stock the additional land without any outside assistance?—Yes.

18,820. *Mr Gordon.*—You are speaking for the whole township?—Yes.

18,821. You propose that the whole township should join together and take Achnadarrach?—Yes.

18,822. You say you are able to stock your share; are all the rest able to stock theirs?—Yes.

18,823. Is this the only arable land in the neighbourhood of the mansion house or is there any other arable land that the proprietor of Duncraig could get if you were to take this?—That is according to how far on towards the castle they might go. Achnadarrach did not go very near the castle at first and there was another place.

18,824. How many acres are there in the portion of the farm which you propose to take?—I could not tell you, but Mr Watson would know better than I know. [*Mr Watson.*—Perhaps about 35 or 40 acres, as far as I can guess it roughly, in the meantime of arable, that is if he limits himself to Achnadarrach proper which is below the road we drove.]

18,825. How many acres would that leave with the mansion house?—I could not tell you.

18,826. You would not propose to take all the arable land from the mansion house?—No.

18,827. What would become of the poor laird for milk. You say that you do now or did formerly put your cattle to Skye. Would you prefer if you got pasture at home to keep them near at home?—Yes.

18,828. And is there pasture upon the home farm of Achnadarrach in your neighbourhood?—Not much.

18,829. Is there not other pasture in your neighbourhood that could be made available?—No, but Balmacara.

18,830. There is in Balmacara. You stated that there was some arable land on Balmacara also. Where is it that you say could be cultivated?—The land that could be cultivated is farthest away from the township.

18,831. Is it part of the present arable farm of Balmacara?—If we got a piece grazing, the hill grazing, we would not require any.

18,832. Then if you got a part of the grazing you would be content?—Yes.

18,833. How many horses have you in the township?—Ten.

18,834. And you want grazing for ten horses and thirty stirks, is that it?—Yes.

18,835. Have you any idea in your own mind how many acres of additional pasture you would require for that?—We have a piece already that would help with that.

18,836. But how much additional ground would you require?—That would be according to the land we got.

18,837. But suppose it is the land nearest yourselves if you got any?—About 100 acres.

18,838. Now will you kindly tell us what kind of stock you herded yourself up in the forest of Patt. Was it young cattle or milk cows on the old sheiling system?—Young cattle.

18,839. What part of the forest of Patt was it. Could you show us the ground or describe it now?

18,840. Riochan first and then they took Patt from us and gave us Calavie.

18,841. But you prefer some additional pasture nearer home?—Yes.

18,842. *The Chairman.*—How many years is it since you sent animals to what is now Patt forest or Monar Forest?—About forty years.

18,843. How many families were in the habit of sending their animals there?—I was very young at the time, and could not say how many families were in the townships.

18,844. Can you tell me how many were in the townships?—There were twelve in our own township.

18,845. What was the name of that township?—Duirinish.

18,846. Did any other township send their stock to the forest?—Yes, Kirkton.

18,847. Any other place?—Craig and Achnadarrach.

18,848. Was there a township of Achnadarrach?—Yes.

18,849. How many families were in the township of Achnadarrach?—Two.

18,850. And did all these families send their stock in summer to this land that is now forest?—Yes.

18,851. How far had they to travel?—About 40 miles from here.

18,852. It cannot be 40 miles. How long did you take to go?—Two days.

18,853. How long did you stay there?—Half a year.

18,854. And did you build bothies there and live there?—Yes, the herd would live there.

18,855. Was there one herd for each township?—No.

18,856. How many herds had these families altogether?—I cannot tell, because my father had it before I was born.

18,857. Did you pay anything for that?—The same rent for that along with the holdings.

18,858. And was that a right which you exercised in virtue of the holdings that you had in Duirinish?—Yes, it followed as a right.

18,859. Did you carry on these sheilings any place you chose on this forest land?—I don't understand the question.

18,860. Have you distinct marches?—Yes.

18,861. Each township had its own marches?—These three townships that I mentioned were together and had the one.

18,862. Which three were these?—Duirinish, Kirkton, Craig, and Achnadarrach. These four had the same marches.

18,863. What other townships did you mention that went to that locality?—Achamore, Ardinarf and others.

18,864. Can you mention the names of any others?—No.

18,865. Were there deer upon that land at that time, do you know?—No deer.

18,866. All sheep ground?—Yes.

18,867. You don't wish, as I understand, to resume that system if you could get additional grazing added to your present holdings?—No, we would not want it if we got grazing near.

18,868. *Sir Henry Macandrew.*—When was the township of Duirinish formed?—Duirinish was a township before I was born and I don't know when it was formed.

18,869. Do you not know that it was at one time a farm let to one tenant?—Yes, when my father came to it first.

18,870. And was it formed into a township out of a single farm in your father's time?—Yes.

18,871. Have you any difficulty in getting summer grazing for your stock in Skye?—Yes, when places are taken up before we arrive we have to return and go from township to township, like ragmen going about here.

18,872. Did you ever in any year fail to get grazing in Skye?—Yes.

18,873. When?—Several times. Twelve years ago I sent my horse there, and I sent him to a place and then he left that place and wandered away and I had to pay £4 before I could get him home.

18,874. Where are the Duirinish horses grazing at present?—At Achnadarrach.

18,875. What are you paying for that?—I could not tell you.

18,876. What did you pay in Skye? If you tell me that I will know what to charge you. What did you pay in Skye?—Not the same in every place in Skye.

18,877. *Mr Donald Macrae.*—Do you deal in sheep or cattle or both on a considerable scale?—Yes.

18,878. Where do you buy?—Every place.

18,879. Have you for several years been buying the Applecross stock?—Yes.

18,880. And Shieldaig?—Yes.

18,881. And Torridon?—Yes.

18,882. You mentioned that a township was taken off Duirinish; what township?—Portaneorna.

18,883. In the olden times were Drumbuie and Erbusaig crofting townships included in Duirinish?—Yes.

18,884. When it was a farm?—When one tenant had it these were attached, but when my father came it was formed into a township, Drumbuie was cut off.

18,885. Am I right in assuming that when Duirinish had the summer grazings at Monar, that summer grazings belonged not only to Duirinish of the present day but to Duirinish and Drumbuie and Erbusaig?—Yes, these townships had it as well.

18,886. Now, is it a fact that every township in Lochalsh had its portion of these old grazings with the exception of Plockton?—I have no recollection with regard to other places, but as I used to go with our own cattle I knew about it.

18,887. Did you hear that the same applies to the other townships?—Yes.

18,888. You said that they had Riochan first and that it was taken from them. How many years is it since Riochan was taken from you?—I believe it is forty years.

18,889. How long is it then since Loch Calavie was taken from them?—I believe it is three years we got possession of Loch Calavie.

18,890. Do you know Ben Dronnaig?—Yes, we had not it. Auchtertyre had that place.

18,891. Were there tenants in Auchtertyre, small tenants?—No.

18,892. Now, are the grazings there better or worse than the grazings of Balmacara in your neighbourhood or of Achnadarrach in your neighbourhood?—At that time there was good pasture on it, but Achnadarrach has a stock on it to-day; it is not so good.

18,893. Which land is better for grazing purposes, Riochan and Ben Dronnaig and these places, or the hill grazings of Balmacara?—I can't tell.

18,894. Do you know the lands of Ben Dronnaig and these places personally?—Yes.

18,895. Could these places be worked to-day in connection with crofting townships in Lochalsh?—Why not?

18,896. Would it be possible to restore the old boundaries and if the old boundaries were restored, would it be possible for the crofting township of Duirinish to take its own and to put a club stock on, common to the whole township, and to keep a shepherd there?—I am of opinion it would.

18,897. Are you of opinion that such a system would work well?—I don't know as to that, but they are of opinion it would benefit them.

18,898. Do you know of any shepherds who lived there all the year round, from year to year?—Yes.

18,899. Do you know John Matheson who is farm servant at Rhudha Mor?—Yes, and I know another one in Auchmore.

18,900. What is his name?—Mackay.

18,901. Did they live as shepherds up there?—Yes.

18,902. Did they live there summer and winter?—They did not use to remain in winter.

18,903. Did John Matheson live there for several years at a place called Coire-each?—Yes.

18,904. *Mr Sutherland.*—May I ask if that was as shepherd for the people down here?

18,905. *Mr Donald Macrae.*—No, this is quite recently. Did you ever hear John Matheson speak of the quality of the ground there, and its capabilities as a pastoral country?—Yes.

18,906. *Sir Henry Macandrew.*—John Matheson is in the district and can speak himself.

18,907. *Mr Donald Macrae.*—I should be exceedingly glad if Sir Henry Macandrew would invite him to come before the Commission; he is servant on the local factor's farm of Rhudha Mor, and I did not ask him to come himself, but he has been telling me himself that there is not a place on the face of the earth he would rather go back to than Coire-each and take a hirsel.

18,908. *Sir Henry Macandrew.*—He is most welcome to come here and give evidence, and I would be delighted if the Commission would invite him to come.

18,909. *Mr Donald Macrae.*—Supposing it were as easy for Duirinish to get a considerable stretch of land for grazing purposes up there on Ben Dronnaig or to get the hundred acres of Balmacara farm that you spoke about, which would you prefer as a crofting township?—I don't know; although I would have my preference I don't know if that would suit the township.

18,910. As a member of the crofting township of Duirinish, which would you rather get, your share of the hundred acres of Balmacara grazings or get the restoration of the old boundaries up at Ben Dronnaig?—If we got what we wanted to take the horse and the young beasts off we were not wanting more.

18,911. Do you believe that Duncraig would have enough of arable land, even supposing they got the whole of Achnadarrach, as Achnadarrach stood when it was a township?—I am of opinion there is.

18,912. And is there another place near Achnadarrach called Achana-h-inich?—Yes.

18,913. Does it form a part of Achnadarrach to-day?—A portion of Achnadarrach was attached to it.

Balmacara. Finlay Macrae.

18,914. Does that place adjoin Duirinish?—It is marching with Achnadarrach.

18,915. Were there tenants there before?—Yes.

18,916. *Mr Gordon.*—You know Ben Dronnaig?—Yes.

18,917. Can sheep be wintered there?—Oh yes, I have seen sheep at the Dronnaig many times.

18,918. You could not winter the hoggs up there?—Yes.

18,919. On Ben Dronnaig?—Yes.

18,920. Now, you say you are a cattle dealer. Do you take grass through the country?—Yes.

18,921. Where?—At Braintra.

18,922. Do you ever take the cattle on to the townships' grazings?—Yes.

18,923. You do that occasionally?—Yes, sometimes.

18,924. Do you understand the question. Do you take the cattle occasionally that you purchase in the way of your business on to the township grazings?—No, but of Braintra and other places.

18,925. *Mr Sutherland.*—You stated in reply to a question by Sir Henry Macandrew that Duirinish township was formed out of a single farm. That, you stated I think, was in your father's time, was it?—Yes.

18,926. Why was it made into a township, do you know?—I have no knowledge.

18,927. Seeing it was one farm at one time some people must have come there?—Yes.

18,928. Where did they come from?—From different parts of Lochalsh, but I don't know.

18,929. What made them settle there, do you know?—I don't know.

18,930. You don't know anything about the formation of this township?—Nothing.

18,931. You also spoke of the blotting out of some other townships. Had the one thing anything to do with the other?—I did not mean that they were blotted out, but they were dissociated, cut off from Duirinish.

18,932. But you mentioned a township of Auchmore which is no longer a township?—Yes, there were tenants in at the time, but it is now a big farm.

18,933. Then I wish to ask you a question with regard to deer. You said that when this right of grazing attached to the townships in Lochalsh there were no deer in Monar?—No, unless deer would come from other places.

18,934. I want to know exactly what you mean by there being no deer there. Did you only mean that there was no deer forest there?—There was a forest in Strathglass.

18,935. There would be deer there at the time your cattle would be there?—I never saw any deer at that time.

18,936. But was the whole of the land up there occupied as sheiling, or some of it as a deer forest at that time?—None as a forest at that time.

18,937. Then where do you think the deer came from that are in it now?—They came up from Strathglass over the boundary.

18,938. But there were deer there as well as now?—Yes.

18,939. Then these old grazings of yours were known by a local name. You stated that they were called 'Monadh-Aillseach.' What is the meaning of that?—'Monadh' signifies a place for young cattle, hill ground.

18,940. And what does 'Aillseach' mean?—Belonging to Lochalsh,—Monadh-Aillseach, the hill country of Lochalsh.

18,941. And these grazings were known here by that name, and are they still known locally as Monadh-Aillseach?—Yes.

18,942. And they were called that from the fact that they were attached to the Lochalsh townships, isn't that so?—That is my opinion.

18,943. *Sir Henry Macandrew.*—Do you know that the deer were driven out of the forests up there two years successively lately, twice within the last two years?—I heard nothing of that.

18,944. *The Chairman.*—You did not do it yourself?—No. Balmacara.

18,945. *Sir Henry Macandrew.*—I mean by the weather, by the storm?—I know nothing as to what put them out, if they came out. Finlay Macrae.

18,946. *The Chairman.*—But did you know anything about it?—No.

18,947. *Sir Henry Macandrew.*—Did the Duirinish people for some years let the wintering of their pasture?—I could not tell you.

18,948. Oh, you can tell me that?—For two or three years they let it.

18,949. *The Chairman.*—I am going to read you a passage from the *General View of Agriculture of the Counties of Ross and Cromarty*, by Sir George Stewart Mackenzie, a work published in 1810. At pages 252 and 253, where he is dealing with Lochalsh, he says this—'To each farm is attached a hill grazing, in many 'cases at the distance of several miles, to which the 'young cattle are sent towards the end of spring or 'early in summer and remain till September or 'October, when they are forced by bad weather to 'leave it. The one-year-old cattle are suffered to remain 'on the low farm and generally feed separately on the 'higher and coarser parts of the pasture.' Does that passage correctly represent what your father and you when a boy used to do?—Yes.

18,950. It is quite correct, is it?—Yes.

JOHN MACLENNAN, Crofter, Duirinish, Lochalsh (36)—*examined.* John Maclennan

18,951. *The Chairman.*—Are you a crofter in Duirinish?—Yes.

18,952. What rent do you pay?—£6, 10s.

18,953. Was your rent dealt with by the Crofters Commission?—Yes.

18,954. What is your old rent?—£8.

18,955. Your holding is 6 acres arable and 757 acres pasture, of which you have a tenth share. Tell us what stock you have?—I keep a horse and four cows and followers.

18,956. What followers have you just now?—Two heifers.

18,957. And have you sheep?—I have two or three sheep, but they are on different grazings, I suppose they are anywhere. They like to go throughout the hill anywhere.

18,958. You have only two or three?—That is all.

18,959. What is it you want to get in the shape of land?—Well, we wish in the first place to show you that we are in particular need of summer grazing for the horses, as we are obliged to have them to work the farm.

18,960. You cannot do without horses?—We cannot do without them.

18,961. And you have not enough of grazing for them?—Not enough of outside hill grazing to keep them in summer.

18,962. You wish to get, and are ready to pay a fair rent for, such additional grazing?—Yes.

18,963. Point us to the hill grazing that would meet your object?—We have possession already of a piece for the horses. It is enclosed. It was shown in the statement that you read. It is enclosed, and we find that if that would be extended to keep the other cattle that we are obliged to remove in summer and send to Skye and other places—if that piece that is enclosed already were extended.

18,964. So as to accommodate the stock you have to send to Skye?—Yes, we would be quite willing to pay a fair rent for that and it would meet our object.

18,965. And would that satisfy you?—That would quite satisfy the desire of the township.

18,966. You mean an additional grazing for the whole of the township?—Yes.

18,967. To be held in common?—Yes.

18,968. Can you indicate what additional extent of hill grazing would satisfy the wants of the township?—I should say, but it is only a rough guess, that there

are between 40 and 50 acres in the piece that is enclosed already where the horses are and if other 50 were added to that,—but it is impossible to take it off Achnadarrach unless we got one of the parks which are old arable land.

18,969. You cannot take what you want from Achnadarrach without taking part of the arable?—Without getting part of the arable.

18,970. By arable you mean land under cultivation at present?—It is at present partly arable.

18,971. Under rotation?—Yes.

18,972. Well, suppose that that cannot be done, is there other grazing land reasonably near that would meet your view?—Yes, on the side of Balmacara.

18,973. On Balmacara farm?—It adjoins both Duirinish and Achnadarrach, in the march.

18,974. Is that land you are thinking of on Balmacara farm grazing land?—Yes, there are sheep on it just now.

18,975. It is not land under rotation?—No, no.

18,976. And has not been in your recollection?—No.

18,977. Always used as grazing?—As grazing for sheep.

18,978. Then could a sufficient extent of grazing be got on Balmacara farm without trenching on the arable land of Achnadarrach?—Certainly, any amount of hill grazing on Balmacara.

18,979. Would the taking of the land from Balmacara farm that you require leave a considerable grazing for the farm of Balmacara?—Yes, in my view.

18,980. In your view it would?—Yes.

18,981. In saying what you have told us, do you represent the views of the township as well as your own?—I believe I do, but they all agreed that if they got what they wanted off the farm of Achnadarrach it would be more suitable, because it is all enclosed and would not allow our cattle to stray away.

18,982. You would have Achnadarrach by preference?—Yes.

18,983. But, failing Achnadarrach, you would be glad to get the land from Balmacara?—Yes.

18,984. Is that the way of it?—That is the way of it.

18,985. Is there access to the land on Balmacara that you are thinking about?—Yes, there is no fence between us at all; it is just adjoining our land alongside the road as you come from Plockton to Balmacara.

18,986. You have no desire then, any of you, to leave your holdings if you got this additional grazing?—Not so far as I know.

18,987. You have no desire personally?—No.

18,988. Did you make any endeavours in the past to get additional land either by application to the Crofters Commission or by application to the estate?—We did not apply to the Crofters Commission for additional holdings, but we applied to Sir Henry and we stated this grievance to him last year, and it was him that gave us this piece of pasture for the horses and we beg to offer him thanks for the same, but we don't know whether we will have it any longer, we only got it for the present year.

18,989. You don't hold it under the Act of Parliament?—No.

18,990. Did he enclose it for you?—It was enclosed before.

18,991. Only you would have liked him, when he was doing so well, to have done a little better by giving you more?—Just so.

18,992. *Mr Sutherland.*—With regard to this park, it is on the farm of Achnadarrach, is it?—It is in connection with it. I believe it was formerly on Balmacara but it is now in connection with Achnadarrach.

18,993. And did you get this right of pasturing without any additional rent?—We don't know what we have to pay for the horses yet; we are to be charged, certainly, because we are charged everywhere with summer grazing, generally £1 and sometimes over that.

18,994. And do you accept a bargain on conditions like that?—Well, we just explained our case to Sir Henry and he told us that we would get it in Achnadarrach last year and we did not expect to be charged any more than anywhere else, but, of course, we don't know.

18,995. So it is a bargain of honour, is it?—Yes, so far.

18,996. But you complain that you have no security of tenure of the park?—No, we have no security.

18,997. Neither do you know what you are to be charged?—No.

18,998. How does the farm of Achnadarrach spare this park?—Well, it is enclosed all round, and it is a bit of hill pasture, and outside it is planted and then the rest of it has scarcely any hill pasture, it is all old arable.

18,999. And how many horses are pastured there in the park?—I believe there are eleven from Duirinish itself.

19,000. And what is the usual payment for the pasture of a horse in this country?—One pound note. We used to pay that.

19,001. How many acres are in the park?—I said already that I thought between 40 and 50 acres altogether, but I could not say definitely.

19,002. Do you pasture the horses all the year in the park?—No, they will be there for three summer months.

19,003. That is a fourth part of the year?—Yes.

19,004. And for that you pay £11?—Yes.

19,005. For a park of 40 acres?—We have not paid it yet.

19,006. But you expect that it will not be less than a pound?—We expect so.

19,007. Isn't it a pretty high rental?—Yes, and I believe the place is rather limited for the horses themselves. Unless Sir Henry will be kind enough to remove them to a better park for a time, I believe it is getting very bare by this time.

19,008. But with regard to the other alternative mode of enlarging your township, that is, Balmacara, it is not the best part of the Balmacara farm that you want?—No, but only the worst; well, it is not the worst either, there is another place adjoining Erbusaig which is even worse than the piece adjoining Achnadarrach. It is all black hill.

19,009. Is the general character of this peninsula here that the farther you go west the worse the land gets?—I believe it is.

19,010. And all the people are on the west end of the peninsula and the big farms on the east?—Yes, the big farms are on the best part of the estate as regards arable and pasture.

19,011. The part that you refer to on the farm of Balmacara is not such good land as in Achnadarrach?—No, and it is not so convenient either for our township.

19,012. This addition from Balmacara farm would give your holdings an inconvenient form, wouldn't it, it would make them longer?—It would make them longer certainly, but it would give them a larger extent of pasture.

19,013. But if you got the piece from Achnadarrach farm it would be more compact would it not?—Yes.

19,014. Now it is practically at the present time, isn't it, part of the policies of Duncraig House?—Yes, but they have sheep on it just now.

19,015. The grounds are very extensive, if you include the farm of Achnadarrach?—The arable is extensive, but there is no hill pasture in connection with Duncraig House, all the hill is planted.

19,016. Is there not more land attached to Duncraig House if you include the farm of Achnadarrach, than the whole of the land the Duirinish people have got?—I could not say really.

19,017. It looks so on the map?—It may be so.

19,018. But you state as your opinion, and you have the authority of the rest of the township for saying that you are very anxious to get your pasture enlarged in either of these ways?—So as to keep the horses and the cows that we are obliged to put off yearly.

19,019. And you are both able and willing to pay a rent for it?—Yes.

19,020. *Mr Gordon.*—Is there any pasture on the

Balmacara. John Maclennan.

farm of Achnadarrach except this pasture which you have got?—Well, there is a small bit, but it is very small, lying to the north side.

19,021. In point of fact you have already got all the pasture you can get from the farm of Achnadarrach?—We have not got any from the farm of Achnadarrach.

19,022. There was pasture formerly attached to Achnadarrach?—Yes, from Balmacara, this place that I mentioned, where the horses are, it was taken from Balmacara and attached to Achnadarrach.

19,023. But there is no more pasture that you can get from Achnadarrach?—I don't believe there is, unless they give some of the parks already under sheep.

19,024. Is any of your township engaged in fishing at all?—Yes.

19,025. Do you engage in fishing?—I don't, but there are some in the township who do.

19,026. And Drumbuie, do they engage in fishing?—Yes.

19,027. The most of the townships are built round the seashore?—Yes.

19,028. And the shore generally is on the west part of the estates and not the east?—On the west and north and south.

19,029. Therefore they could not have been fishing villages up on the east part of the estate?—No.

19,030. That may be one reason why the fishing villages may be there.

19,031. *Mr Sutherland.*—How far is Duirinish from the sea?—About a quarter of a mile.

19,032. *Mr Gordon.*—If you got this part of Achnadarrach would that be suitable pasture for you?—I believe it would, if it was laid out for pasture.

19,033. You would be quite satisfied?—Quite satisfied.

19,034. And it would afford the necessary additional outrun both for your horses and young cattle?—Yes, if we got sufficient.

19,035. In other words sufficient pasture if it can be got?—Yes.

19,036. You would not have to send them either to the hills or to the Isle of Skye?—Just so.

19,037. *The Chairman.*—What does it cost you to send across cattle or horses to Skye for grazing?—We pay 6d. each beast across the ferry, and in the case of horses I believe it is 1s.

19,038. And the same coming back?—Well, threepence coming back.

19,039. And have you sometimes considerable difficulty in getting grazing in Skye?—Well, not I, I don't go often.

19,040. Do you know of your neighbours having difficulty?—We generally go as far as Duisdale, and that is a long way from Kyleakin. I believe it is about 20 miles or so.

19,041. Have your neighbours sometimes difficulty in getting grazing in Skye?—Well, we have to go asking till we get it.

19,042. *Sir Henry Macandrew.*—Are there any crofting townships in the east end of this parish?—Yes.

19,043. Sallachy?—Yes.

19,044. Altnasuth, Ardinarff, Ardelve, Avernish?—Yes.

19,045. You are not correct in saying all the townships were on the west end?—I meant my own district. I did not understand the question like that. I meant my own district between Plockton and Kyle. I think the bulk of the crofting population of Lochalsh is between Plockton and Kyle.

19,046. But are not the townships I have named all in the east end, and all very considerable townships?—Yes, they are.

19,047. *The Chairman.*—Do you carry on any trade apart from your holding?—No, but I work as a labourer when I can get it from the estate.

19,048. And do you sometimes get labour from the estate?—Yes, in the winter months I generally work for day's wages.

19,049. What are your wages generally?—From 15s. to 16s. a week.

19,050. You get work every winter I suppose, more or less?—Yes, more or less. Balmacara. John Maclennan.

JOHN MACRAE, Crofter, Duirinish (50). John Macrae.
(Examined in Gaelic through an Interpreter.)

19,051. *The Chairman.*—You are a crofter at Duirinish?—Yes.

19,052. What rent do you pay at present?—£6, 10s.

19,053. What was your former rent?—£10 first, and then it was reduced to £8, and by the Crofters' Commission to £6, 10s.

19,054. Your holding is 6 acres arable and one-tenth of 757 hill pasture. You heard the evidence of Finlay Macrae, I suppose, and of John Maclennan?—Yes.

19,055. Does their evidence set forth your views?—Yes.

19,056. Is there anything you would like to add yourself?—I have nothing against what the rest said, or anything beyond what they stated.

19,057. I think we may take you as concurring.

DONALD CAMERON, Cottar, Duirinish (55). Donald Cameron.
(Examined in Gaelic through an Interpreter.)

19,058. *The Chairman.*—You are a cottar; do you pay any rent?—Not a penny.

19,059. Have you any land?—No land.

19,060. Do you wish to get land?—Yes, either in Achnadarrach or in any other place that you might see proper to give me.

19,061. Do I understand that you would like a holding consisting of arable land and outrun, with the necessary buildings upon it?—Yes.

19,062. Would you be willing to pay a fair rent for all that?—Yes.

19,063. Could you do so?—Yes; if not, I would not ask for it.

19,064. How do you maintain yourself at present?—On day's wages.

19,065. And do you get pretty steady labour?—Sometimes, yes. I have now for half a year been working for Lord Middleton in Applecross.

19,066. Then this holding you would like to get, do you propose that it should be situated on Achnadarrach or Balmacara?—I would prefer Achnadarrach to be near the neighbours if you would see it proper to give it me. They were not bad to me, the township, and I would not like to be far from them.

19,067. Is your house situated on some other man's croft?—It is on the common land of the township.

19,068. And have you some stock on the common?—I have a cow.

19,069. Anything else?—No, unless a few bits of sheep here and there.

19,070. Are there any other cottars in Duirinish besides yourself?—Yes, there is another one here.

19,071. What is his name?—Duncan Matheson.

19,072. Are you stating Duncan Matheson's views as well as your own in this claim?—He is here and will speak for himself.

19,073. How long have you been living in this house at Duirinish?—Thirty-five years.

19,074. Where did you come from to Duirinish?—From the parish of Lochcarron.

19,075. Why did you leave Lochcarron?—Because I used to be at service in other places.

19,076. *Mr Shaw Stewart.*—Do you think that cultivating a croft would be more profitable than getting weekly wages?—I am of opinion it would be better to have a croft than to be on day's labour; I am certain of it.

19,077. Do you mean you would like it better or that it would be more profitable?—I believe it would be better for me to have a bit than to be on day's pay.

19,078. Do you think you would have so much to live upon?—Yes, and more.

19,079. How do you think you would make the

money out of the croft?—The croft would help and I would be working, as occasion offered, on day's labour.

19,080. You would still work, and cultivate the croft in your spare time?—Yes.

19,081. *Mr Munro.*—I suppose in your desire to have a croft, other considerations influence you besides those of mere money matters or profit?—I am of the opinion that a piece land would be better for me because I have a family.

19,082. I suppose you would consider yourself in a more independent position having a croft of your own than even earning daily wages?—Yes, I would not be in the reverence of anybody else.

19,083. Could you take and stock a croft?—Yes.

19,084. You could live upon it independently with the assistance of occasional wages earned for labour?—Yes, much better living than I have.

19,085. Are there many others in a similar position to yourself who desire to get crofts?—There is only one other like myself from the township that has come here, and I don't know in regard to the others. There is another one who was saying he would like it but he is from home.

19,086. *Mr Sutherland.*—Do the people of Duirinish ever ask you to pay any rent?—No, except for the cow.

19,087. But they allowed you to build your house, and to have your peats on the common without any demand to pay rent for them?—The house was built when I came to it.

19,088. But they allowed you to occupy it rent free?—They did not make any objection.

19,089. *Mr Shaw Stewart.*—I understood just now in answer to Mr Munro that you said you would be independent if you had a croft, but you told me that you would still have to work whether you had a croft or not. I want to know if you think you could live entirely by your croft without getting wages for work?—I am of opinion if I had a sufficiently large croft that it would keep me without recourse to other labour.

19,090. What would you call a sufficient croft?—About 6 acres arable and grazing for two cows. That would satisfy me.

19,091. Could you stock it yourself and pay rent for that?—Yes, I have it already.

19,092. And you think that would keep you and your family without getting work from outside?—Myself and family, of course, would work here and there in addition.

19,093. Do you want such a big one as that?—No, I don't want such a big one.

19,094. Then you still contemplate working for a weekly wage even if you had a croft?—Quite so.

19,095. So that so far as independence goes you would still be dependent on other people for labour?—Not to be in the reverence of others, not in the way of being free from labour, but that I would not be so much in the reverence of other people by having a croft for myself.

19,096. But you would still have to work?—Yes.

19,097. *Mr Sutherland.*—Have you got any idea whether it would be necessary for you to work outside if you had such a croft?—I have no experience, but I believe I would have to work here and there, and would be willing to do so although I had a croft.

19,098. But as a matter of fact, you have had no experience of working a croft of that size?—No, I never had a croft. My father and relatives had land, but I never myself had a croft.

19,099. Have you any security in your present home?—I don't know, but the township might evict me.

19,100. But if you had a croft such as you mentioned you contemplate that you would come under the Crofters Act and would have security in your home?—Yes.

19,101. And is it in that sense you mean independence?—Yes, that is the sense.

19,102. *The Chairman.*—What family have you?—Seven.

19,103. How many sons have you?—Four.

19,104. How old is the eldest?—Twenty-two years.

19,105. And the youngest?—Seven.

19,106. Are they all living with you?—No, they are here and there. Some are shepherding. Balmacara.

19,107. How many are at home?—Four. Donald Cameron.

19,108. How many of them go out to work?—Four of them are away at service.

19,109. How many of your sons go out to work?—Two.

19,110. And how many daughters are away from home?—Two daughters.

19,111. But they have no separate holdings of their own, your house is their home I suppose, when they are not away working?—Just at service.

19,112. Are you looking to get assistance from them in any holding that you might obtain?—I believe I would, and they are giving it to me at all events as it is.

DUNCAN GILLIES, Cottar, Conchra, Lochalsh (73)—*examined.* Duncan Gillies.

19,113. *The Chairman.*—Are you a crofter?—No.

19,114. Are you a cottar?—Yes.

19,115. Do you pay any rent?—Well, I did not pay much rent yet. I only got a bit land last spring from the proprietor, from the rulers, Sir Henry.

19,116. How much land did you get last spring?—Half an acre. We have to pay for that.

19,117. Is there any rent fixed for it?—Yes.

19,118. What is the rent?—10s. I believe; that is what they said.

19,119. Do you wish to get more land?—Well, I wish to get as much as would keep a cow, that is all I want, although I would get it for nothing if it was possible to give me it near where I am stopping myself. I don't like to be removed out of my place; I am too old.

19,120. You don't wish to leave your holding?—No.

19,121. But you would like to get grazing for a cow?—Just that altogether, whatever.

19,122. You have no cow just now?—No, I have not one. I was twelve years keeping a cow on the place where I am, but there is eighteen years since I left it now.

19,123. How did you come to lose the cow that you had some years ago?—Well, the farmer asked too much, and I could not keep it.

19,124. You grazed upon Conchra farm?—Yes.

19,125. What did he ask for it?—£4. I could not get wintering for her.

19,126. And you had to give it up?—Yes, we had to give it up.

19,127. But you would be perfectly satisfied now if you had the grazing of a cow?—That is all I want if it be possible to give me it. We will not be long in this world now.

19,128. I hope you will be a good long time?—Oh no, sir, my time is wearing away.

19,129. I suppose there would be no difficulty; you are marching with Conchra farm, are you?—Oh yes.

19,130. You live on the farm?—Yes, I am living on the farm that I got that land from last spring.

19,131. *Mr Sutherland.*—What had you been doing before you came to Conchra farm?—Many a thing.

19,132. Have you been a labourer?—Yes, sometimes, working in everything that came in my way to keep me up.

19,133. And what place do you refer to that you had at one time?—Place?

19,134. Yes, you said that you were in some place before you came there, where you had a cow?—Yes, I was born in Kishorn, and I was brought up most of my day on the estate of Applecross. I was there for thirty years.

19,135. And you had to leave there?—Oh no, I don't like to leave it.

19,136. But Kishorn?—Oh yes, my father and all the family were brought up there, and my father took the farm at Applecross, removed from the place and went to Applecross.

19,137. And you came to Conchra?—Yes.

Balmacara.

Duncan Gillies

19,138. Had you no land at all before you got this half acre?—No.

19,139. What do you do with the half acre?—I only planted a few potatoes last spring on it.

19,140. And you have to pay 10s. a year for that, have you?—Ay, they are saying so; that is what I was told I would have to do.

19,141. And you are living on the farm of Conchra, are you?—Yes, I am just living at the roadside. Mr Watson there, knows where I am living.

19,142. Are there more people like you there?—No, not there.

19,143. Have you applied to the farmer, or to whoever the authority is, to give you more land than the half acre?—Oh, I must get more if I will get a cow.

19,144. Half an acre will not keep a cow?—Just to keep a cow.

19,145. How much more would you require?—Well, I am not well acquaint with that.

19,146. But don't you think yourself now, that they might give you the grazing of a cow for the 10s. as well as the half acre?—I don't think that; surely that is too cheap.

19,147. Do you know what the large farmers pay per acre for the land?—I don't know, I did not ask that.

19,148. Do you know that it is only a few pence?—Oh well, I daresay.

19,149. And don't you think you might get some land upon the same terms?—Oh, I don't think that.

19,150. You don't expect it?—No.

19,151. *Mr Shaw Stewart.*—I suppose when Mr Sutherland says a farmer pays a few pence per acre, he is not alluding to arable land?—That is the high land and the hill for cattle and sheep.

19,152. *Mr Sutherland.*—But it is a cow you wish?—Just a cow I wish to get.

Colin Mackenzie.

COLIN MACKENZIE, Cottar, Conchra, Lochalsh (60)—*examined.*

19,153. *The Chairman.*—Are you a crofter?—Well, I am a kind of it; I got half an acre from Sir Henry.

19,154. You are a cottar?—Yes, but I was a farmer before.

19,155. Where?—At Ruarach, Kintail; my brother and myself were there.

19,156. What rent did you pay there?—About £160.

19,157. You and your brother paid a rent of £160 at Ruarach?—Yes.

19,158. When did you leave Ruarach?—About ten or twelve years ago.

19,159. What led you to leave Ruarach?—It was over-rented. It is just to-day about a third part of that. We lost our money there, and my brother died.

19,160. Were you under a lease for nineteen years?—Yes.

19,161. Your brother died, and you thought it over-rented, and you lost your money, and you came here; was that the way of it?—Yes, but I was born in Lochalsh myself, and my forefathers.

19,162. What is that place rented at now?—Well, I think it is about £60.

19,163. *Mr Gordon.*—It is more?—It is not much more.

19,164. *The Chairman.*—Under £100 at any rate?—Yes. [*Sir Henry Macandrew.*—£75.]

19,165. How much money did you lose in Ruarach? [*Sir Henry Macandrew.*—I might explain, my lord, he never was a tenant there].—It was better to us to throw a £1000 in Loch Duich the day we go there than to go.

19,166. Sir Henry says you were not a tenant; were you not a tenant there?—Well, I am not sure if my name was there, but I had the half share of it.

19,167. Whose name was in for it?—Well, I was thinking my own name was in it, but my brother was older than me, and he was going before me.

19,168. Then was your brother the tenant of it?—Yes, and me, I have the half share of it.

19,169. But your brother's name was the name in the books?—Well, they said that; I was thinking my own name was in it.

Balmacara.

Colin Mackenzie.

19,170. But you lived with your brother and helped him to pay the rent?—I was living there, and my brother was in Lochalsh keeping a shop, and we were paying the rent out of the shop, the place itself would not pay it at all.

19,171. Now you have got half an acre, and what is it you would like to get more?—Well, I can't pay, and if I would get a cow and about an acre that is near my house I would be glad of it.

19,172. An acre of arable?—Yes, it is just a place that would keep a small cow.

19,173. And a cow's grazing?—Yes.

19,174. That is all you desire is it?—Yes, but there are six or seven from Ardelve that got half an acre along with me there, and if you like better to give us the pasture out along with them I would be glad to join with them.

19,175. You mean to join with the people of Ardelve?—Yes, and there are other parks above the high road there.

19,176. On the farm of Conchra?—Yes.

19,177. But it is only one cow you are anxious about?—Yes, if you will give me that I will be glad of that.

19,178. I am not giving anything just now.—I am sorry I have not right English, but I can't help that.

19,179. Oh your English is very good?—There is plenty of arable land there above the road, about 200 acres above the road. There are old tracks there.

19,180. It would be very suitable?—Yes.

19,181. *Mr Sutherland.*—About the tenancy that you occupied before, have you any reason to suppose that you were a joint-tenant with your brother? Did you ever see any of the receipts for the rent paid?—Well, no, but when my brother married we not agreeing so well, and I went to Dingwall and got three papers there and every one of them cost a pound each.

19,182. And were you accepted by all these people as the tenant of the farm, but this is a point Sir Henry Macandrew could tell us; was he a joint-tenant? [*Sir Henry Macandrew.*—No, he never was.]

19,183. You kept the shop for your brother?—I had the half share of it.

19,184. That is the way your brother settled it between you, the profits of the shop and farm you settled between you, was that the way?—Yes.

19,185. Only you had losses more than profits?—Oh yes.

19,186. How many years were you there paying £160 of rent?—Eight or nine years.

19,187. And did you pay the full rent all that time?—The full rent, and my father and my mother were there, and I think it is about £6 that is on them of arrears since that time.

19,188. So you would pay £1280 in rent during that time?—Yes, during eight years.

19,189. And now you have half an acre of land?—Half an acre.

19,190. And what are you going to pay for it?—10s.

19,191. You say that you would like to join the Ardelve people?—If I would get the cow alone I would prefer it better as I am an old man.

19,192. And do you think the Ardelve tenants would have any objection to your joining them for common pasture?—No, they were speaking to me some of them about it, to take the pasture if they could get it above the road.

19,193. *The Chairman.*—What shop was it you mentioned that your brother had?—It was between myself and my brother.

19,194. Where was the shop?—Altnasuth.

19,195. And was it a grocery shop?—Yes, and clothing and everything.

19,196. A store?—Yes, and we made some money there.

19,197. It is still going on, is it, with somebody else?—Yes, my brother's widow is carrying it on.

19,198. But it was the shop that paid the rent when you were on the farm?—Yes.

Balmacara.

Margaret Macrae.

MARGARET MACRAE, Ardelve (74).
(Examined in Gaelic through an Interpreter.)

19,199. *The Chairman.*—Where do you live?—On the shore of Ardelve.

19,200. Do you pay any rent?—No, but my father was paying rent.

19,201. And are you in the place your father occupied?—Yes, there were only other three in Ardelve when my father came to it, and the land is now occupied by another person.

19,202. Does anybody live with you?—A sister who has been bedridden for the last ten years.

19,203. What is it you wish to tell us regarding land?—I want a cow's grazing and a bit land to keep it in winter. I had some lately, but it was too far from me and I could not manage.

19,204. Have you given up that land?—Yes, I have a young beast that I expect to be a cow next year, and if I had not that, my nephew would give me what would buy one.

19,205. Where does your nephew live?—In Drumbuie.

19,206. Is all you wish to tell us that you would like a cow's grazing?—Yes, a cow's grazing and what would support her in winter and keep potatoes to her. If we got it out of our own land which is at the back of my house I would prefer it.

19,207. That is land that you formerly had in Ardelve?—Land that my father had at the back of my own house.

19,208. What is your nephew's name?—Farquhar Murchison, and another one George Murchison in Portineora.

19,209. And they help to support you?—Yes, the one that is unmarried.

19,210. What is his name?—The one called Farquhar. George has a very large family of his own.

19,211. That will do.—What I could manage myself, I don't want more. I appeared before Lord Napier when he was here and he said that when the land was divided I would get a share.

Donald Macrae.

DONALD MACRAE, Camuslongart, Lochalsh.
(Examined in Gaelic through an Interpreter.)

19,212. *The Chairman.*—What is it you want?—I want a piece of Conchra.

19,213. Did you send in your name?—No.

19,214. What is your name?—Donald Macrae.

19,215. You pay no rent I suppose?—Yes.

19,216. What rent do you pay?—£2, 5s.

19,217. Are you a crofter?—Yes.

19,218. Was your croft dealt with by the Crofters Commission? [*Sir Henry Macandrew.*—They got an addition]. Did you get an addition?—We got a little bit, 9 acres 5 poles. We are 8 in the township, and that would support us.

19,219. What is it you want to tell us now?—Another piece which would be sufficient along with what we have to enable us to keep two cows each.

19,220. What is the name of your township?—Camuslongart.

19,221. You would be satisfied if you had grazing sufficient to enable you each to keep two cows?—Yes, and a little more arable land too.

19,222. How much more arable?—We would need two or three acres each additional.

19,223. Do you know where arable land could be got?—Quite easy, it is opposite us.

19,224. Is it on a farm?—Conchra.

19,225. Is it used at present as grazing, this land that you have in view?—Sometimes it will be cultivated and sometimes left under grass.

19,226. Is it under rotation of crops just now?—Some of it under crop and some under hay.

19,227. Do you know any other land besides that arable you are mentioning that would be suitable for the extension of your arable holding?—No, I don't know any other suitable land, unless the people were removed altogether out of the township; but if we get what we want we need not change. Balmacara.

19,228. You mean from the farm of Conchra?—Yes. Donald Macrae.

19,229. I think we understand your case.

Sir Henry Cockburn Macandrew.

SIR HENRY COCKBURN MACANDREW, Solicitor, Inverness, Commissioner for Sir Kenneth J. Matheson of Lochalsh—*examined.*

19,230. *The Chairman.*—I understand you are desirous of submitting a statement dealing with the Matheson estates in this district?—Yes, I have prepared a statement which I will read. It is as follows:—

With the exception of the minister's glebe and the land occupied by the Highland Railway, Sir Kenneth is proprietor of the whole parish of Lochalsh. The greater part of this parish was acquired by his father, the late Sir Alexander Matheson, from the representatives of the late Mr Lillingstone in 1851, along with the estate of Ellandonan in the parish of Kintail, for £120,000.

In 1861 Sir Alexander purchased Attadale, which is partly in the parish of Lochalsh, for £16,400; and in 1866 he purchased the estate of Edderacharron, in the parish of Lochcarron, for £25,412. In 1888 Sir Kenneth sold a portion of the Edderacharron estate to Lord Lovelace for £6000.

The earliest information I have as to the estate of Lochalsh is from the rental made up for the Commissioners on forfeited estates to which I alluded in my statement regarding Sir Kenneth's property in Kintail and Glenshiel. From this rental it appears that in 1827 the rent of the estate was £3583, 19s. 4d. Scots money or £298, 19s. 7d. sterling, with 34 wedders or muttons, 18 stones and 10 pounds of butter, and 36 stones of cheese. There were 33 separate holdings and 67 tenants. By 1756, consolidation of holdings and a rise of rent had taken place, for there were then only 17 holdings and 28 tenants, and the rent was £354, 6s. 2d. sterling. In the latter rental there is no mention of payments in kind. In 1798 the estate was offered for sale by the Seaforth family, and before 1801 it was purchased by the late Sir Hugh Innes. From a rental and particulars, prepared with a view to the sale, and dated in 1798, which has come into my hands, it appears that there were then 25 holdings and 115 tenants besides the tenant of the kelp shores, and that the rent, including £111, 12s. 8s. for the kelp shores, was £1299 1s. 2d. All the holdings were then let on lease, and the term of lease for the purely agricultural and pastoral subjects was nineteen years. In several of these leases there were breaks in favour of the proprietor. In these particulars Plock (now Plocktown) is described as occupied 'as a village and fast improving in its value and the 'number of its inhabitants and several good houses 'built and others now building.' By this time the policy of settling people in villages and in agricultural communities holding directly from the landlord had been adopted as exemplified in the case of Plocktown and of the following places, which appear in the rental of 1798 as township or joint tenancies, viz:—

Farm.	No. of Tenants.	Rent.		
		£	s.	d.
Nonach and Polintaire, .	6	34	0	0
Achnabeine, . . .	8	32	0	0
Salachie, ...	10	60	0	0
Ardelve, . . .	4	120	0	0
Balmacara, . . .	5	80	0	0
Kyle, ...	9	28	0	0
Erbersaig, . . .	5	20	0	0
Achnadarroch, . . .	5	130	0	0
Braentra, . . .	7	60	0	0
Achmore, . . .	10	80	0	0
Ardnarff, . . .	2	47	0	0
Total, ...	71	691	0	0

Balmacara. — Sir Henry Cockburn Macandrew.

All these holdings were let on lease for nineteen years, and from two of the leases which have come into my hands, it appears that the tenants, although having varying shares of the tenancy, were jointly liable for the rent. In 1821 the townships were as follows, viz. :—

Farm.	No. of Tenants.	Rents.		
		£	s.	d.
Achmore,	7	260	0	0
Ardnarff,	6	210	0	0
Avernish,	17	108	0	0
Blarour (now part of Badycaul),	3	21	13	4
Drumbuie,	18	92	0	0
Kirkton,	10	120	0	0
Loundy,*	6	60	0	0
Nonach,	7	90	0	0
North Erbersaig,	6	48	7	7¼
Portchullin,	8	47	0	0
Portnacloich,	4	24	0	0
Sallachy,	35	300	0	0
South Erbersaig,	7	55	5	10
Total,	134	1436	6	9¼

For Ardelve and Plocktown there were at this time separate rentals which have not come into my hands, but I see from an abstract that the rent of Plocktown was £161, 5s. 6d. and of Ardelve £136, 17s. 6d., but in neither case is the number of tenants given.

When Sir Alexander purchased the estates a re-valuation and a re-adjustment of holdings took place, and the rental for 1852–53 shows the township as follows, viz. :—

Farm.	No. of Tenants.	Rent.		
		£	s.	d.
Upper Ardelve,	11	81	5	0
Lower Ardelve,	6	41	10	0
Cambuslongart,	9	29	11	0
Altnasow,	19	47	0	0
Ardnarff,	6	75	0	0
Achmore,	4	144	0	0
Avernish,	9	44	15	0
Badycaul,	8	27	10	0
Craig,	8	38	0	0
Durinish,	20	100	7	6
Drumbuie,	23	72	5	6
Erbersaig,	22	64	0	0
Kirkton,	5	80	0	0
Kennamoine,	6	12	10	0
Portchullin,	9	21	12	0
Portaneorna,	9	8	5	0
Portnacloich,	4	16	0	0
Sallachy,	19	160	4	10
Plocktown tenants of land and grazings,	45	148	0	6
Total,	242	1211	16	4

It may be mentioned here that at the time of this re-adjustment one or two sheilings which still existed were taken from the farms to which they had previously been attached, and added to the sheep farms.

Except in four cases, one of them being the case of Inverinate referred to in my statement at Glenshiel, there have been no rises of rent in any crofter township, or single crofter tenancies, except in the form of interest on money spent on improvements since 1852. In the four cases mentioned, there were slight rises in 1879 on re-valuation and without immediate reference to expenditure, but in all these places there had been money expended before the rise of rent. Within a very few years the rents of the four places were reduced.

* Tenants all inhabitants of Plocktown.

Balmacara. — Sir Henry Cockburn Macandrew.

Kyle which in 1852-53 was let in two separate holdings to two tenants one of whom was the innkeeper and tenant of the ferry, has for a number of years been let in three holdings as follows :—(1) the inn and land and share of grazing attached to it ; (2) a pendicle called Plock of Kyle on which there is a good slated cottage, with 4½ acres of arable and a share, along with the tenant of the inn, of 95 acres of pasture land ; and (3) the remainder extending to 8 acres arable and 766 acres of pasture as a club farm to two tenants. One of these tenants died last year and his representatives have relinquished his share of the farm and this share is now in the proprietor's hands.

Ardelve when Sir Alexander purchased the estate, included what are now the townships of Upper Ardelve, Lower Ardelve, and Cambuslongart. There were on it 58 tenants, but with the exception of those represented by the present tenants and one or two others who were removed to other places these merely held plots of potato land and resided elsewhere. After his purchase Sir Alexander divided Ardelve into the three townships above mentioned and divided the arable land into lots as now held, with common pasture for cows attached to each lot. A sum of upwards of £500 was expended in reclaiming land principally I believe in Lower Ardelve. The tenants of Upper Ardelve and Alexander Macrae, merchant, Strome, who, although holding a lot in Lower Ardelve has a house and share of the common grazing in Upper Ardelve, applied to the Crofters Commissioners for a considerable portion of the farm of Conchra as an addition to their holding, but the application was refused on the ground that the granting of it would injure the letting value of the remainder of the farm. Subsequently, however, and in order to satisfy the tenants, Sir Kenneth offered to the two townships of Ardelve a portion of the farm extending to about 11 acres of arable and 644 of pasture. The Lower Ardelve tenants except Alexander Macrae declined to accept the offer and stated that all they wanted was additional grazing for their cows. Ultimately the offer was accepted by the upper Ardelve tenants and Alexander Macrae, but three of them have withdrawn on the ground that they were not able to pay their share of the stock, and the remaining four tenants of upper Ardelve and Alexander Macrae are now in possession of the land as a club sheep farm. They have taken over from Dr Duncan, the tenant of Conchra, a stock of over 400 sheep, for which they are to pay according to a valuation in the usual way. The rent is to be fixed by valuators. In order to meet the wish of the Lower Ardelve tenants Sir Kenneth has let to them a part of Conchra which they themselves pointed out, consisting of 5 acres of arable land and 27 acres pastures. They are now in possession and the rent is to be fixed by valuators. The tenants of Cambuslonguart applied to the Crofters Commission for one of the fields on Conchra as an addition to their holding. The Commissioners did not grant the application but awarded them another field extending to 9 acres which they now possess at the rent of £4 fixed by the Commission. They are not satisfied, but there is no other land available for them without destroying the farm of Conchra.

Advantage was taken of the re-letting of Conchra farm to give small pieces of arable land as grazing to two tenants in Camuslonguart and one in Ardelve who had no share of the common grazing of these townships, and to divide a field containing 8 acres arable into 15 allotments for the same number of cottars mostly resident in Dornie and Brindalloch who had no land before.

Aultnasuth was in 1727 held by two separate tenants and had one portion waste and in 1756 it was held by one tenant. Afterwards it was apparently united to Sallachy. In course of his possession Sir Hugh Innes formed Sallachy into a sheep farm, removing a number of the tenants to Altnasuth which was then formed into a township and has remained so ever since. The tenants applied to the Crofters Com-

mission for an addition to their holding of a part of Conchra and the Commission awarded them a piece of grazing land extending to 83 acres and (with his own consent) appointed the proprietor to furnish materials for fencing it and the tenants to erect the fence. At the same time Mr Commissioner Macintyre advised that an additional piece of land should be given to these tenants on condition that they fenced it themselves. Sir Kenneth agreed to adopt the recommendation and it was found that the fencing material awarded by the Commission would by alteration of the line fence about half of the additional land. The fencing materials were supplied and lay on the beach at Aultnasuth for nearly a year, nothing being done by the tenants towards the erection of the fence. I remonstrated with them several times and at last they told me they would not erect the fence unless a small crofter who had been a sub-tenant of Dr Duncan, and so did not come under the Act, and whose croft was bounded on two sides by the land awarded to them by the commissioners, was removed. I declined to remove this man, and lodged a minute with the Commission complaining of the delay in erecting the fence. A few weeks ago they did begin to erect the fence; a skilled fencer was sent to assist them and the fence so far as the materials supplied by the proprietor would go has been erected. The rent of the land awarded by the Commission has not yet been fixed, and the rent of the portion given by the proprietor will be fixed by valuation.

In *Sallachy* there have been numerous variations in the state of possession, Achnabean which appears in the rentals of 1727, 1756 and 1798, as a separate holding was added to it before 1803. In 1803 it was possessed by three tenants, in 1823 by twenty-nine, in 1833 and 1843 by three, in 1852 by twenty-three, and on the rearrangement of holdings in 1852-53 the number was reduced to nineteen. In 1883 the farms of Nonach and Blackwater were out of lease and they were added to the farm of Sallachy except a small portion taken to form along with other lands two holdings in Attadale and a portion added to the farm of Achmore.

Kirkton seems to have been possessed by small tenants in varying numbers from 1727. In 1859 the old glebe of Lochalsh, which belongs to the estate in virtue of an excambion which took place in 1775, fell out of lease. It was added to Kirkton, which adjoins it, and the whole was divided into six shares and let to six tenants. Good slated cottages have been erected for all the tenants and three large and substantial barns each of which is occupied by two tenants were also erected; land was reclaimed and drainage executed. Altogether during Sir Alexander's and Sir Kenneth's possession £2926, 12s. 9d. have been expended on this holding. The rent, which in 1872 after the principal expenditure had been incurred was £180, was reduced by successive reductions to £115, 4s., and this was still further reduced by the Crofters Commission to £90; but the tenants are not satisfied, and have appealed. Part of the reclaimed land in this holding is, owing to the neglect of the tenants to clean out the drains and ditches, fast returning to swamp. It was in contemplation to give these tenants an additional piece of grazing adjoining their holding called Portmore, but until the appeal as to the rent is disposed of no decision on this point can be come to.

Achmore was possessed in 1852–53 by four tenants each paying £36. It is now possessed in three separate holdings, one possessed by one of the original tenants, paying a rent of £108, one by the descendant of another of the original tenants, who has a good slated house and steading, at a rent of £27, 4s., and one by a widow who has a good slated cottage and a small croft for which she pays £5, 8s.

The tenants of *Kennamoine* applied to the Crofters Commission for an extension of holding, claiming a considerable part of the portion of Conchra which was claimed by the Upper Ardelve tenants. Their request was not granted, but the Commissioners awarded to them a portion of an old enclosure called Nostie Park extending to 17 acres at a rent of £3, and of this they are now in possession

At the time he acquired the estate Sir Hugh Innes erected *Plocktown* into a burgh of barony, with a right to elect two bailies, and laid out ground for the erection of a considerable town. I exhibit the plan with report thereon by Mr Cumming, Land Surveyor. The sites were let on building leases for ninety-nine years I am not aware whether the right to elect bailies was ever exercised, but if it was it has long been in abeyance. For a time the town increased and prospered, and at one time there was a number of sailing vessels owned in it and sailed by the owners or other natives of the place, now there are only one or two of those vessels remaining, and the place is not improving. There are, however, a number of substantial and comfortable houses, and when the railway comes to it it may improve again. At the time the town was laid out, a considerable extent of ground was apportioned to it as cows' grazing and as allotments for the inhabitants, and for a time the farm of Lundie was let to the townspeople as grazing for cows and horses. At one time as many as sixty of the townspeople has either cows' grazing or allotments. When Sir Alexander built Duncraig Castle he resumed possession of Lundie, or part of it, and included it in the policies and home farm; and about the same time he spent a large sum (£1684, 14s. 11d.) in draining, fencing, and improving the portion of the land left to the townspeople. The number now holding allotments and cows' grazing is thirty-three and the number of cows grazed is forty-six. These holders of allotments and grazing did not come within the Crofters Act, in respect that they did not live on thei holdings; but the holdings were valued last year by Messrs Macrae and Adam, the assessors of the Crofters Commission, with the result that the rents were reduced from £110, 3s. 6d. to £87, 11s. Advantage was taken of the visit of these gentlemen to have a set of rules drawn up for the regulation and management of the common grazing about which there had previously been many disputes among the people. All the tenants of holdings have signed agreements binding themselves to abide by these rules and have elected managers in accordance with them.

In 1885, the small farm of Avernish which had previously been held by Mr Brown, Killilan, was relinquished by him and given as a common grazing to the tenants of Averinsh at the rent of £60 which had been paid by Mr Brown.

The estate of Attadale was as I have stated acquired by Sir Alexander in 1861, and I have no information as to the state of possession of it previous to that year, although I believe there were small tenants on it at one time. In 1861 the whole estate was in possession of one tenant as a sheep farm at a rent of £335. In 1883 it was out of lease, the tenants Messrs Weir & Kellie having been allowed to relinquish it along with Nonach and Blackwater which they also held, at their own request, made on the ground that the farms were causing them a heavy loss. They were allowed a year's possession rent free to enable them to clear off their stock. Part of the farm with a small part of Blackwater was divided into three holdings and let to three tenants, two of them having a club stock of sheep.

Out of the parts of the higher or wedder ground of this farm the Attadale Forest has been formed and it is now let along with Attadale House and the shooting over the holdings of the three tenants mentioned at a rent of £800. The remainder of the wedder ground was added to the afforested part of Killilan mentioned in my statement regarding the property in Kintail, and is now let to Lord Lovat at a rent of £740, Mr Winans being the sub-tenant.

When Sir Alexander acquired the Estate of Edderacharron it was held as follows:—(1) the township of Achintee by ten tenants; (2) the township of Arieneckaig by ten tenants; (3) the large sheep farm of New Kelso by one tenant; and (4) the blacksmith's croft by one tenant. Sir Alexander spent a great deal of money on this property. He reclaimed land at Achintee and divided the arable land of the township into five fields which are cultivated in rotation, and embanked burns and rivers. This is the third example

Balmacara. — Sir Henry Cockburn Macandrew.

of club farms given by Mr Mackenzie, the former Factor in his Report on club farms published in the Report of the Napier Commission. In the case of Arieneckaig the houses were all close together at one end of the farm, and the arable land was in detached patches. A considerable extent of land was trenched and reclaimed, and the arable land was divided into distinct holdings and fenced off from the hill ground. Seven new slated houses have been built for as many of the tenants; a road has been made from the Strathcarron Railway Station to the farthest end of the township, and other improvements effected. The proprietor spent in all in these two townships principally on Arieneckaig a sum of about £5000. The rent of Arieneckaig after the improvements was fixed at £131, 11s. 4d.

It was afterwards reduced by successive reductions to £102, 17s. and the Crofters Commission further reduced it to £101, 7s. Against this decision the tenants have appealed. The tenants of Achintee are under lease and renewed their lease last year. When the Highland Railway opened Sir Alexander Matheson built an hotel and a number of cottages near the station, and assigned small pieces of land to each.

I submit as an Appendix a tabulated statement of the holdings, rents, and number of tenants (exclusive of shooting rents and tenants, and feu-duties and ground rents) on these estates for the years 1852–53, 1862–63, 1872–73, and 1892 [for Appendix, see page 460] from which it appears that the number of tenants and rents in these years has been as follows:—

Years.	No. of Tenants.	Rents.		
		£	s.	d.
1852–3,	259	3406	16	4
1862–3,	262	3912	2	5
1872–3,	256	5155	16	4
1882–3,	268	4181	16	6
1892,	276	3119	9	4

With the exception of the grazing rents of the portions of land afforested, and the reduction of £160, 14s. 8d. made by the Crofters' Commission in cases finally disposed of the large reduction of rent since 1872–73 is due almost entirely to voluntary reductions by the proprietor. In these years the sporting rental was as follows:—

Years.	Rents.		
	£	s.	d.
1852–3,	...		
1862–3,	300	0	0
1872–3,	750	0	0
1882–3,	2644	0	0
1892,	3035	0	0

What I have hitherto stated refers to the estates in the parishes of Lochalsh and Lochcarron. What I have now to state refers to these estates and to the estates in Kintail and Glenshiel as well, the properties in all these parishes having been, since they were acquired, held and managed as one estate.

The following are the particulars of the townships on the estate at present, viz.:—

Township.	No. of Tenants.	Rents.		
		£	s.	d.
Parish of Lochalsh.				
Upper Ardelve,	9	40	3	0
Lower Ardelve,	7	21	18	0
Cambuslongart,	9	14	16	0
Aultnasuth,	12	23	6	6
Ardanarff,	5	46	0	0
Avernish,	11	53	1	0
Badycaul,	6	15	18	0
Craig,	5	29	0	0
Durinish,	18	74	12	0
Drumbuie,	21	43	6	0
Erbetsaig,	18	43	2	0
Kirkton,	6	115	0	0
Kennamoine,	5	13	10	0
Kyle,	2	22	0	0
Portchullin,	7	21	0	0
Portanerin,	7	6	6	0
Portnacloich,	4	7	4	0
Sallachy,	16	176	3	0
Plocktown,	40	155	7	6
Parish of Kintail.				
Camuslunie,	8	80	0	0
Carr and Wester Keppoch,	3	64	0	0
Dornie,	21	79	10	0
Bundalloch,	21	91	1	0
Inverinate,	14	62	7	0
Parish of Glenshiel.				
Drudaig,	5	40	0	0
Letterfern, &c.,	28	29	0	0
Parish of Lochcarron.				
Arieneckaig,	9	101	7	0
Achintee,	9	108	0	0
Total,	326	1576	18	0

Of these the following are club farms having a common sheep stock managed by a committee or managers appointed by the tenants, viz.:—Upper Ardelve, Ardanarff, Craig, Kirkton, Kyle, Sallachy, Camuslunie, Carr and Wester Keppoch, Dornie, Bundalloch, Inverinate, Drudaig, Arieneckaig, Achintee. They vary in extent from about 6000 acres to 600. On most of these farms the arable land is held by the tenants in separate lots, each tenant farming his own land independently of the others, but in some of them a modified system of runrig prevails. In Achintee the arable land is divided into five regular shifts and cultivated in rotation. Each field is divided by furrows into nine equal shares (one for each tenant), and at the commencement of a rotation in each field lots are cast for the shares. The tenants retain their lots through the whole rotation until the hay is removed when the grazing becomes common. In Kirkton the arable land is in the same way divided into regular fields and cultivated in rotation, but each tenant has his share of each field permanently assigned to him. The sheep stock on the club farms varies, of course, with the extent. The largest common sheep stock is held by the tenants of Sallachy, Arineckaig, and Achintee, their number being about 1000, and the smallest by the tenants of Ardanarff whose number is about 200.

From the time of their acquisition until his death or shortly before it Sir Alexander spent on these estates the whole of the rental derived from them, and his successor although not able to do this has spent considerable sums. There has been expended on these estates since Sir Alexander purchased them a total sum of £257,169, 16s. 9d., and of this sum £27,150, 5s. 7d. was for improvements on the holdings of tenants paying under £30 of rent. These figures given above do not represent the whole expenditure on small holdings, for large sums were spent since 1883 in the purchase of building and fencing materials, and otherwise in connection with improvements which were not at the time, and cannot now be appropriated to particular subjects. In addition the value of estate grown wood supplied to tenants was not, until within the last two

Balmacara. — Sir Henry Cockburn Macandrew

years, entered in the accounts. Large quantities of estate wood manufactured and unmanufactured were from time to time given to the small tenants. In addition to the money actually spent on the estates, Sir Alexander invested in the Dingwall and Skye Railway for the benefit of the estate £26,553. For this he got no return till 1882. In 1880 the line was amalgamated with the Highland Railway, and the shareholders got in exchange for their stock half the amount of Highland stock, carrying a dividend from 1882.

Since 1883 the expenditure has been as follows—

	£	s.	d.
On repairs and improvements for tenants over £30,	19,323	0	11
On repairs and improvements for tenants under £30,	5,324	0	7
On woods,	8,038	0	4
On preservation of game, expense of shootings,	6,817	9	5
Upkeep and improvements of mansion houses, gardens and grounds,	5,336	19	9
Upkeep and repairs of river embankments,	2,114	15	11
Sundries, principally building and fencing materials,	4,689	14	1
Total,	51,644	1	0

A very large proportion of this expenditure went as wages to persons resident in the district.

Last year Sir Kenneth's expenditure was as follows :—

	£	s.	d.
Rates, taxes and public burdens,	1816	19	6½
Maintenance and improvements,	1961	6	10
Preservation of game, &c.,	616	1	6
Woods,	701	1	5
Total,	5095	9	3½

Of the last three items about three-fourths consists of wages to residents on the estate.

There are on the estate 34 miles of roads made and maintained by the proprietor for the benefit of the estate.

The area of the estates let to tenants or occupied by the proprietor as home farm is as nearly as can be calculated as follows :—

	Arable.	Pasture, &c.
	Acres.	Acres.
Held by tenents paying over £30, and by proprietor,	972	51,066
Held by tenants paying under £30,	1505	34,655
Forests,	...	34,871
Total,	2477	120,592

The deer forests, as I have already stated, were formed out of the wedder ground of several of the large farms when wedder farming became unprofitable. At the prices for wool and the cost of the wintering of hoggs which have prevailed for a number of years, these forests could not be profitably occupied as grazings by either large or small farmers. There never were inhabitants in any of them.

It may be true that in the Glomach forest two or three small tenants might be placed at some particular place, but they could cultivate nothing but potatoes, and in a bad winter such as those which we have recently had when the deer have left the forests, they would have to remove their whole stock to lower ground or lose them, and the placing of them there would destroy the forest, causing a loss of the rent to the proprietor, of the rates on the rent to the parish and county, and throwing out of employment more persons than could be placed in holdings in the forest. The same may be said of the Attadale forest. The Killilan, Patt and Riochan forest is absolutely unfit for occupation by small or large tenants.

On the subject of deer forests I may state that the expenditure by the tenants on wages is as follows :—

	£	s.	d.
Glomach Forest,	218	3	10
Killilan Forest,	150	0	0
Attadale Forest,	400	0	0
Total,	768	3	10

It is an accident that Mr Winans has not for some time shot over the forests he rents, but a resident tenant would spend very much larger sums than he spends on wages, and would besides, as the tenant of Attadale does, spend largely in the district otherwise.

With reference to the grazing land occupied by the large farmers, I am satisfied that this land could not be profitably occupied by small tenants or by any tenants apart from the arable land attached to these farms. There may be patches of old arable land here and there through the grazing land, but nothing at all adequate to the profitable use of the grazing. The only farms on the estate, in excess of very moderate size, are Killilan, which extends to 18,000 acres, and Lienassie, which extends to 7,000. On Killilan there are only 43 acres of old arable apart from what is cultivated or used for cutting hay by the present tenant. But assume that the whole of this farm could be taken for small tenants, I invite the consideration of the Commission to the capital which would be required.

The witness Alexander Macrae, who was examined at Glenshiel, stated that this farm would accommodate twenty small tenants. To settle twenty tenants on the land the following expenditure would have to be incurred :—

	£	s.	d.
The price of say 7000 sheep, say at the very moderate estimate of 30s. per head,	10,500	0	0
One hundred head of cattle, at say £10,	1,000	0	0
Twenty horses at £10,	200	0	0
Cost of 20 houses at £150 each,	3,000	0	0
Cost of 20 small steadings at £100 each,	2,000	0	0
Fencing, &c., &c., say,	500	0	0
Total,	17,200	0	0

Something might be saved by utilising the houses of the present shepherds, and by evicting one or two pensioners of the tenants who have houses and potato land, but on the other hand the present farm house and buildings would become useless as not suitable for a small tenant. To accomplish the settlement of these twenty families, the following people at present employed on the farm would be displaced, viz.:—seven shepherds, one ploughman, one herd, one woman servant for out work, one domestic servant, in all eleven persons besides the tenant, and the small tenants and cottars in the neighbourhood would lose the sum of about £70 per annum which the tenants at present pays for extra labour. In the case of the farm of Lienassie the expense of settling the four tenants whom Mr Macrae mentioned it would maintain, would be in the same proportion, while the number of people displaced would be three shepherds, one ploughman, one general servant, two domestic servants, one female servant for out work, and one herd boy, in all nine persons besides the tenant, and the neighbourhood would lose the benefit of about £100 a year which the tenant spends in extra labour.

The population of the four parishes with which I have been dealing, so far as known from the Census returns and previous estimates, has been as follows :—

Balmacara.

Sir Henry Cockburn Macandrew.

Parish.	1775.	1790.	1801.	1811.	1821.	1831.	1841.	1851.	1861.	1871.	1881.	1891.
Lochalsh, . .	613	1334	1606	2034	2492	2433	2597	2299	2402	2276	2030	1851
Kintail, . .	698	840	1038	1058	1027	1240	1168	1009	890	751	688	588
Glenshiel, . .	509	721	710	728	768	715	745	573	484	463	422	394
Lochcarron, .	771	1068	1178	1485	1932	2136	1960	1612	1592	1629	1456	1390

As I have said, the whole of the parish of Lochalsh belongs to Sir Kenneth Matheson, and the whole inhabited area of Kintail also does. There have been no evictions from these parishes except in the case of Avernish, where it has been said that Mr Lillingston removed a few tenants, and these have since been replaced. From what I have stated, it will be seen that there has been no contraction of the land held by small tenants, but on the contrary an increase of it, and notwithstanding since 1861 there has been a steady decline of population in Lochalsh and since 1841 in Kintail. The decrease is due to natural causes, and will in my belief continue. Within the last two years, during which I have had charge of the estates, four holdings have been relinquished by the tenants, and I expect from what I have learned and observed that within a few years a good many more will be relinquished.

So far as I have been able to observe, the small tenants on these estates are in a comparatively comfortable condition. As a class they have certainly participated as much in the increase in material comfort which has taken place during the last century as any other class; and during this century they have emerged from the semi-servile condition in which they lived under the old tacksman to the more independent position of tenants holding directly of the landlord for a fixed money rent. They are all well fed and well clothed, and the children in particular look bright and well nurtured. There is no poverty among them, at least nothing approaching to the poverty one is accustomed to in towns and even in some rural districts. There are in Lochalsh, no doubt, a number of paupers, but I think the poor law is administered with great leniency and there are no beggars. I have never been asked for charity in any part of these estates, and as compared with Inverness and its neighbourhood that is very remarkable experience. The poorest of the tenants has a fairly good house, land enough to graze two or three heads of cattle, to raise enough potatoes for the use of the family, and winter provender for his cattle, has fuel for the labour of cutting it and taking it home, and all this in very many cases for less rent than an artisan or labourer pays even in a town like Inverness for one bare room for his family.

The people are courteous, especially the older men, and pleasant to deal with. They are hardworking when they have work to do, and are ready to take work when it is to be got.

They could without doubt improve their own condition in many ways, as by better methods of cultivation, the cultivation of other vegetables than potatoes, better methods of preparing their manure, more care in the breeding of their sheep and cattle, more care in breeding and rearing poultry, by saving the price of one stirk out of tea and tobacco, and keeping at least one cow exclusively for milk for the family, by dispensing with superfluous dogs and keeping pigs instead of them, and in many other ways.

In his examination before Lord Napier's Commission the late Sir Alexander Matheson stated that he did not buy these estates as an investment for money or with the object of making money by them, but because the lands had once belonged to his ancestors, and because he desired to improve the condition of the people on them. It was with the latter object that a very great deal of the large expenditure which I have mentioned was incurred. His successor has no income but what is derived from the estates, and he cannot therefore spend so largely as his father did, but he has the most earnest desire to do all in his power to promote the welfare of his tenants, more especially of the smaller tenants, and he is spending and means to spend as far as he is able for that end.

On the whole, I respectfully submit that on these estates, at least, no case can be made out for exceptional legislation or for any interference by the legislature between the proprietor and his tenants.

(Signed) H. C. Macandrew,
Commissioner for Sir Kenneth Matheson.

19,231. How many residences has Sir Kenneth Matheson on his estates?—Inverinate, Duncraig, Balmacara house, which is let to a tenant, and Attadale. I am not dealing at all with the east coast estates.

19,232. You are confining your answer to the Lochalsh estates?—Entirely to the west coast estates.

19,233. Does Sir Kenneth occupy any of these?—He is not able to live in any of them at present.

19,234. But has he occupied any of them for a period of time since he succeeded to the property?—Well, he lived sometime here; he lived at Inverinate for some time, and at Duncraig for some time.

19,235. You mean for a few months, I suppose?—Yes.

19,236. But he has not been a residential proprietor since he succeeded?—No.

19,237. And have all these mansions been let?—Generally.

19,238. To sporting tenants?—Yes.

19,239. He is not living on his property at present?—No.

19,240. With regard to Conchra farm, can you tell me what is its extent, arable and grazing?—The total is 66 acres arable and 2752 acres—I am leaving out fractions—of hill pasture; of that the Crofters Commission assigned 9 acres arable and 100 acres of pasture, part of it being the enclosed field assigned to Camuslongart.

19,241. Is that the full extent of assignment by the Crofters Commission?—Yes. Then the proprietor himself has this year given off 26 acres of arable and 732 acres of pasture.

19,242. From the same farm?—From the same farm; leaving on the farm now 31 acres arable and 1919 acres pasture.

19,243. That is the total farm held by Dr Duncan at present?—Yes.

19,244. Under a new lease?—Under a new lease.

19,245. Which began, I suppose, recently?—At Whitsunday.

19,246. You came into the position of Commissioner about five years ago, was it?—No; the beginning of 1891.

19,247. Since that date how many applications for land from crofters or cottars have you received?—Well, I can hardly say, I had recieved none until the Crofters Commission came here.

19,248. But since that?—Well, there were Ceannamoine, and Ardelve, and Camuslongart and Altnasuth, four applications to the Crofters Commission. I cannot at this moment recall any application, except in the case of the Duirinish people, who want grazing for horses, and the people of this township.

19,249–50. You mean Avernish?—No, Kirkton, who

applied for the flat land down below there; and the people in Avernish who asked for grazing for horses.

19,251. Leaving aside the applications to the Crofters Commission, so far as your recollection serves you there have been three applications to the estate?—That is all that I remember. [*Mr Donald Macrae.*—And Port-a'-chuilinn, the land was under lease]. Yes, Port-a'-chuilinn applied to the Commission.

19,252. There have been three applications to the estate apart from applications to the Commission?—Yes.

19,253. What has been done with these applications?—In the case of Duirinish they have got grazing for their horses, which was what they wanted on the farm of Achnadarrach, and I may mention also that that farm is being at present mostly laid down in grass for the express purpose of meeting the want that exists in the district for summer grazing.

19,254. Then with regard to the other two?—With regard to Kirkton, as I have said that is hanging in abeyance until the appeal is decided. With regard to the application by the Avernish people there is really no available land unless it is taken off the low ground of the farm of Auchtertyre.

19,255. You mean arable land?—Or low ground pasture, spring pasture. The only thing available is the moss land down below. I was very anxious to grant the request, but I have been told by the most experienced farmers that that could not be taken from the farm without serious injury to the letting value, as it is the only moss ground on it.

19,256. Your own personal desire was to advise its being granted if it could reasonably be done?—Certainly.

19,257. I should like to ask you this further question. Do any of the crofters on this part of Sir Kenneth Matheson's estates live by their holdings?—I think so. I don't know that there are any townships where some of the tenants don't go out as gillies or hire out their ponies, but so far as I know the tenants of this place we are on live on their holdings, and the tenants of all the bigger farms I believe do mainly.

19,258. But I suppose we may take it that the majority of the crofting tenants on the Lochalsh estates live partly by their holdings and partly by labour?—I believe that is the case in the smaller townships.

19,259. And do a considerable number of these make their living by fishing?—I believe some of them go away to the fishing for the season, the herring fishing, I don't know any of them that fish regularly for white fish all the year round.

19,260. You don't know any who do that?—No.

19,261. Can you say how many crofters or cottars get labour on the estate in ordinary years?—I cannot.

19,262. But do a number?—A number do, a large number.

19,263. There is no indisposition, I suppose, to give such labour?—Quite the reverse; always has been the reverse.

19,264. Was that the policy of the late Sir Alexander?—Yes, and I may say a great deal of money was spent for almost no other purpose than to give labour.

19,265. You mentioned that there were 34 miles of roads on the ground maintained by the proprietor?—Yes.

19,266. Is that maintenance through crofters' labour mainly?—Well, the leading man, the boss, is not a crofter, but all the other labour is from residents in the district.

19,267. Of the crofter class?—Yes.

19,268. What wages do you pay to men of the crofter or cottar class getting labour on the estate or on the roads?—From 2s. 6d. to 3s. 4d. per day.

19,269. Now you mentioned among other figures that there had been an expenditure of £27,000 by the late Sir Alexander upon holdings, or for the benefit of holdings not exceeding £30 of rent?—Yes.

19,270. What, may I ask, was the main purpose of that expenditure; was it on buildings or reclamation?—Buildings, reclamation, embanking, and so forth; and on fencing a very large amount.

19,271. Fencing for the benefit of the crofters?—For the benefit of the crofters. Of course I take these figures, up till 1883, from the returns given by my predecessor to Lord Napier's Commission. The accounts for that period have not come into my hands, but since then I made up the figures myself. A good deal was spent in building.

19,272. What sort of building?—Building new houses.

19,273. For the tenants?—Yes.

19,274. And was there a charge made of interest for such expenditure?—In some cases the charge was made, but it never lasted for more than two or three years.

19,275. Then there is no such charge running now?—No such charge running now. The rents are greatly below what they were before the expenditure was incurred.

19,276. May we take it that the whole of that £27,000 is money expended more or less directly for the benefit of holdings under a rent of £30, which expenditure is not at present yielding any return to the estate?—The holdings are yielding less rent than they did before the expenditure began.

19,277. You said, I think, that there were 34,000 acres of common hill grazing held by crofters, and 34,000 acres under deer?—Yes.

19,278. The two figures happen to coincide?—Yes, they do. I am sure about the correctness of the forest area and I will substantiate the other, but I believe it is correct.

19,279. As far as your materials at present enable you to say, there is the same area under crofters as under deer?—Yes; but, of course, I say that what is under deer is not suitable for crofters.

19,280. Yes, I quite understand. You make that clear enough in your statement. Then how many forests, what may be called separate forests, are there on the estates?—There is the Attadale forest; Patt, Riochan, or Killilan (it gets all three names), which is let to Lord Lovat and sublet to Mr Winans, and the Glomach forest, which is let direct to Mr Winans.

19,281. Glomach, Killilan and Attadale?—Yes.

19,282. In point of fact I think you mentioned that Mr Winans has not been on that forest for a number of years?—I believe he was never on it; he never shot on it at all events.

19,283. And how long has he had it?—About ten years.

19,284. And he has not been seen upon it?—No.

19,285. You made a remark in your paper with regard to the township of Altnasuth. I gathered from what you read that at one time a number of crofters had been added to it?—In Sir Hugh Innes's time,—I am talking from the evidence the tenants gave before the Crofters Commission,—the tenants were removed from Sallachy to Altnasuth.

19,286. Do you know how many?—There were nineteen, I think, in Sallachy at that time. In 1803 there were three tenants. In 1823 there were twenty-nine. In 1843 these came down to three again.

19,287. Before 1829 what was the figure?—Three. It was formed into a township by Sir Hugh Innes.

19,288. Did that introduction of additional tenants to Altnasuth take place without any addition of land to the township?—As I mentioned in my statement, at that time Altnasuth was included in Sallachy. Sir Hugh Innes took the greater part of Sallachy into his own hands as a sheep farm, and removed the tenants to other parts of the estate. A number of them settled at Altnasuth, which has continued a township ever since.

19,289. Those who settled in Altnasuth, I suppose, shared with the Altnasuth tenants the land they had; they did not get additional land?—No.

19,290. That, I suppose, produced some congestion in Altnasuth?—Probably; the word was not invented at that time.

19,291. Well, we will use it now. I mean to say it put into Altnasuth a greater number of small tenants than had been there before, without additional land?—It put on Sallachy, if you take them together. Sir

Balmacara. — Sir Henry Cockburn Macandrew.

Balmacara. — Sir Henry Cockburn Macandrew

Hugh Innes took the greater part of Sallachy grazing into his own farms and put the greater number of tenants into Altnasuth. Then a very few years after he gave up the sheep farm and brought back the tenants to Sallachy and made it into a township again. He did not bring back the old tenants; he brought people from other parts of the estate.

19,292. Then he did not relieve Altnasuth?—No.

19,293. Do you know if any change was made on the rents of the Altnasuth tenants when the Sallachy tenants were introduced to Altnasuth?—I could give that; I don't know at present. I know there was a large rise of rents in Sir Hugh Innes' time.

19,294. Which are the largest townships on this part of Sir Kenneth Matheson's estate?—Arineckaig, Sallachy, and Achantee. These have each a stock of somewhere about a thousand sheep and an area of about 6000 acres.

19,295. *Mr Sutherland.*—You speak, Sir Henry, with the full authority of the landlord here?—Yes.

19,296. And we can take your sentiments to be his on this point?—Yes.

19,297. Shall we have an opportunity of asking some questions on this statement at a future period? I mean to say will you be giving evidence before us with regard to the east coast estate?—If you go there, certainly.

19,298. You know that is a very large and important mass of figures to throw at us of a sudden?—I will certainly appear before you at any later time if you wish to put any question to me.

19,299. There are some of these statistics that I would like to understand the bearing of?—If at all possible I will appear at Lochcarron.

19,300. Your general opinion is that there is not on the Lochalsh estate land at present occupied as a deer forest or as grazing, which could be cultivated to profit or otherwise advantageously occupied by crofters or other small tenants?—I am quite sure there is no land in the deer forest that could be cultivated or occupied by small tenants.

19,301. Or on any of the grazing farms?—On any of the grazing farms. I am quite sure there is no land at present uncultivated that could be profitably cultivated.

19,302. You no doubt have seen the marks of old cultivation on certain lands?—I have seen that.

19,303. Are you of opinion that these were cultivated to profit when they were cultivated?—I am of opinion that they could not be cultivated to profit now, and that they were cultivated formerly merely in conjunction with bits of grazing. They are all very small patches.

19,304. But when you speak of profitable cultivation, to whose profit do you mean?—I don't understand.

19,305. Had you any other profit in your mind except the profit to the cultivator?—No, clearly not; but I mean they could not be cultivated as arable land alone to profit. It might be worth the while of a man who has grazing to cultivate a bit of land along with it, although the arable land itself was cultivated at a loss.

19,306. But as to the other alternative, what do you say 'or otherwise advantageously occupied?'—Well, I say, in my opinion, and from the best information I can get, and I have endeavoured to get it from the very best sources, the land in these deer forests could not be profitably occupied by itself, or as wedder ground, which is all that it is suited for, either by large or small tenants.

19,307. But taking it in the way in which it has been used in the olden times, concerning which evidence has been given here to-day, what is your opinion?—My opinion is that you could send cattle up there to grazing; no doubt about that.

19,308. And it would be to the advantage of the people?—It would depend on what they paid for it, but it would not be an advantageous occupation of the land. I say that more money goes into the hands of the people in the way it is used now than they could possibly get in that manner.

19,309. What do the Duirinish people profit by the land being a deer forest up there?—They don't profit; but gamekeepers and watchers profit, and they surely have as much right to live as the people in Duirinish.

19,310. But you surely understand,—take it that they held this grazing long ago and that they have been deprived of it without compensation?—I don't admit that at all. Balmacara. — Sir Henry Cockburn Macandrew

19,311. But I think the evidence was brought out here to-day that curtailment of their low pasture was almost contemporaneous with that afforestment?—The lands were valued when Sir Alexander took possession, and they got their holdings without this.

19,312. But what was the natural result to them?—I believe in some cases the rents were fixed as high as when they had these summer grazings, at least so they say. I have no special means of knowing.

19,313. But with regard to the advantage to the people down here, what advantage was there really, Sir Henry, in the whole transaction?—I did not say there was any advantage to the Duirinish people in not getting these grazings, but they would probably have had to pay a higher rent if they had been left with them. What I say is that as many people are supported and maintained by means of that land being let as deer forest as ever could be by any other way of using the land—there is more wages got I say out of it, more goes into the hands of the working people out of it than any advantage there could possibly be by the low townships being allowed to send their cattle up there.

19,314. But you recognise a man could be very comfortable although he got no wages?—I recognise a man could be very comfortable living on the interest of his capital.

19,314*a*. Or on the result of the cultivation of the soil?—Yes.

19,315. Do you still then maintain that the land up there is as profitably and advantageously occupied to the people as it could be?—Certainly, I would put it again. There are as many of the people supported by it as to more than counterbalance any advantage that would be given to the Duirinish people by getting it. And if the Duirinish people got it a great number of respectable people would be put out of employment.

19,316. Is it your statement that the land could not keep more people than we have seen while going through this deer forest?—I don't think we understand each other exactly. If you gave these shielings to the people in the townships lower down, undoubtedly there might be an advantage to them, if it is an advantage to anybody to have sheep grazings.

19,317. Yes.—But I say you would put out of employment a number of people who are earning very much more than the Duirinish or other crofters could earn by having these holdings as summer grazings.

19,318. That is to say that if these people were displaced, which they might not necessarily be if it were occupied as grazing, that would more than counterbalance the number of people who would be benefitted down here by getting it as grazing?—Yes, distinctly.

19,319. How many people occupied these townships when they had the benefit of them; can you tell me those who had this right of grazing?—About the same number as at present.

19,320. But there are townships mentioned that are not there now at all?—There are many townships now on the estate that were not there fifty years ago.

19,321. And there are places away that were there?—No.

19,322. Achnadarroch?—It was never a township.

19,323. It was mentioned here?—That is a mistake; it was occupied by father and son.

19,324. Then on Achmore, how many were there?—Four, and there are three now.

19,325. Tenants?—Yes.

19,326. Braintra, that is another place?—Well, there, there were several.

19,327. And had all these not right of grazing in the *Monadh-Aillseach*?—Some of them had, but that is not peculiar to this estate. It was once universal all over the Highlands, and it has been abandoned everywhere as an unprofitable and semi-civilised method of using land.

19,328. As unprofitable to the landlord?—And to the country generally.

Balmacara. — Sir Henry Cockburn Macandrew.

19,329. Well, if the landlord's interests and the country's are identical, what would follow?—Well, I should think they are.

19,330. But I understand,—you have stated, in fact, Sir Henry,—that you do not see that on this estate there is any necessity for any interference between the landlord and the tenant by legislation?—Most distinctly.

19,331. Do you say that with regard to the Crofters Act as well?—Yes.

19,332. You have stated that the people have advanced very much, and I was glad to hear that you were able to say so,—that they are keeping pace with the advancement of the country?—I think so.

19,333. Do you think any of that is due to the legislation of 1886?—Not a penny's worth of it.

19,334. Don't you think the people are more independent and self-respecting than they were before?—I don't know, I think it has hardly had time to have any effect of that kind.

19,335. I quite acknowledge that this estate is far before a number of estates in the Highlands, when I make that remark. We saw improvements, for instance, in other places in the houses; have you not noticed any improvement in general in the country in the housing of the people since 1886?—Well, a good many houses have been built here. I have seen fewer improved houses than I expected to find when I came here, but I believe in every case Sir Alexander was willing to assist largely anybody who wanted to improve their house, and Sir Kenneth is now.

19,336. I have no doubt of that; in fact, I was always given to believe that; but the case is general, isn't it, all over the Highlands to your knowledge that the houses are improving in consequence of that legislation?—Of the legislation, do you mean the Crofters Act?

19,337. Yes.—I am not aware of it.

19,338. Then with regard to the population; the population here has varied considerably?—Yes.

19,339. There have been variations in the population and in the area of land at their disposal?—Yes, that quite negatives your idea of an ancient inalienable right.

19,340. But there is a time beyond that. This is from the report of Lord Napier's Commission. 'The 'processes by which the comminution of crofters' 'holdings and the displacement of the people were 'effected are too familiar to require detailed description. 'The reduction or withdrawal of common pasture, the 'diminution of arable ground, the obliteration of 'townships, and the transfer of the inhabitants to the 'moor, the shore, or the cultivated area of other 'communities, were the methods by which a revolution 'in the rural economy of the country was effected.' (Vol. V., p. 16.)

19,341. Does that apply to any extent, may I ask, to this estate?—To no extent at all.

19,342. This is the exception?—I don't know that it is the only exception, but that certainly does not apply to this estate. The area occupied by small tenants has been extended.

19,343. Yes; it has at any rate been changed?—Extended.

19,344. So that this does not cover the case?—It does not apply to this estate in the least, and when you come to Ardross I will show you that the very reverse applies very strongly.

19,345. Well, we have heard to-day of holdings of half an acre?—Yes.

19,346. And any credit that is due in regard to that is certainly due to you, Sir Henry. I am quite willing to admit that, but at any rate it came under your administration?—It is due to Sir Kenneth, and I may just as well explain how that happened. Ever since I came here a few people in Bundalloch have been asking me to get this particular field where Dr Duncan sometimes gave them leave to plant potatoes, and when the farm came out of lease I put it to Sir Kenneth that it would be a good opportunity of granting their request, and it was divided into 15 half-acre lots for these people; the proprietor has fenced it at a very considerable expense; it is all arable land and they have got the lots at 10s. apiece, which would perhaps not much more than pay for the fencing of it.

Balmacara. — Sir Henry Cockburn Macandrew.

19,347. There were fifteen shares, did you say, Sir Henry?—Yes.

19,348. Seven and a half acres?—No, there is a little more than half an acre in each, I believe there are about eight acres.

19,349. But bearing upon the question of the distribution of the land, here we have got seven families—I presume, or fifteen families—who have got 7½ acres; and on the other hand we have got this huge accumulation of how many thousands of acres of deer forest let to one?—They could not get potato land in a deer forest. You must take it this way, that fifteen families who had no potato land before have got it now, with the usual result that some of them now want a cow as well. [*The Chairman.*—Which is natural.]

19,350. A very natural desire?—And one that I would most earnestly desire to grant if possible.

19,351. That has been put already to you, I think, by his lordship. Would there not be a desire to reduce those extremely large holdings to the benefit of those who have only half an acre?—You cannot break up a big farm to give a dozen people a cow's grazing.

19,352. But, as a matter of fact, have not large farms been broken up frequently?—Yes.

19,353. And have not the same arguments been used before to prevent them?—None have been broken up to give ten or twelve people grazing for one cow.

19,354. Have you ever seen a large farm broken up, that there were not the same arguments used against it?—Which argument?

19,355. The argument that it would not benefit them to the amount that it would destroy the benefit of the public?—I daresay it has been used, and I daresay it was true in very many cases. You would not recommend Sir Kenneth to spoil the farm of Conchra in order to give cow's grass to two people?

19,356. If you ask my opinion I think it would be very much to his advantage to do so; but don't you think there is too great a discrepancy between the size of the holdings, one man having a deer forest of several thousand acres, and the other man having only one half-acre to maintain a family?—No more discrepancy than between one man having a million of money and another having only £50. Such differences exist in the whole universe.

19,357. But not with regard to land?—Land is only one form of property, and all over the universe land is in the hands of few.

19,358. But you know that you can multiply money indefinitely, but you cannot multiply land?—I know that that is a stock argument.

19,359. But is it a right argument?—I don't think it. I don't think there is any inherent right in anybody born on land to live by it any more than in any other way.

19,360. What other way can he live except by land?—Take the case of a professional man: you cannot multiply the number of legal practitioners who can make a living.

19,361. I hope not?—Employment for legal practitioners is just as limited as land. I could not make my son a legal practitioner, and so he went abroad. I don't see why a crofter in Lochalsh should have a right to have his son settled beside him any more than I have.

19,362. Then I wish to ask you a question. I don't know what you wished us to infer from the facts you stated regarding the village of Plockton. Was it that it did not succeed as well as was expected of it?—Well, I gave you the account of it as a matter of history; it was prosperous at one time, and I say there was a large number of ships there, but wooden ships have gone out of fashion.

19,363. So that there are other causes at work which no doubt quite account for changes such as you have indicated and in fact a good deal of the trade went by rail?—Plockton was never intended to be a place to live by agriculture or by grazing at all. It was intended for a commercial town.

Balmacara.

Sir Henry Cockburn Macandrew.

19,364. One other point; you said that a large sum, I forget it at the present moment, was expended upon small holdings?—Yes.

19,365. And that interest was added to the rent?—In some cases.

19,366. Not in all cases?—No.

19,367. But generally was it added to the rent?—Only I think where there had been very considerable expenditure.

19,368. And then you said that the rent was subsequently reduced?—All the interest disappeared before my time, the charges of interest on the tenants had all been wiped off long before I became factor.

19,369. Were they separately stated in the estate books and separately rendered?—Sometimes they were. I have seen the books where they were so stated.

19,370. But were they in all cases, or were they ever embodied in the rent? [*Mr Watson.*—In some of the cases it was embraced in the lease, the lease mentioned it.]

19,371. And did the interest terminate? Was a period specified in the lease at which the interest terminated?—Oh no, that is the idea people here have that when they have paid 5 per cent. for twenty years the thing should stop.

19,372. But what I want to know is, did the reduction come off the rent or off the interest?—Well, in some cases I know that the interest was first taken off.

19,373. Was that at the time of a reduction of rent?—I can't tell you.

19,374. It would be perfectly easy to transpose the charges you know?—There is no case where a separate charge of interest was made and the interest taken off and added to the rent; there is no case of that kind. Where the interest was taken off it was taken off as a reduction from the payment.

19,375. But there were some reductions of rent made by the Crofters Commission?—Yes, £160 odds.

19,376. Would it not have been stated to the Crofters Commission that such and such was on account of interest, and such and such on account of rent?—There was no separate charge of interest made against any tenant at that time.

19,377. Was it because it was wiped out or because it was merged in the rental?—Because it was wiped out.

19,378. As interest?—As interest or as an increase of rent. Sir Kenneth and his father made several reductions of rent, and in one year, 1886 I think it was, there was a reduction over the whole of the estates of 20 per cent.

19,379. But are you prepared to state that in every case where there was interest upon money spent upon improving the land, that was taken off first before there was any reduction of rent?—Yes.

19,380. *Mr Munro.*—Could you give us any idea what the population of the west coast properties was when Sir Alexander acquired them?—That will appear in the Census returns; there was a Census in 1851.

19,381. But can you tell us whether the population has much decreased or increased?—In 1851 the population of Lochalsh was 2299 and it is now 1851. Kintail was 1009 and it is now 588. Glenshiel was 573 and it is now 394. Lochcarron was 1612 and it is now 1390. Sir Kenneth's property is not a considerable proportion of either of the parishes of Glenshiel or Lochcarron.

19,382. So that the population of these estates has very considerably decreased since Sir Alexander acquired them?—Yes, since 1851, but it increased for a time.

19,383. You yourself describe the tenantry on these properties as courteous and industrious?—Hardworking, if you can distinguish that from industrious.

19,384. Don't you consider it a great loss to the community to lose such a class of people?—No doubt it is, but if the condition of these people is improved by going elsewhere that is a gain to the community somewhere else and a gain to the people themselves.

19,385. But do you really think there is no possibility of conceding land to these people in response to their several applications on the properties?—Well, if one felt quite sure that anything that was conceded would not be taken from the landlord by some future legislation there would be less hesitation about giving it.

Balmacara.

Sir Henry Cockburn Macandrew.

19,386. You have not much confidence in the future, I see?—No. Some legislators have very advanced opinions.

19,387. You stated that Sir Alexander expended £257,000 on the Lochalsh estates since he acquired them?—Yes.

19,388. Might I ask of you what proportion of that large sum was expended upon mansion houses, and the making of roads to mansion houses, and other amenities?—A very large sum was expended on Duncraig, about £70,000 I believe. Mr Watson says £90,000, but the return made to Lord Napier's Commission was £69,000. I think. Might I add, with reference to that, that a very large amount of that went in labour on the estate.

19,389. I think I heard you state that you expended £25,000 upon the crofters' holdings?—£27,000.

19,390. *Mr Gordon.*—With reference to this occupation of this forest land as cattle or sheep grazing, you are well acquainted with the present condition of the Highlands as to sheep stock?—Well, I have lived in the Highlands all my life.

19,391. It is an important thing that this should be clearly brought out. Is it not a fact that in these cases or in a good many other cases that higher ground was principally under wedders and was abandoned by the tenants of their own free will and accord?—Yes.

19,392. What was the reason?—In the case of Killilan and Lienassie, the places were out of lease and the tenants both willingly gave up the wedder ground.

19,393. In consequence of what?—Because wedder farming did not pay.

19,394. And even supposing that they were going up to occupy these lands, they could only occupy them with a smaller or more inferior class of Highland cattle?—I believe, and I have heard that on one occasion the cattle were left in a summer sheiling all winter, and they died.

19,395. But even suppose they lived, the improvement of these animals for the summer grazing up there would be extremely small?—Very small indeed.

19,396. And in all probability would entail loss rather than profit to those that sent them up?—Well, unless in a very good year, it would entail loss; they had better sell their cattle before they go up there. There has not been a beast sold in Lochalsh this year that has not been a serious loss to the owner of it.

19,397. Then you think it would be better for them to keep fewer and keep them better and sell them earlier?—Yes, and to kill some of their calves and use more milk.

19,398. *Mr Donald Macrae.*—Could Sir Henry Macandrew mention any crofting township that threw up their hill-grazing voluntarily?—It was long before my time; it was forty years ago. I don't know anything about it.

19,399. But you are not aware of any township having thrown up their hill-grazing?—I am not aware of anything, but the fact that about the time that Sir Alexander succeeded, the summer sheilings ceased to be occupied by the low farms.

19,400. Then there is just one point I should like to have the privilege of asking Sir Henry a question about. Is it about the crofting township of Port-a'-chuilinn. Sir Henry knows the township well. The question of rent and of arrears, and extras I think was settled by voluntary arrangement two years ago?—Yes.

19,401. Sir Henry is aware that these crofters applied for an extension of holding from the big farm of Fernaig?—Yes, but they applied for the farm steading and house.

19,402. Is Sir Henry not aware that in their application, or in pursuit of their application, they defined lands that they applied for 'or any other lands' subject to modification according to circumstances?—I have no doubt that is the case; I don't remember, but I have no doubt it is.

19,403. Is it not the fact that the Crofters Commission had to reject that application solely and entirely on the ground that the land was under lease?—Well

it was under lease, and I have no doubt that was the ground. [*The Chairman.*—Entered into before?]

19,404. No, a lease current at the passing of the Act. Does my memory serve me rightly if I say that Sir Henry on that occasion did approach the tenant with the view to induce him to allow Sir Kenneth Matheson to give the people an addition at the time?—I did speak to him about it, I know.

19,405. And wrote a letter, and he wrote a letter back, the tenant, that he would not consent?—I don't recollect that, but if you do I am quite willing to take it from you that that is so. I know I did either speak to him or write to him.

19,406. Since then Sir Henry is aware that there is a prospect of the Highland Railway being extended through this township in such a way as to deprive these people of their arable holdings?—I am afraid it will trench on their arable holdings, but I have seen the engineer twice about it, and he has promised to avoid the arable land as much as possible.

19,407. But even as it is Sir Henry admits that their holdings are too small?—If the tenants are going to attempt to live by their holdings most distinctly. They cannot live by these holdings; they must have other employment, and if it is desirable that every man born in the parish should live by crofting in it, they are not big enough, but one of them might suit the gentleman here who wanted a small croft as an assistance to his labour.

19,408. Would Sir Henry consider the case of these people when the lease of Fernaig expired?—I have no doubt that Sir Kenneth will consider that most anxiously, particularly with reference to the injury that is likely to be done to them by the railway. Of course they will get compensation for that.

19,409. It is nothing compared to the damage done to them. Does Sir Henry know the farm of Braintra?—Yes.

19,410. It was occupied by a number of small tenants at one time, in the beginning of this century?—Yes, it appears in some of the rentals, I know, as occupied by several tenants, I know there was a number of tenants at one time.

19,411. What was the rent twelve years ago when the Macraes had it?—I don't remember but Mr Watson says £160.

19,412. What is the present rent?—£95, but I may state that it has been largely reduced. It is a lease that has only run for eight or nine years.

19,413. Reduced in what respect?—It was let at £160, with interest on the expenditure, and it has been reduced.

19,414. How much money was expended?—I cannot tell you at this moment.

19,415. Were there not thousands expended in reclaiming land?—Over £2000.

19,416. And yet a farm that my clansmen, the Macraes, were charged £160 for without any expenditure, was reduced to a stranger down to £90 after an expenditure of over £2000?—But you must recollect that a very serious change of circumstances occurred in the interval; and also I may state that I think the rent was unduly reduced.

19,417. Does not Sir Henry consider that farm a very suitable one in view of the fact as we all hope that the railway will extend to Kyleakin. Does he not consider that a very suitable place for division into smaller holdings for the Port-a'-chuilinn crofters?—Braintra is most decidedly the farm that is most easily adapted to small holdings on the estate.

19,418. And I may be allowed to take it that Sir Henry will act as a good faithful interceder on behalf of my countrymen?—I will make no promises.

19,419. I know Sir Henry is always fully better than his promises.

19,420. *The Chairman.*—Was the stoppage of interest for expenditure on small holdings made by the estate prior to the crofters holdings being dealt with by the Crofters Commission?—Oh yes, long before.

19,421. Then was not this the fact, that when the Crofters Commission were here, the expenditure by the proprietor was stated as an element to be considered in fixing the fair rent?—Well, the statements that we laid before the Commission were not prepared by me, but in most cases it was stated in the paper that was laid before the Commission what the expenditure had been.

19,422. Suppose it to be the fact that that expenditure was laid before us as an element to be considered in fixing the fair rent, would you say now that that was an erroneous statement in so far as it included interest?—I would say that it never occurred to me that it would influence the mind of the Commissioners. I understood that they were to go to each holding and examine the subject and form their own opinion of what it was worth as it stood.

19,423. Quite; but you remember, of course, that the expenditure on the estate was one of the things submitted to the Commission on behalf of the estate?—Yes.

19,424. Then was there expenditure submitted to the Crofters Commission on behalf of the estate which had ceased a considerable time before the Commission were here?—Expenditure on which interest had ceased. All interest laid on directly as interest on the rents had been wiped off before the Crofters Commission came here at all.

19,425. And yet was not that expenditure mentioned as an element to be considered by the Commission?—It was mentioned in these papers, but as I say, it never occurred to my mind that it would be used as an element in fixing the fair rents, because, as I say, I understood the Commissioners were going there to judge for themselves and examine the subjects and see what they were worth as they stood. [*Mr Watson.*—Subject to what the landlord had contributed to making them in that state, and also to what the tenant had contributed to making them in that state]. It never occurred to me, and I never put it to the Commissioners, that they should fix the rent any higher or lower than a holding was worth because money had been spent on it. They, of course, had to consider whether the holdings had been put into the condition in which they saw them by the proprietor, or by the tenant or his predecessors.

[Adjourned].

APPENDIX.

Tabulated Statement of Rentals of Townships and Farms in Lochalsh and Lochcarron.

	No. of Tenants.	1852/3. £ s. d.	No. of Tenants.	1862/3. £ s. d.	No. of Tenants.	1872/3. £ s. d.	No. of Tenants.	1882/3. £ s. d.	No. of Tenants.	1892. £ s. d.
Upper Ardelve,	11	81 5 0	10	81 2 6	10	82 2 6	10	69 7 6	9	40 3 0
Lower Ardelve,	6	41 10 0	6	43 10 9	6	43 0 0	6	36 10 0	7	21 18 0
Ardelve Ferry Inn and Croft,	1	27 0 0	1	27 0 0	1	27 0 0	1	25 0 0	1	19 0 0
Camuslongart,	9	29 11 0	9	29 11 0	9	29 11 0	9	25 0 0	9	14 16 0
Aultnasow,	19	47 0 0	14	45 1 9	12	45 0 0	12	40 2 6	12	23 6 6
Ardanarff,	6	75 0 0	6	81 0 0	6	84 0 0	5	84 0 0	5	46 0 0
Achmore,	4	144 0 0	4	177 3 9	3	175 0 0	3	195 0 0	3	108 0 0
Achnadarrach,	1	36 0 0	1	40 10 0						
Achtertyre,	1	152 10 0	1	212 12 6	1	210 0 0	1	200 0 0	1	120 0 0
,, Schoolmaster's Croft,	1	2 10 0	1	4 1 0	1	3 10 0	1	3 10 0	1	2 6 0
Avernish,	8	22 19 8	8	21 15 8	8	21 10 6	8	21 10 6	11	53 1 0
,, Mill and Croft,	1	21 15 4	1	21 5 10	1	20 0 0	1	20 0 0	1	13 0 0
,, Farm,	1	70 0 0	1	60 15 0	1	60 0 0	1	60 0 0		
Benaveg, same Tenant as Avernish,	1	100 0 0	1	101 5 0	1	100 0 0				
Balmacara,	1	297 0 0	1	354 7 6	P	340 0 0	1	319 0 0	1	170 0 0
,, House,	1	100 0 0	1	100 0 0	1	110 0 0	1	118 6 0	1	110 0 0
,, Part of Farm,									1	25 0 0
Bracantra,	1	140 0 0	1	162 0 0	1	160 0 0	1	160 0 0	1	95 0 0
Badycaul,	8	27 10 0	9	27 17 6	5	28 14 6	6	28 14 6	6	15 18 0
Craig,	8	38 0 0	8	38 10 0	8	38 0 0	7	38 0 0	8	29 0 0
Conchra,	1	300 0 0	1	425 5 0	P	419 19 0	1	325 0 0	1	240 0 0
Durinish,	20	100 7 6	19	101 13 6	14	108 0 0	14	108 2 6	18	74 12 0
Drumbuie,	23	72 5 6	23	73 3 6	23	72 8 9	21	70 2 6	21	43 6 0
Erbusaig,	22	64 0 0	19	64 16 0	17	64 5 0	18	66 0 0	18	43 2 0
Fernaig,	1	230 0 0	1	303 15 0	1	320 0 0	1	300 0 0	1	190 0 0
Glebe of Ardhill,	1	5 0 0	1	5 0 0	1	5 0 0	1	5 0 0	1	5 0 0
Kirkton,	5	80 0 0	6	120 0 0	6	180 0 0	6	144 0 0	6	115 0 0
Kennamoine,	5	12 10 0	5	20 5 0	5	20 0 0	5	20 0 0	5	13 10 0
Kyle,	1	42 0 0	1	45 11 3	2	45 0 0	2	40 0 0	2	22 0 0
,, Land, Inn, and Ferry,	1	18 0 0	1	46 1 6	1	25 10 0	1	25 10 0	1	15 13 4
Nonach and Blackwater,	1	460 0 0	1	506 5 0	1	700 0 0	Rent Free.			
Old Glebe,	1	30 0 0	added to Kirkton.							
Plock of Kyle,	1	30 0 0	1	10 2 6	1	10 0 0	1	10 0 0	1	8 0 0
Portchullin,	9	21 12 0	9	21 12 0	9	21 12 6	8	32 0 0	7	21 0 0
Portaneorna,	9	8 5 0	8	8 12 3	8	8 10 0	7	8 10 0	7	6 6 0
Portnacloigh,	4	16 0 0	4	16 4 0	4	16 0 0	4	16 0 0	4	7 4 0
Reraig,	1	80 0 0	1	92 0 0	1	90 0 0	1	130 0 0	1	120 0 0
Sallachy,	19	160 4 10	18	161 17 8	18	180 0 0	17	160 0 6	16	176 3 0
Kyle House,	1	55 0 0	1	40 0 0	1	20 0 0	1	20 0 0	1	27 0 0
Plockton Lands and Grazings,	45	148 0 6	53	184 18 6	35	117 17 0	40	128 10 3	40	155 7 6
Balmacara Commercial Bank,		20 0 0		20 0 0		25 0 0		25 0 0		25 0 0
Reraig Cottages,			6	15 10 0	8	60 0 0	9	62 10 0	10	52 16 6
Balmacara Cottage and Land,									1	37 10 0
,, Glaic Grazings,										4 0 0
Free Church Lands,						3 9 0		3 9 0		1 0 0
Strome Ferry Hotel,					1	100 0 0	1	170 0 0	1	170 0 0
,, ,, House and Shop,					1	5 10 0	1	6 0 0	1	6 0 0
,, ,, Drove Stance,								3 0 0		3 0 0
Parish of Lochcarron.										
Attadale,					1	469 17 1	3	220 0 0	3	146 0 0
Achintee,					10	132 10 0	9	182 10 3	9	108 0 0
Arieneckaig,					10	107 10 0	9	128 13 0	9	101 7 0
New Kelso,					1	223 2 0	1	220 0 0	1	176 0 0
Lubriach,					1	4 7 6	1	6 7 6	1	5 3 6
Strathcarron Inn and Land,					1	21 0 0	1	21 0 0	1	21 0 0
,, House and Land,						2 0 0	8	77 0 0	8	70 10 0
Camalt and Craigton,							2	3 10 0	2	2 10 0
Total,	259	3,406 16 4	262	3,912 2 5	256	5,155 16 4	268	4,181 16 6	276	3,119 9 4
Shooting Rents.										
Benaveg,				150 0 0		150 0 0				
Balmacara,				150 0 0		150 0 0		200 0 0		175 0 0
Achmore,								130 0 0		60 0 0
Attadale (part of),								650 0 0		560 0 0
Patt and Riochan,								740 0 0		740 0 0
Nonach,								24 0 0		60 0 0
Duncraig,										500 0 0
New Kelso,						350 0 0		700 0 0		700 0 0
Attadale (Lochcarron),								200 0 0		240 0 0
Total,				300 0 0		750 0 0		2,644 0 0		3,035 0 0

(Signed) H. C. Macandrew.

TWENTIETH SITTING.

LOCHCARRON, July 28, 1893.

Present:—

DAVID BRAND, Esq., Advocate, Sheriff of Ayr and Chairman of the Crofters Commission, *Chairman.*
ANGUS SUTHERLAND, Esq., M.P.
GEORGE GORDON, Esq.
HENRY MUNRO, Esq.
WILLIAM MACKENZIE, Esq., *Secretary.*

RODERICK MACKENZIE, Retired Farmer, Strathcarron (58)—*examined.*

19,426. *The Chairman.*—You are described as a retired farmer; have you a croft now?—I have a house and a little park,—about an acre or an acre and a half.

19,427. Was your case dealt with by the Crofters Commission?—No, I was not in the country.

19,428. What rent do you pay?—I paid £8, 10s. between the house and the little park.

19,429. And is that what you are paying at present?—Yes, besides road money and taxes.

19,430. You have an acre and a half of arable land?—Well, I cannot be quite sure, but I think it is an acre or an acre and a half.

19,431. And you have some grazing, I suppose?—No, only the park itself, that is all.

19,432. What estate are you on?—The estate of Sir Kenneth Matheson.

19,433. Do you know the lands hereabout very well?—Yes.

19,434. You had a farm at one time?—Yes.

19,435. Where was it?—In Kintail; and I was also one of the club farmers at Achantee, Lochcarron. I left there in the year 1877.

19,436. And what rent did you pay when you were in the club farm?—We paid £21 each.

19,437. What extent of ground had you?—I cannot tell you that.

19,438. It was a sheep grazing?—Sheep grazing and arable land.

19,439. And had you sheilings?—Yes, but they gave up sheilings about forty years ago; but the sheep were under one mark, a club farm mark.

19,440. How many were in the club farm?—We were ten. We were only eight at first, but there was a township in Achnashellach evicted, and two came from Achnashellach.

19,441. And made ten?—And made ten; we had been only eight at first.

19,442. It was eight, and it became ten; was that the way of it?—Yes, the two came down in the year 1863.

19,443. And had each of these crofters separate holdings?—Yes, they had the houses, and the arable land was rig-about.

19,444. The arable land was rig-about, and the grazing?—Yes, the grazing was in partnership.

19,445. Just tell us the locality of this township.—It is situated just at the head of the loch.

19,446. Which loch?—Loch Carron on the south side, marching with Lochalsh estate. [*Mr Watson.*—It is just at the Strathcarron Railway Station]. The south side of the railway.

19,447. What was the name of the township?—Achantee.

19,448. How is that land of Achantee occupied now?—It is occupied by nine tenants.

19,449. Can you mention the names of any old townships in that locality that are now obliterated?—Yes.

19,450. Would you just give us their names?—Coulin.

19,451. How many tenants were in Coulin?—Four, in the year 1818.

19,452. Where was that place exactly; was it near Achantee?—No, it is about 14 miles from Achantee.

19,453. In what direction?—North.

19,454. And on whose estate?—The proprietor is Mr Dalgleish, I think.

19,455. Is that Mr Scott Dalgleish?—Mr William Ogilvie Dalgleish.

19,456. Now the next township?—Craig.

19,457. How many tenants were in it?—Six.

19,458. In what year?—They were evicted in the year 1818.

19,459. Is that on the same estate?—No, it is on the estate of Lord Wimborne.

19,460. What is the name of that estate?—Achnashellach.

19,461. And are the remains of houses to be seen there?—Yes.

19,462. Both at Coulin and at Craig?—Yes. There are the remains of one house there which was my father's house. The next place again is Easter Corrievanie.

19,463. How many tenants were there?—Two.

19,464. And whose estate is that on?—Lord Wimborne's.

19,465. Are the remains of old houses there?—Yes, they took all these townships for banking up the river, and such like.

19,466. When did it cease to be a township?—This place was evicted in the year 1818 also.

19,467. That is before your recollection?—Yes, but my father was still in it.

19,468. He is now dead?—Yes.

19,469. When did he die?—He died in the year 1864.

19,470. Give us the name of the next township.—Wester Corrievanie.

19,471. That is close to Easter Corrievanie?—Yes, there is only the burn coming down between them.

19,472. And how many tenants were there?—Two.

19,473. Was that also on Lord Wimborne's property?—Yes.

19,474. Did it cease to be a township about the same time, 1818?—Yes, they were evicted at the same time.

19,475. Was that with a view to the formation of sheep farms?—Yes.

19,476. How old was your father when he died in 1864?—He was 89.

19,477. Was he born in one of these townships?—He was born at Craig.

19,478. And you were born at Craig too, I suppose?—No, I was born at Achantee.

19,479. What is the name of the next township?—Coire-Liridh.

19,480. How many tenants were there?—Two.

19,481. Is that on Lord Wimborne's property?—Yes.

19,482. And was there a removal there about the same time?—Yes, all these were removed about the same time.

19,483. Are there any more?—Lair.

19,484. How many tenants were there?—Three.

19,485. Were they removed at the same time?—No, these were removed before that time.

19,486. And is the landlord Lord Wimborne?—Yes.

19,487. Did your father tell you the date of the removal in that case?—No.

19,488. But it was before 1818?—Yes.

19,489. That land is now under sheep grazing, I suppose?—No, it is under deer, every inch of it.

19,490. The whole of these townships?—Yes.

19,491. The whole of Lord Wimborne's property that we have been hearing about is under deer?—Yes, except two townships up here; they had the low ground and a piece of the grazing above the road, but they lost the hill grazing they had.

19,492. What is the name of the next township?—Tullochanan.

19,493. How many were there?—Five.

Lochcarron. — Roderick Mackenzie.

19,494. Is that still in Achnashellach?—Yes.

19,495. Were there any removals there?—Yes, they were removed in the same year.

19,496. What year is that?—That is more than I can tell you, but they were there in the year 1756.

19,497. And I suppose we may take it they were removed before the year 1818?—Yes, that is quite true.

19,498. And that land is under deer?—Yes. There is another place here, the Change-house; it is an old inn.

10,499. How many tenants were there?—One.

19,500. And was he removed?—Yes, he was removed in the year 1818.

19,501. That is Lord Wimborne's, is it?—Yes.

19,502. Now there are other two townships here?—Yes, Coulags and Balnacra. They had a piece of the grazings.

19,503. How many tenants were there in Coulags?—Six.

19,504. And how many in Balnacra?—Six, I think, or seven; I believe it was six.

19,505. Is that on Lord Wimborne's estate?—Yes, and the grazing they had at Achnashellach.

19,506. Can you tell us the dates of the removals from these places, Coulags and Balnacra?—They are in the same place yet, only they lost this grazing in the year 1818 when the other tenants were evicted.

19,507. And the grazing is now under deer?—Yes.

19,508. Can you give us any idea of the extent of grazing these tenants lost?—That is more than I can tell; a person could not get near these to measure them.

19,509. Any other townships?—About here?

19,510. About the place you are now describing?—After that New Kelso or Edderacharron.

19,511. Were there any tenants there?—Yes.

19,512. How many?—There were in the year 1756 four tenants there.

19,513. Were these tenants removed?—Yes, two of them were removed, and the other two got the place to themselves altogether.

19,514. Are their successors there now?—No.

19,515. Well, what has become of the lands that belonged to the other two who were not removed?—It is made under one farm.

19,516. Then they were removed at some date?—Yes, but I cannot give you the particular date. They were there in 1756.

19,517. You have told us that there were four tenants there in 1756; two of these you say were removed, but you have not accounted for the other two?—The other two took the whole farm to themselves.

19,518. What ultimately became of them? Are their successors there now?—No, there are other tenants; it is only one tenant to-day.

19,519. What is his name?—Norman Reid.

19,520. And what rent does he pay?—I am not sure what he pays.

19,521. Does he pay over £30?—He pays nearly £200.

19,522. Is that on Lord Wimborne's estate?—No, but on Sir Kenneth Matheson's estate.

19,523. What is the name of that part of the estate?—They call it the Strathcarron estate.

19,524. The Strathcarron portion of the Matheson estate?—Yes.

19,525. Now can you give us the names of any others?—Well, Attadale again, there were thirty-five there paying rent in the year 1837.

19,526. Was that a township?—Yes, the proprietor was stopping there, the grandfather of the present Sir Kenneth.

19,527. It is not about the proprietor I am asking. What I want to know is were there small tenants in Attadale at one time?—Yes, there were thirty-five in the year 1837; they were evicted in the year 1838.

19,528. By whom?—By Macbarnet, who was proprietor at the time.

19,529. They were all tenants of the crofter class?—Yes, besides cottars.

19,530. Were there cottars in addition to the thirty-five?—Yes.

Lochcarron. — Roderick Mackenzie.

19,531. How many cottars?—There were sixty altogether, thirty-five paying rent and the rest cottars.

19,532. Twenty-five cottars who paid no rent?—Yes.

19,533. And the whole of these persons, thirty-five crofters paying rent, and twenty-five cottars were removed?—Yes.

19,534. In 1838, by a man called Macbarnet?—Yes, he was the proprietor; and the tenant who came in, the sheep farmer, was Peter Mitchell.

19,535. All that land was turned into a sheep farm?—Yes, every inch of it.

19,536. Did Peter Mitchell get the whole of the land?—Yes, arable and grazing.

19,537. And what rent was he asked to pay?—He came to value the place; Macbarnet was a man from Badenoch, who made his money in India, and he bought this estate from Macleod of Raasay. This Mitchell had a farm in Badenoch, and he took Mitchell to value the land, and he valued the land at £600 yearly rent. Macbarnet asked him would he take the farm himself at that rent, and he said he would; but it never paid him. He got it down at last to £400.

19,538. Mitchell became the farmer in those lands previously occupied by sixty tenants?—Thirty-five tenants, the rest were cottars.

19,539. Well, thirty-five tenants at the rent of £600, afterwards reduced to £400?—Yes.

19,540. And what became of him afterwards?—He took then the hill grazing again, what is deer forest now, called Ben Dronnaig forest.

19,541. In addition?—In addition; he took it from the Lochalsh crofters.

19,542. Having got hold of this, he added to it the Ben Dronnaig grazing?—Yes.

19,543. Taken from the Lochalsh crofters?—Yes.

19,544. Was that Macbarnet's?—No, that belonged to Sir Alexander Matheson at the time.

19,545. And what rent did he pay for that?—He was paying between that and Attadale for three years £750 as far as I understand.

19,546. That rent was afterwards reduced, I suppose?—No, it was not reduced. On the first lease I think he paid £750 or so; and the rent was raised next lease.

19,547. Now you have told us about the Attadale tenants and the Ben Dronnaig tenants. Did this gentleman Mitchell make any other addition to his grazing farm?—Not since that.

19,548. Were there any tenants removed from Ben Dronnaig?—No, the Lochalsh tenants had it for grazing for their cattle in the summer time.

19,549. For common hill pasture?—Yes.

19,550. Sheilings?—Yes, there was a piece put up to every township.

19,551. And this man got the whole of it?—Yes.

19,552. Now is that Attadale the same Attadale we see across the water?—Yes, just over here.

19,553. Was any other farm made out of the land which had been occupied by the Attadale small tenants except this farm of Mitchell's?—No, Mitchell took the whole.

19,554. You have given us a very distinct account of these townships; are there any other places you can mention?—Yes, this farm of Tullich here.

19,555. Whose land is it upon?—It is on Mr Murray's estate.

19,556. Mr C. J. Murray of Lochcarron?—Yes.

19,557. Can you give us any particulars about it; what is the rent of it?—The present tenant was paying over £600 when he came in there about forty years ago; he came in there, I think, about the year 1864.

19,558. What do you wish to tell us about that farm?—It is a good farm.

19,559. Very possibly; anything more?—Very good grazing, and very good arable land. The sea is coming in on both sides of it, the north side and the south side.

19,560. Were there old townships on any part of it?

Lochcarron. — Roderick Mackenzie.

—In the year 1756 it was taken by one farmer, Mackenzie of Fairburn; before that two farmers had it.

19,561. But at any rate it has been in the condition of large farms since 1756 at all events?—Yes, it was just under one tenant since that, but there were some cottars on it.

19,562. Who were labourers on the farm, I suppose?—Yes.

19,563. Do you know how many cottars?—I daresay about four or five.

19,564. All working on the farm?—Yes, they were just working on the farm.

19,565. They got labour on the farm, and they had cots on the ground?—Yes.

19,566. Is there any other ground you desire to speak of?—Yes.

19,567. What is that?—Kirkton.

19,568. Where is it?—It is one farm now, occupied by the hotel-keeper.

19,569. Has there been any township there?—Yes, but it was sub-tenants; they were paying rent to the hotel-keeper. There were four of them.

19,570. Are they away now?—Yes, they are away.

19,571. When were they removed?—I daresay it would be,—I don't think there were any there in the year 1872. It was all given to the hotel-keeper.

19,572. And that farm is in the hands of the hotel-keeper at present, I suppose?—Yes.

19,573. Is there land on that farm available for occupation by crofters?—Yes, as good as there is in the country.

19,574. The best in the country?—Every bit as good.

19,575. The grazing land is easily capable of cultivation, is it?—There is not much grazing land, only just a piece.

19,576. It is mostly arable?—Mostly arable. There is a good piece of grazing too, but it is not large.

19,577. Can you tell me what rent is paid for that farm?—The tenants who were at Kirkton hill were paying £6 each.

19,578. You mean the sub-tenants?—Yes.

19,579. But what rent does the hotelkeeper pay?—He was paying £100 for this farm once; I don't know what he pays now.

19,580. Is there any other land you wish to mention?—Yes, but it is over in Kishorn.

19,581. Let us hear about it?—There is another farm.

19,582. That is on Mr Stuart's property?—There is another farm in the hands of Mr Murray down at Reraig.

19,583. Where is it?—It is on the north side of Strome Ferry.

19,584. Do you know if there were old townships there?—Yes. My sister was there for one.

19,585. What was the name of her township?—Reraig.

19,586. Is she dead?—Yes; she does not live now.

19,587. She does not live there?—She died last year.

19,588. How many, do you know, were in that township of Reraig where your sister lived?—Three.

19,589. And let me ask you, what was your sister's name?—Her husband was Roderick Mackenzie.

19,590. She was Mrs Roderick Mackenzie?—Yes. There were three brothers, John, Ewen, and Roderick Mackenzie.

19,591. And they all paid rent, I suppose?—Yes, they were paying at that time £15, 10s. each.

19,592. What stock had they?—They had sheep and cattle.

19,593. And horses?—Yes, they had one horse each.

19,594. Was their land all upon the farm of Reraig?—Yes.

19,595. Or had they hill grazing besides?—No, the hill grazing and the low grazing were together.

19,596. They together occupied and possessed the whole of the land which now forms the farms of Reraig?—Yes; it is in the hands of the proprietor now.

19,597. Can you give me the size of it, roughly?—That is more than I can say.

19,598. And had they Kishorn island besides?—No, the Kishorn island was on the other side; it is not in the same parish. It is in the parish of Applecross.

Lochcarron. — Roderick Mackenzie.

19,599. What parish are you talking of just now?—Lochcarron parish.

19,600. That was the only township there, was it?—Yes, but there were small crofters down the seashore, marching with Reraig to Kishorn.

19,601. Crofters from Reraig to Kishorn?—Aird, Kishorn.

19,602. How many were in Aird?—I am not very sure.

19,603. Any other townships?—Yes, there are other townships there again, on the estate of Mr John Stuart.

19,604. But was there more than the township of Aird?—Yes, there were four or five of them, I think, altogether.

19,605. Townships?—Yes; small places.

19,606. Along Loch Kishorn?—Yes, between Achintraid and Reraig.

19,607. But you cannot give us the names of any but Aird itself?—Yes, I can tell more places that crofters were in.

19,608. Let us both have our minds on the same point. What I want to know is the names of any townships, running from Achintraid round the coast to Reraig?—There were four or five small tenants round the coast from Achintraid to Reraig.

19,609. Now do you wish to mention any other place?—Yes, there are places where crofters were in Kishorn.

19,610. Do you mean townships?—Yes.

19,611. Just give us their names.—There is a place called Rossal, on the estate of Mr Murray.

19,612. How many were in Rossal?—Four tenants.

19,613. Do you know when they were removed? Was it this century or last century?—More than a hundred years ago.

19,614. And how is the land now occupied?—Under sheep.

19,615. Any other townships in Kishorn?—Yes, Tornapreas; the proprietor is Mr John Stuart.

19,616. How many were in Tornapreas?—It was only one tenant when the estate was divided in the year 1857.

19,617. Do you know what rent he paid?—No.

19,618. Any other township?—Yes, there was Glenbeg.

19,619. How many were there?—Only one tenant was there, at last.

19,620. It was a sort of farm?—Yes.

19,621. And it is all consolidated now?—It is sublet to the farmer at Glenmore.

19,622. What is his name?—David Jackson.

19,623. Any more townships?—Yes, there was a place there called Achavanie.

19,624. How many were there?—I think only one tenant.

19,625. What has become of it?—I think it is let by Mr Stuart to Mr Murray.

19,626. For sheep or for deer?—For the home farm, I believe.

19,627. Is it near the mansion house?—Yes, near Mr Murray's mansion house.

19,628. Close to it?—Just above it.

19,629. Is there any other place you wish to mention?—There is Lag-nan-Copag, on the estate of Mr Stuart.

19,630. That is the Kishorn estate?—Yes.

19,631. How many tenants were there?—One.

19,632. And what has become of it now?—It is let to Mr Murray.

19,633. By whom?—By Mr Stuart.

19,634. Is it under sheep?—Under cattle; it is on the home farm.

19,635. Any other place?—Sanachan, on the Kishorn estate.

19,636. Was there one tenant?—Yes.

19,637. And is it let by Mr Stuart to Mr Murray?—Yes.

19,638. Any other?—Yes, Seafield.

Lochcarron. — Roderick Mackenzie.

19,639. Was there one tenant there?—It is let by Mr Stuart to Mr Murray.

19,640. Was Seafield formerly in the hands of a tenant?—Yes, the last tenant that was there was Kennedy.

19,641. Only one?—Only one tenant; he had Achavanie and Sanachan also.

19,642. When did he give up possession?—I do not recollect, but it would be about five or six years ago.

19,643. Did he give it up because it did not pay, or why?—I cannot say indeed; whether he was in arrear or not I am not sure.

19,644. Is there any other place you would like to mention?—Another little place there was called Bruach-nan-goirtean.

19,645. How many were there?—I think there were once two crofters there, but it was in the hands of this Kennedy at last.

19,646. And did he remove these two crofters?—Yes, his grandfather. [*Mr Stuart.*—They died out]. Perhaps they died out.

19,647. Any other lands you wish to mention?—No; all this land called Glas-Chnoc, these tenants in Kishorn had for grazing and for sheilings once.

19,648. That is the land lying inland?—Yes, at the head of Loch Kishorn.

19,649. The whole of the grazings at the head of Loch Kishorn were used by these tenants and crofters and cottars for summer grazings?—Yes, the place called Glas-Chnoc was following Tullich, but the tenants of Kishorn had the rest for sheilings and grazing.

19,650. Do you wish to mention any other lands?—I don't know any more in the parish.

19,651. You have been dealing all along with the parish of Lochcarron?—Yes. But Achintraid belongs to the parish of Applecross, but it was put to the parish of Lochcarron since a year or two.

19,652. That was under the Local Government Act, I suppose. We will deal with it as part of the parish of Lochcarron. These lands that you say were formerly under small tenants, are they in your opinion, suitable for occupation now, either as arable land or grazing land?—Well, you can see them. It is not the crofts that made the crofters so good in this parish at all, but the good grazing, along with the low ground.

19,653. Is the arable soil low ground too?—Yes, at Achnashellach.

19,654. But speaking generally, is it good?—Yes, it is good; it was good at the time the crofters were there, for I heard my mother saying it would take out double the quantity of grain that could be done at Achantee.

19,655. Then is the grazing good?—Yes, the best on the west coast, so far as I know. Achnashellach has as good grazing as any on the west coast.

19,656. Do you think that crofters could be settled there in such holdings as regards size that they would be able to live by their holdings?—Yes, I am quite sure of that.

19,657. Having an extent of hill ground, and arable ground in proportion?—Yes, I am sure of it. There was not a penny of arrear from this township when they were evicted.

19,658. You mentioned crofters who paid a rent of £15, 10s., and others who paid other rents,—£6 I think you mentioned. Were these people able to live by their holdings alone?—Yes, between the croft and the hill; they had different kinds of stock,—goats, Highland cattle, and sheep.

19,659. And horses?—Yes.

19,660. Did they live between the arable land they had below, and the hill land they had above?—Yes.

19,661. Without labour?—No labour at all.

19,662. Without fishing?—There was no fishing up at Achnashellach.

19,663. I do not profess to know the ground very well. But in point of fact, they did not need to supplement their work on the crofts by other labour?—Those down here on the loch side were fishing; they were evicted from Achnashellach, from Jeantown here, when the lodge was made in 1818, and were put in some of the townships.

19,664. But I am speaking of those who were inland, and who had crofts of the size you have been describing. Did they subsist without fishing?—Yes, at Achnashellach. Lochcarron. — Roderick Mackenzie.

19,665. And without having to go out for labour?—No, there was no labour going in the country at that time at all.

19,666. And do you think the same thing could be done again?—Yes, I am quite sure of it; but I can say this, that the grazing is not so fat to-day as it was in those years.

19,667. The grazing has gone back?—Yes, because there is no cattle going over it.

19,668. But it could be brought forward again?—Oh yes.

19,669. In a few years?—Yes, the Highland cattle would improve it.

19,670. You said just now that the village of Jeantown consisted of crofters from inland who had been brought down to the shore?—Yes.

19,671. And that took place in the time of the removals in 1818?—Yes.

19,672. Then before that, was there no village of Jeantown?—No; in the year 1756 the minister, Mr Sage, had Kirkton all the way down to this burn here, but he was paying rent for it.

19,673. He had it as a farm?—Yes, I can show you it before you leave.

19,674. These men who were brought down here were turned from crofters,—self-sustaining crofters,—to fishermen on the coast here, with houses by the seashore?—Yes, they had to put up their houses themselves.

19,675. And is that the year in which Jeantown was built,—1818 or 1819?—It was growing larger every year; there were only a few houses at that time, 1818. It was called Tor-nan-Clar.

19,676. And when was the name changed into Jeantown?—It was so called after one of the ladies of Applecross. [*Mr Stuart.*—The liferenters of the estate.]

19,677. Do you remember in what year it was changed from Tor-nan-Clar into Jeantown?—No.

19,678. It is a long time ago?—Yes. [*Mr Shaw.*—I think it received its name after the wife of one of the proprietors of Applecross]. The land agitation commenced in Lochcarron here in the year 1818, by the Rev. Lachlan Mackenzie, the minister.*

19,679. He set it agoing, did he, or at least helped to start it?—He started the land agitation here. Murdoch Maclennan, who was at Tullich, was trying in every way to take the glebe farm from him, and the minister commenced an agitation; that was at the time of the evictions from Achnashellach, in the year 1818.

19,680. I pass now from these matters. How long is it since you ceased to be a farmer?—I came into the farm after my father; I was the youngest of the family.

19,681. What farm was that?—The club farm of Achantee.

19,682. And when did you leave Achantee?—I left Achantee in the year 1877; the proprietor moved me over to a place in Kintail, a farm there called Keppoch. I left that in the year 1880.

19,683. And where are you living now?—At Strathcarron. I have been abroad for seven years.

19,684. *Mr Sutherland.*—You have described localities in which there were tenants before, and which have got no tenants now. These places are divided into three groups, as I follow you,—the south side of Lochcarron, the north side of Lochcarron, and Loch Kishorn?—Yes.

19,685. Beginning with the south side of Lochcarron, you mentioned the summer grazing that the tenants in Attadale had?—No, in Achnashellach.

19,686. Where had they these grazings?—They are just marching with Ledgown.

19,687. But where had they them before?—At

* At the time that Tor-nan-Clar was converted into a village and called Jeantown, the Rev. Lachlan Mackenzie, minister of Lochcarron, commemorated the change in the following quatrain, which old people still quote:—

Faire, Faire, Tor-nan-Clar,
'Se Baile-Sine 'th'ort an drasd;
Cha'n eil tigh anns am bi teine
Air nach bi similear no dha.

Lochcarron. — Roderick Mackenzie.

Achnashellach; there was a piece of grazing put up for every township, Coulags, Balnacra, Craig, two Corrievanies, and Coire-Lirldh.

19,688. Are these places all on the north side or the south side of Loch Carron?—They were on both sides of the river, above Loch-Dhughaill.

19,689. And they had their summer grazings up the Ben Dronnaig way?—No, it was not up the Ben Dronnaig way, but marching with Monar and Gleann-Fhiodhaig. Monar was on the south side, and on the north side again, it was marching with Ledgown and Sir Kenneth Mackenzie's property of Gairloch.

19,690. So that all those grazings that are now either under deer or sheep were at one time in possession of these townships as summer grazings?—Yes.

19,691. Were they deprived of these summer grazings before they were removed from the townships?—No, they were removed at once. Sheep came in there on the hill called Moruisg, which was in the hands of the proprietor, Mackenzie of Applecross.

19,692. They were deprived of their summer grazings and of their township grazings, and were removed at the same time?—Yes, just in one day.

19,693. Does that apply equally to the other districts that we have referred to, both the north and the south of Loch Carron and Loch Kishorn?—In Rossal, again, they were removed at a different time.

19,694. Subsequent to 1818?—No, about a hundred years ago.

19,695. Before 1818?—Yes.

19,696. I think you stated, in reply to the Chairman, that it was about that time that the village of Jeantown was formed?—Yes, in the year 1818.

19,697. Was the formation of the village of Jeantown the result of these clearances?—Yes.

19,698. The people were swept in here, and made into a village?—Yes.

19,699. What state was this land in before?—It was the estate of Applecross.

19,700. What state was it in? Was it cultivated before the people came to Jeantown?—No, it was themselves that took in the whole of the land.

19,701. Was the quality of it any better than we see in the land round about?—No, nothing better, only just it was rough ground.

19,702. Had they to build their own houses when they came here?—Yes.

19,703. On what sort of tenure did they hold their houses?—The whole of the houses on the estate belong to the crofters, and when the crofter would be removed out of it he would get a yearly rent for the house, for the holding.

19,704. Where?—On the estate of Applecross. That was the regulation.

19,705. But I was asking about the village of Jeantown. What sort of tenure do they hold their houses by; are they feuars?—Most of them,—you see the houses were not on the crofts at all.

19,706. But had they leases?—No, I do not think so.

19,707. Were they feuars, or under feu charter? Are they all crofters under the Act now?—Yes, Mr Murray, the proprietor, allowed them to come under the Act. But the houses were not connected, I believe, with the crofts; some of them at any rate.

19,708. But when the people came here, there were neither houses nor land for them?—No.

19,709. They had to build the houses and reclaim the land themselves?—Yes, that is quite true.

19,710. And is the land better than the land they were put from, or worse?—The land at Achnashellach from which they were sent down was better land, better grazing. They had the grazing up here at Coire-each, they had thirty-five stirks there.

19,711. They were better off than when they came down here?—Yes.

19,712. Do you think, if any means were devised of sending them back again, they would thrive better in the better land than they did here in the inferior land?—There is not the least doubt about that.

19,713. They overcame the difficulties which met them when they came down here, and if they were put in better circumstances they would get on as well?—The tenant Murdoch Maclennan would not allow a single beast to graze on the place if he could help it.

Lochcarron. — Roderick Mackenzie.

19,714. What is your opinion generally about the reasons for the clearing of the people? Have you heard it stated that it was because the people were not well off there?—No.

19,715. You never heard that?—No.

19,716. But what is your opinion about it? If it were stated, would it be true, in your opinion?—It is my opinion that the way this Maclennan evicted them—

19,717. I am not talking about Maclennan, or any other person, but just about this district?—Because sheep were paying better at that time. The sheep farmers were coming in from the south, and they were taking every bit of the high lands from the crofters.

19,718. Were they offering bigger rents?—Yes.

19,719. So that it was altogether, you think, a question of rent?—Yes. The crofters were well liked by the proprietor.

19,720. Then with regard to the rent, was that rent that they paid at first maintained afterwards? Are they paying as high a rent now as they did before the sheep farmers came?—Yes, I can show you here. [*Producing a document.*]

19,721. What particular point do you refer to? I am asking you if the rents which the large farmers offered over the heads of the tenants were kept up, or are they lower now than then?—They are not paying the half of what they were paying at first.

19,722. So that the expectations of the landlords themselves in regard to rent were not realised; they had to lower the rent?—Yes, when prices came down in the year 1878 or 1879.

19,723. Is it your opinion that the people were better off when they were in the glens and the places you have described, than when they came to the sea shore?—They were far better off. They had goats and sheep and cattle, and they could kill a sheep or a goat any time they liked. Now, when they came down here they had neither sheep nor goats.

19,723*a*. *The Chairman.*—When they came down to the shore here, did they bring any stock with them?—Only perhaps a cow or two, that was all.

19,724. Except for a cow's grass, they had no stock of sheep or cattle or horses?—No. Well, sometimes they would have horses for the spring work here, but they would require to put them away in the summer time.

19,725. Did they get any land?—When they came down from Achnashellach part of them were put down into this township here, Slumbay.

19,726. But did they get any land?—Yes, and some of them got no land.

19,727. But those who settled here, did they get some moorland?—They got the land above here.

19,728. Which they have yet?—Yes, and some in Achnashellach were put in other townships, Achantee.

19,729. *Mr Sutherland.*—In what state did they get that land?—It was just moorland; there was never crop on it before.

19,730. And they had to reclaim it?—Yes.

19,731. Themselves?—Yes, themselves.

19,732. Now you have referred to places where tenants used to be. In all these places,—which I have no doubt you could show us?—Yes.

19,733. There were tenants at one time?—Yes.

19,734. And had they arable land there?—Yes, they had arable land, and grazing along with it at Achnashellach.

19,735. And is it your opinion that they reclaimed the best land in these places,—that the old arable is the best land?—Yes, it is as good as ever, and better now.

19,736. It was cleared of stones in the old times?—Yes.

19,737. Rocks that were in it were taken away?—Yes, and everything. You can see by that paper. They had so many cottars first, and then you see when the lease was out they were taken in, the crofters.

Lochcarron. — Roderick Mackenzie.

19,738. You are referring now to sub-tenants, I suppose, that were under the tacksmen, who were the tenants of the principal proprietor. Is that what you mean?—Yes, they were cottars first to take in the ground, and they were getting a share of it.

19,739. The cottars reclaimed the land, and in virtue of such reclamation were called crofters?—Yes. Sometimes one or two of the tenants would be in for the whole of the rent.

19,740. Is it your opinion that if there was an opportunity given, there is other land besides the old arable, that might be made arable now?—What the other tenants had before.

19,741. No, but over and above that?—There are plenty of places, but up higher.

19,742. There is plenty of land that is as good as this land up here when the people came to it?—Yes, and far better, in the deer forest of Achnashellach; no doubt about that.

19,743. So that, if the arable land was found too small in area, are you of opinion that the people would reclaim more land if they got back to these places?—Yes.

19,744. And better subjects to work upon than they reclaimed up here?—Yes, it is better ground.

19,745. *Mr Gordon.*—You have spoken mostly about the deer forest of Achnashellach?—Yes.

19,746. I suppose you have no personal experience of what that country could do?—Yes, because I know it perfectly well, I know it from my youth.

19,747. There was no arable land there since 1818, you say?—Well, it was under one farmer at that time.

19,748. Now, assuming that you put back crofters there, what size of holding would you propose to give them?—Any size you like. Giving them the whole grazing as a club farm would be the best thing.

19,749. What size of a club farm? How many would you put into it?—Say four or six.

19,750. How many sheep would you propose for the club farm? What size of a grazing would it be?—Just according to how many tenants you would put on the ground.

19,751. But how many sheep would you propose to give to each tenant?—I would say from 100 to 130 or 140, or the like of that.

19,752. And you would give them some cattle?—Yes, say six milk cows and their followers.

19,753. Any horses?—A horse a-piece.

19,754. Six cows, 130 sheep, and a horse?—Yes, or 140 sheep.

19,755. Now, what money would a crofter require to stock that?—According to the price of stock when they would get it.

19,756. Take the present prices, which are low?—It would be quite easy to put the stock on this year.

19,757. What would you value the sheep stock at?—It would be according to the kind of sheep, whether blackfaced sheep or cheviots.

19,758. Take the blackfaced sheep; they are cheaper?—According to the last wool market, they would be quite cheap.

19,759. But you must have them of different ages?—Yes, ewes and wedders.

19,760. You would not put old ewes on a new farm?—No.

19,761. Would it be fair to estimate the cost of the sheep at £1 a-piece?—Yes, you would get hoggs this year, good cheviot hoggs, for 21s. to 14s.

19,762. Suppose we put the sheep in at £100, and say six milk cows, would you put them in at £10 a-piece?—You could buy the sheep cheaper than £100.

19,763. I will let you put your own price upon them; tell us your own mind?—I would say I could put in the sheep for £80.

19,764. And how much for the six cows?—Say according to this year's price £6 or £7 a head.

19,765. They would not be very good at that price?—They would this year.

19,766. Then the horse?—Between £10 and £15.

19,767. Say £14, making a total of £150, as a round sum?—Yes.

19,768. Now you must provide for buildings?—Yes. Lochcarr

19,769. Would they cost you another £150?—No.

19,770. How much?—That would be according to the way they would be put up. If they were stone and lime and slates they would be dear, but with wood they would be cheaper. Roderick Mackenzi

19,771. Would you get a crofter to pay £200 or £250 in round money, or how would you provide the sum required to stock and build?—There are plenty who could pay for stock and all.

19,772. Are there crofters who could do so at present; or who do you propose should take these holdings?—Plenty in the country would take them. I for one would.

19,773. Are you living in this quarter just now?—Yes.

19,774. And you think you could get men that would have £250 of capital willing to take these places?—Yes, some of them and some not.

19,775. Now suppose you had a holding capable of grazing 130 sheep, 6 cows and followers, and a horse, what rent would you suppose that place would be worth?—I cannot tell you; it is according to the price of the year they would get the crop.

19,776. Well, but we will take the present, it is a cheap time?—In the year 1863, when they were evicted, they were paying £8 a-piece, eight of them.

19,777. And would you expect to get a croft of that size for £8?—Well, they had it there at that time.

19,778. Are you acquainted with the fishermen down this loch side?—Yes.

19,779. Are they making a good living down here?—No, because there is no fishing in the loch.

19,780. Is there no fishing in the loch?—A little, but not much.

19,781. Is there a township down this loch called Airdaniaskan?—There is.

19,782. Are the fishermen there successful or not?—There is a railway station there, and they get a better chance to send the fish away.

19,783. Are they not, as a whole, a successful body of fishermen?—Yes, they are very good fishermen, as good as there are in the country.

19,784. Are they in good circumstances from fishing?—Well, it is not by the croft they are.

19,785. I don't say that, but it is by the fishing?—Yes, they are making their living by the fishing, except that they have the grazing of their cows.

19,786. And they are in good circumstances?—Middling well, according to the year.

19,787. I take it as you say that they are middling well. Now you were farming in another part of the country, in the farm of Keppoch?—Yes.

19,788. How did the land of Keppoch compare with the land of Achnashellach?—It was not so good as Achnashellach.

19,789. Take the face of the hill next the sea, is that not as good as Achnashellach?—It was just down to the sea, it was not so good as Achnashellach, it was too green and steep, and it was narrow below at the low ground.

19,790. Is Keppoch not a good mixed farm?—Yes.

19,791. Is it a farm you would recommend being put under crofters?—Well, it is not very easy for crofters; it is so steep.

19,792. But it is not the crofter so much as his sheep that have to be suited?—It is good arable land, what is in it.

19,793. What was your own personal experience of farming?—I was just after sheep.

19,794. How long were you in Keppoch?—Only three years; I had to give it up.

19,795. Why?—Because the price of sheep came down and my security failed, and I had not as much money as would stock the place myself.

19,796. In point of fact, you yourself did not find farming a profitable occupation?—You see when my security failed I had to give it up. [*The Chairman.*—You mean the cautioner?—Yes, I gave up the farm.—Who do you mean by the security?—The security that was on me with the bank failed, and I had to give it up.]

Lochcarron. — Roderick Mackenzie.

19,797. Your own experience is that you could not stock the farm without a cautioner, and if you got a cautioner, he might fail, and you might in consequence have to give up the farm?—I don't understand the word.

19,798. Security?—You see it was not so easy for me to get a security at that time; that was at the time the City of Glasgow Bank and the Caledonian Bank went down; and I thought it would be better for me to leave, because the proprietor took it off my hands.

19,799. But supposing your security had stood good, were you making money on the farm?—No, because prices came down.

19,800. They were not very low in 1878?—Yes, they were; in 1880 they were low whatever.

19,801. *Mr Munro.*—You furnished us with a long list of holdings from which families had been evicted at the beginning of this century, and later on?—In the year 1818.

19,802. I think I understood you to say that these holdings could be advantageously occupied by crofters if an opportunity were presented of getting them?—Yes.

19,803. In coming to that conclusion, have you taken into consideration the altered conditions of living between to-day and the beginning of this century?—Yes, there is a great difference.

19,804. You can, of course, understand that in 1818 crofters mostly lived upon the entire produce of their croft?—They lived just on flesh and cheese and butter and fish and venison.

19,805. They fed and clothed themselves from the produce of their own crofts?—They were paying nothing but the weaving. They tanned their own leather; they made their own clothes and their own shoes; and they were not giving a penny except to the tailor and the weaver.

19,806. But you are sensible of the fact that to-day crofters have to a large extent to purchase those necessaries?—Can they not do it as well to-day as in those days, if they like?

19,807. But I am pointing out to you that they produced those things in these days themselves, and to-day they have to purchase them, so that there must be some considerable difference in the working of a croft to-day as compared with 1818, is that not so?—I don't see but they could do the very same to-day as they did in these old times; they can tan the leather if they like, their women can spin their own yarn, and there are plenty of weavers for making the cloth.

19,808. Now, supposing that crofters got possession of these crofts, did I understand you to say they would be in a position to stock them, and to build their houses, without any outside help?—Some of them would and some would not.

19,809. And they could work them to advantage?—Yes, there is no doubt about that.

19,810. *The Chairman.*—Supposing you got a holding yourself of the kind we have been having in view, could you stock that holding, and put up the necessary buildings, without any outside assistance?—Well, perhaps I would get some assistance from some friend.

19,811. I have no doubt you have many good friends; but could you do it without their assistance, or would you require such assistance?—Not for a croft of six cows, a horse, and a hundred sheep.

19,812. You could establish yourself in a holding with six cows and followers, a hundred sheep and a horse, and put up the buildings without any assistance?—Just very little.

19,813. How much?—According to the year.

19,814. Take the present year?—You see I might not buy everything the first year. I would be getting it by-and-bye.

19,815. Take the present year, with the prospects for the future. Suppose you were to proceed to establish yourself this year, would you look forward to doing so without assistance, and if not, what extent of assistance would you require?—You mean that I should pay the whole stock myself.

19,816. Would you desire assistance, and if so how much?—I would have a little assistance.

19,817. How much?—I would say about £30 or £40.

19,818. You think if you had £30 or £40 you could establish yourself in a holding, and go on with a prospect of profit, and with the view of maintaining yourself?—Yes.

19,819. Now you spoke of the bank. The bank had a security for your rent, I suppose, in Keppoch?—No, you see I had to pay for the sheep stock when I went in. The stock was valued by three men, and I had not as much money when I went to Keppoch as would buy the stock outright, so I had to borrow part of the money from the bank.

19,820. And the bank got a security?—Yes, they would not take the stock as security.

19,821. They got a security for the repayment of the advance?—Yes.

19,822. And did that security fail?—Yes.

19,823. And was that the reason you had to leave Keppoch?—Yes.

19,824. Then it was not because Keppoch failed to yield a profit, but because of the accident that your security happened to fail?—Yes.

19,825. And, but for that, you might have remained much longer at Keppoch?—Yes, and there was not a penny of rent on me.

19,826. *Mr Sutherland.*—I wish, with regard to this, to ask you one question. You have had experience as a large farmer, have you not?—Yes.

19,827. And you know what the custom is with regard to these large farms, I have no doubt,—when a farmer enters into possession of a large sheep farm is it necessary that he should have the whole capital to pay for his whole stock in cash right away?—It would be better for himself.

19,828. But is it a common thing that he has?—Not in the western parts here.

19,829. He has to obtain assistance elsewhere?—Yes, some have and others have not.

19,830. And no doubt the amount of assistance he will require will be very much larger than a crofter would require, because of the stock being larger?—Yes, there is no doubt of that.

19,831. And if there is no difficulty with regard to the large farmer, why should there be any difficulty with regard to the smaller farmer, who would require less?—The one could do it as well as the other.

19,832. Are you aware, with regard to the proposals that were made for sending people to Manitoba and North America, one of the conditions was that for five years they were allowed to sit rent free, without paying interest on capital or anything else?—I have been over in America myself; I never was in Manitoba, but I have seen plenty who have been there. They are just tied hand and foot there, and they never can get out of it. You see, although they might get the land, the time is so short after sowing the seed; and then one bad night may take it all away at once.

19,833. Are you aware that it was proposed that these settlers in North America who were to be sent from this country were to be left five years in which they were to pay neither rent nor interest?—No, I never heard of that.

19,834. That was the proposal in that case; and if it were found necessary do you not think it might be tried in this country too?—Oh, indeed yes, that would suit very well in this country; no doubt about that.

19,835. Apart from that, are there not some parties at present who, if you were to send them to a new place, would take a certain amount of stock to begin with?—Yes, the sooner they could get stock on the place the better for themselves and the proprietor.

19,836. And when the people were sent to Jeantown from these places, they got no assistance whatever?—No. Now you can see there (refers to document produced) in the year 1756 all the crofters that were in the whole parish.

19,837. *The Chairman.*—Who wrote this?—I copied it.

19,838. Where did you copy it from?—From a rental book of Applecross.

19,839. Have you got that rental book?—No, but that is just as correct as it could be.

19,840. I have no doubt it is. How did you come into possession of an Applecross rental book?—I had seen it at the time of the Applecross sale, after the Mackenzies left. There was a table left by some parties, and there was a rental book in the drawer of the table.

19,841. And you got possession of it in that way, and copied out the names?—I got a while of it.

19,842. And what did you do with the book?—I gave it back to the same man who gave it me.

19,843. Who was he? You do not wish to tell us. Very good. [*Mr Sutherland.*—It is a public document, is it?—Yes. And it can be seen in Edinburgh at any time?—The man that gave it to me is living yet.]

19,844. It was got in a drawer of a table, and you gave it back to the man you got it from?—Yes.

19,845. Do you know any more about it?—No, but I am sure that the man who had it is in possession of it now.

19,846. Then it is not in Edinburgh?—No.

19,847. I don't suppose it is?—But Sir Henry Macandrew told me he had one of the same kind himself.

19,848. It is not in Edinburgh either?—No.

19,849. You are willing to sign this?—Yes.

19,850. And what do you say it contains?—It contains the tenants and the rents of the parish of Lochcarron.

19,851. In the year 1756?—Yes.

19,852. *Mr Duncan Shaw, W.S., Inverness, agent for Mr C. J. Murray of Lochcarron.*—There is one question I should like to ask. You said there was a good deal of arable land on the estate of Achnashellach; now is not a great part of that land in the valley of the Carron, in the hollow?—Yes, the Carron comes down in the middle of that.

19,853. Does not that river overflow its banks a good deal?—Yes, because the proprietor never turned the river.

19,854. But as a matter of fact, the river does overflow its banks, does not it?—Undoubtedly.

19,855. Do you think that is a safe place for crofters to have houses and crops if the river overflows its banks?—The river is not much higher than it used to be sixty or eighty years ago, in the former times.

19,856. But does it not flood the valley now, I am speaking of the present time?—If the river was banked it would not overflow; it only overflows a little part of the low ground.

19,857. Does it not go over the whole of the low ground?—No.

19,858. And you think it would be perfectly safe for the crofters?—You can see the crofters' houses on the edge of the river. At Craig, where my father was, it is not 60 yards from the bed of the river, and there was never a house taken away by the flood there.

19,859. *Mr Donald Macrae, Plockton.*—Sir Henry Macandrew in Lochalsh referred to the high grazing lands as wedder ground, and he said that the big sheep farmers were very glad to get clear of those lands. Is the name 'wedder ground' a suitable description for those high lands at Ben Dronnaig?—It was ewes that were on Ben Dronnaig all the time.

19,860. All the time?—No, at first, since Peter Mitchell got it.

19,861. Tell us all you know about it?—Since Peter Mitchell got the Lochalsh hills it was ewes that were on Ben Dronnaig, but before that it was wedders; it was attached to the Auchtertyre farm. There were three-year old wedders and two-year-old wedders, and so on, but they were sending their noggs, like the rest of the farmers between this and Skye down the country to winter.

19,862. The one-year-olds?—Just the hoggs.

19,863. But Ben Dronnaig was the mere grazing ground?—Yes, it was ewes that Peter Mitchell had on it the whole time.

19,864. And did the ewe stock graze there all summer and winter?—Yes, and Mitchell was keeping the best of the hoggs there in summer as well.

19,865. And these grazings wintered the ewe stock of the big sheep farmers to your own knowledge?—Yes, I mind the time the sheep went on it.

Lochcarron. — Roderick Mackenzie.

19,866. And do you believe these same lands would winter the ewe sheep stock of crofters. If crofters got the same lands?—I am certain they would.

19,867. The winter would be as kind to the crofter's stock as to the big farmer's?—Every bit, and kinder, because if a snowstorm came they would go out themselves and help the shepherd to gather in the stock.

19,868. Now there is another matter. Sir Henry Macandrew said most distinctly that some of these big farmers were very glad to get clear of that land?—Well, that might be.

19,869. Do you know anything about that?—I don't believe that. I know that as to Killilan, when it went into a forest he was very sorry to part with it—I mean Mr Brown, Killilan. He was very sorry to part with his farm, and he never came back since he left the hill grazing.

19,870. Since the high ground was taken from him?—He never came back since.

19,871. So that, as a matter of fact, he was not glad that it was taken from him, but very sorry?—I was present myself, and some of people he had taken to Strome Ferry.

19,872. And what did you hear yourself?—I heard that Mr Brown was very sorry to lose the farm.

19,873. Can you give us the character of the high hill ground that used to touch with Achnashellach when tenants were there?—Yes.

19,874. What are the names of the places?—Coille-bhreac was attached to Balnacra, and Coillebhan to Coulags, and Allt-dearg to Wester Coire-bhanie and Craig.

19,875. What hill grazing attached to Craig?—Leathad-an-tobair and Coire-Choinnich and Eardach and Coirag-sheilich. Again to Coire-liridh, Coineas and Malafiiuchart and to Easter Coire-bhanie, the Corries of Coire-bhanie. And it was attached to the other townships besides.

19,876. Did those high hill grazings include all that land?—Yes.

19,877. The whole of the land?—The whole of the land. [*Mr Gordon.*—Up to Loch Monar?—No, it was marching at Balachruinn.]

19,878. Was Gleann-Fhiodhaig a boundary?—Yes, it belongs to the estate of Coul.

19,879. Was that the boundary on the north side?—Yes, Gleann-Fhiodhaig was marching with a portion of Glen Carron on the east side, and Monar on the south side; the three proprietors might shake hands in the one spot—Balachruinn.

19,880. And the Lochalsh tenants had the rest?—Yes, the south side of it.

19,881. Is that near the top of Sgurr-na-Fantaig?—Yes.

19,882. Is that superior hill grazing to your own knowledge?—There is no better grazing in Ross-shire.

19,883. And is the whole of that under deer now?—Every inch of it.

19,884. Now supposing these lands were given back to the people, and the people occupied them as they did before 1818, how would you propose that their sheep stock should be managed?—The way that I would say is just to make club farms of it. Sheep are very easy to buy in these days, being so cheap.

19,885. And would every man have his own share separately, or would it be common property?—No, it would be one mark in the sheep stock, but you would have cattle of your own.

19,886. And one shepherd?—Yes.

19,887. Paid by the community?—Paid by the club farm.

19,888. And then in summer would you graze the farrow cattle there?—Yes, they used to be there.

19,889. Each crofter having his own stock of cattle?—Yes.

19,890. And would the whole of the sheep stock, with the exception of the hoggs, winter there?—Yes, every one of them.

19,891. The whole stock?—Yes. Mr Scott took the

farm there after Maclennan was there, and he wintered his hoggs there.

19,892. Wintered the whole stock?—Yes, mostly the whole stock, when he took it first. You see they were not going to the low country in those days at all.

19,893. And then before the big sheep farmers were introduced into this country, and before the evictions you referred to, was there such a thing as rack rent?—What do you mean by that?

19,894. Were the people rack-rented?—Too high rented.

19,895. In the olden time?—No. One of the proprietors went to Edinburgh and he never came back, and he took £2 off each township, and he said if he came back and if it did not pay, he would take it down.

19,896. Was it after the lands were taken from them that the rents began to go up?—Yes. The price of sheep and cattle was rising, and the rent was rising.

19,897. *The Chairman.*—Have you any personal knowledge of the use to which these places you have mentioned were put for wintering?—I don't understand.

19,898. Have you any personal knowledge of these lands you have mentioned being used for wintering?—For wintering sheep?

19,899. Yes?—Oh yes, my lord. When Mr Scott had the farm of the height of Lochcarron there, he was wintering the whole of the sheep there except the hoggs; and he was leaving some of the hoggs themselves, the best of them.

19,900. The whole of the sheep were wintered there?—Except the hoggs.

19,901. And even some of them. What was the name of that place?—Achnashellach.

19,902. What was the death-rate?—In the sheep?

19,903. Yes?—I cannot tell you; it would be according to the winter, and the snowstorms.

19,904. Was it sometimes very high?—Not very high in this good grazing, but it is high in bad grazing. It is always high in bad grazing.

19,905. *Mr Donald Macrae.*—Your lordship might ask him when the sheep stock was cleared off Achnashellach; that is a question that we omitted.

19,906. *The Chairman.*—When was the sheep stock cleared from Achnashellach?—In the year 1863. [*Mr Stuart.*—When Scott's lease expired.] Scott's lease expired about that time; Sir Alexander Matheson had the higher part of it for some time.

The following is the copy rental produced by the delegate:—

LOCHCARRON RENTAL, CROP THE YEAR 1756.

		£	s.	d.
Reraig, James Matheson,	Scots	16	0	0
Castle Strome, Colin Mackenzie,		11	15	$6\frac{8}{12}$
Mid Strome, Alexander Matheson,		9	10	0
Strome Carronach, Murdo Bain Mactorkil, and 6 others,		14	10	0
Wester Slumbay, Kenneth Mackenzie,		17	5	0
Easter Slumbay, John Mackenzie, Rorie Matheson, and 5 others,		12	15	0
Kirkton, Æneas Sage, Minister,		16	13	4
Bracklich and Tullich, Alexander Mackenzie of Fairburn		31	10	0
Ryvoachan, Alexander Mackenzie and John Mackenzie,		15	15	0
Eddaracharron and Change House, N. Jeffrey and Melling Law,		29	10	0
Coulag and Dalmartin, John Matheson and Rorie Mackenzie,		21	0	0
Balnacra, Rorie Brebider, and 6 others,		17	0	0
Arineackaig, Donald Matheson,		21	0	0
Upper Achintee, Duncan Maclennan, and 6 others,		13	13	4
Lower Achintee, William Murchison, and 4 others,		18	16	8
Lair, John Murchison, and 2 others,		7	13	4
Tullichan, John Mactavish, and 4 others,		7	13	4
Gortanfraoich, Rorie Murchison, and 4 others,		11	13	4
Craig, John Mackenzie, and 5 others,		12	5	$3\frac{4}{12}$
Easter Corrievannie, Duncan Macgregor, and 2 others,		4	8	$10\frac{8}{12}$
Corrielirie, John Mackenzie, and 2 others,		32	3	4
Change House of Coish, John Mackenzie, and 2 others,		1	13	4
Lochcarron Rental in all, crop in year 1756,		£344	4	$8\frac{8}{12}$

THE MINISTER STIPEND.

		£	s.	d.
Lochcarron estate,	Scots	41	3	9
Attadale estate,		5	15	$1\frac{8}{12}$
Sannachan and Courthill,		0	16	8

(Signed) RODERICK MACKENZIE.

Strathcarron, 28*th July* 1893.

JOHN KENNEDY, Crofter, Arineckaig (34)—*examined.*

19,907. *The Chairman.*—Are you a crofter?—Yes.

19,908. What rent do you pay?—£11, 4s.

19,909. Was your rent dealt with by the Crofters Commission?—Yes.

19,910. Did they make any change upon it?—Not the least.

19,911. It remained the same?—Yes.

19,912. Where is your croft?—Arineckaig.

19,913. I see the extent is 13 acres 2 roods 27 poles arable, and 3 acres outrun; present rent £11, 4s., fair rent £11, 4s. Whose estate are you on?—Sir Kenneth Matheson's.

19,914. What is it you wish to say?—Part of the old township lands was taken from us in the year 1819.

19,915. Can you point us to any new lands suitable for settlement?—That part of it would be to the advantage of the township, the part that was taken from them.

19,916. For grazing?—Yes.

19,917. Have you any desire to leave your present holding?—To extend it.

19,918. But not to leave it?—Not at present.

19,919. And the only extension you ask for is in the way of hill grazing?—Yes, there is no arable land near hand.

19,920. What was the extent of the land taken, can you tell us?—I cannot tell you the extent, but I could give the names of the marches.

19,921. You could show us the marches on the ground?—Yes. After that was taken from us we were overcrowded in 1863 by evictions from Achnashellach.

19,922. You mean that the township of Arineckaig was crowded up by evictions from Achnashellach?—Yes, three more crofters from Achnashellach. There were seven crofters at first, and one had two shares, so that there were only two crofters added to the township in that way; one of the three got the odd share.

19,923. And were there any other additions made to the township?—No, but the rent was raised. In 1818 the rent was £9, 4s. 5d.; and in 1858 it was raised to £15, 12s. In 1863 it was reduced to £10, 15s. The township was not very good afterwards; it was overcrowded.

19,924. Are you mentioning the rent of the township, or of each croft?—Each croft.

19,925. When was your rent made £11, 4s.?—In 1884.

19,926. Is there any other land you wish to tell us about?—There are lands in the hands of Sir Kenneth Matheson as deer forest,—Ben Tarsuinn; from Allt-

Lochcarron. — John Kennedy.

beath to Ben Tarsuinn the land would suit as it marches with the township. [*Mr Gordon.*—Is that Ben Dronnaig?—No, Ben Dronnaig lies to the southwest of Ben Tarsuinn. Is it above Loch Lunndaidh?—Yes.]

19,927. From Allt beath to Ben Tarsuinn is grazing land?—It is a deer forest now, part of Ben Dronnaig deer forest.

19,928. Which deer forest are you speaking about?—Ben Dronnaig deer forest in the hands of Sir Kenneth Matheson.

19,929. Any other lands?—Not close to the township; but there were 300 acres taken away by Sir Alexander Matheson of the common low ground pasture.

19,930. And what did Sir Alexander do with it?—It is in Sir Kenneth Matheson's hands still.

19,931. What is it used for?—There is one crofter settled on it, and some of it was added to the neighbouring township of Achantee.

19,932. Are all the 300 acres in the hands of crofters?—There is just part of it in the hands of one crofter.

19,933. And the other part of it?—It is in the hands of the proprietor, and the other part added to the township of Achantee. [*Mr Gordon.*—The whole of that hill face is in the hands of crofters, is it not?—The low ground.—Who has it?—It is in the hands of Sir Kenneth Matheson.]

19,934. That is exactly contrary to what you said to me just now. You said Sir Alexander took away 300 acres, and of these 300 acres a part is in the hands of crofters now?—What we had for our shepherd is in the possession of a crofter,—I don't know whether he is a crofter or not, but he is staying there.

19,935. And the rest of that land?—The rest of that land is in Sir Kenneth Matheson's hands.

19,936. What is he doing with it?—They cut peats there.

19,937. Who cut peats there?—The Achantee township, and several other townships.

19,938. Then is the whole of that land being used by crofters, either for cultivation or for grazing or for peats?—It is used for peats, part of it, but he took 40 acres back to the township last year.

19,939. He gave it back to the township?—Yes.

19,940. So that the whole of that land is being used by crofters in one form or another?—Oh certainly. [*Mr Sutherland.*—Who grazes on it?—There is no restriction on anybody, as far as I understand.]

19,941. It is all being used by crofters in one way or another?—And by cutting peats for distilling from Inverness, Dingwall and other parts.

19,942. Have the crofters free access to it to cut peats?—Oh certainly.

19,943. Are there any other lands you wish to mention?—Not next the township; but at Achnashellach there is very good land.

19,944. You have heard the evidence given by Roderick Mackenzie about that?—Yes.

19,945. And you agree with it?—Yes.

19,946. His statement was a very full one; you have nothing to add to it, have you?—No.

19,947. *Mr Sutherland.*—You referred to some grazing that was adjoining your grazing, out the way of Ben-Tarsuinn?—Yes.

19,948. It is at present used as a deer forest?—Yes.

19,949. Would it be a desirable addition to your grazing if you could get it?—It would be a great benefit to the township.

19,950. Is it better grazing than you have now got?—Yes, it is better grazing than any we have got; it is higher up.

19,951. It bounds with your present grazing?—Yes.

19,952. Can you give us any idea of the amount of grazing the township has got?—5769 acres.

19,953. Can you tell us how much the Achantee people have got?—No, I have no idea of that.

16,954. How many sheep have you got at Arineckaig?—Something like 800 sheep.

19,955. Is it managed as a club stock?—It is a club stock.

19,956. And if you got the piece you referred to from the deer forest, how much additional stock would it enable you to keep?—It would keep a good many more.

Lochcarron. — John Kennedy.

19,957. How many?—I could not tell the exact number.

19,958. Would it enable you to keep an additional hundred sheep?—Yes, and more, with the other side that was taken from us in 1818.

19,959. What part is that?—It is a deer forest as well.

19,960. How far up does it extend?—From Loch Dhughaill along our march to Bealachvernish, on the east side of our present march.

19,961. And where did it go then?—The march stopped there at that part.

19,962. And you would like to get that part along with the other part of the forest you referred to first?—Yes.

19,963. If you got it, would you be able to stock it?—We would.

19,964. How many families are there in Arineckaig?—Nine.

19,965. Have they equal shares in the club?—Equal shares in the common pasture, not in the arable land. They had at one time, but some have now double the number others have. They had at one time an equal share, and it was taken from them without any compensation and given to others.

19,966. About these 300 acres that you referred to, how do you say it was taken from you?—We never got any word that it was to be taken from us, they just took it themselves.

19,967. Who did?—Sir Alexander Matheson's factor.

19,968. And what did he do with it?—We had to carry wooden posts and to put stone on the ground.

19,969. And who got it after that?—It is in his own hands still.

19,970. Whose?—Sir Kenneth Matheson's. [*The Chairman.*—That is not in accordance with the information you gave me a few minutes ago.]

19,971. Sir Kenneth Matheson took the land from you and you have not got it back yet, is that it?—We have got 40 acres of it last year.

19,972. Of the 300?—Yes, that is all.

19,973. And did the Achantee crofters get the remainder?—They got part of it,—the most of it.

19,974. How much of it remains now?—And another man has part of it, but the greater part of it is in Sir Kenneth Matheson's hands.

19,975. You did not make it very clear for what purpose it was used?—It is not used except for cutting peats.

19,976. But is it not used for grazing?—There are people at Carnach who may graze their cows on it.

19,977. Is your contention that it was taken from you and given to some other crofters?—Part of it was given to one man.

19,978. You said that your desire was to have your present hill grazing extended?—Yes.

19,979. And you know the ground from which the additions could be taken with advantage?—Yes.

19,980. *The Chairman.*—Do you make any complaint with regard to that area of 300 acres?—Of course, it was a great complaint.

19,981. What is your complaint?—It was a great drawback.

19,982. What is your complaint?—That we used to winter our hoggs and cattle there through the winter time. They used to graze there whenever April and May came on; there was good grazing there.

19,983. And who has that now?—It is mostly in Sir Kenneth Matheson's hands.

19,984. Is it not the fact that the whole of that land is being used by crofters at present?—One crofter has part of it.

19,985. And the rest of it?—By peats.

19,986. And who get the peats?—The crofters; not us.

19,987. But it is used by crofters?—Oh certainly.

19,988. Then if it is used by crofters it is not land before us at all?—It is not rented by anybody.

19,989. Do you know about, it Mr Watson? [*Mr*

Watson.—There is some peat land that was reserved for the houses at Strathcarron and the crofters at Achantee and the other people there; and I believe at one time there was a bit of it proposed to be feued as a peat bank for the Ben Wyvis distillery; whether that is going on I cannot say.]

19,990. *Mr Sutherland.*—Is it used for grazing purposes, Mr Watson? [*Mr Watson.*—I do not think so; I think the crofters get the benefit of any crop that is on it.]

19,991. It is not appropriated by the proprietor?—I don't think so.

KENNETH MURCHISON, Ground Officer, Strathcarron (70)—*examined.*

19,992. *The Chairman.*—You are ground officer on the estate of Sir Kenneth Matheson?—Yes.

19,993. In Strathcarron?—In Strathcarron.

19,994. How long have you been ground officer?—Since first the time when the late Mackenzie of Applecross sold it I was under the proprietors of the estate.

19,995. You were under Mackenzie of Applecross?—Yes, I was in the same place.

19,996. Would you give your own explanation about these 300 acres to which Kennedy alluded?—It is a common for the use of the estate between the townships of Achantee and Arineckaig for cutting peats there, and the tenants agreed to give the land to the proprietor for improving it, taking in lands, and this land was taken at the same time which belonged to Arineckaig.

19,997. It was taken from Arineckaig, and when so taken what was done with it?—It was given for a common; there is a peat-moss there and it is a common for cutting peats.

19,998. It is a common for Arineckaig, I suppose, and not for Achantee?—Yes.

19,999. And who else?—And for Strathcarron, and whoever the proprietor would give leave to is getting it.

20,000. Did he give leave to the Ben Wyvis distillery?—Yes.

20,001. Are they using it now?—Yes.

20,002. Besides Achantee, Arineckaig and Strathcarron, and the Ben-Wyvis distillery, does anybody else use it?—Yes, the Inverness distillery.

20,003. Anyone else?—Well, they are giving it to some on Mr Murray's estate, some at Lochcarron village got leave to cut peats there. It is a common.

20,004. That land was taken from the Achantee tenants, was it?—The Arineckaig tenants.

20,005. Did they get any other lands instead of it?—I don't think so.

20,006. Was it a serious loss to them, this being taken away?—I believe it was, so far.

20,007. Was there any change made on their rents? [*John Kennedy.*—The rents were raised.]

20,008. Were the rents raised?—I am not sure if the rents were raised.

20,009. You are ground officer and ought to know?—I don't know everything.

20,010. When these lands were taken away were the rents raised?—I don't know; I am not sure. [*Mr Watson.*—There were very extensive improvements made for the whole of them, and the rents were rearranged by the late factor, Mr Mackenzie; some of the rents were increased according to the extent of the expenditure thus made.]

20,011. *Mr Gordon.*—But it is a fact that the last witness's croft, when inspected by the Crofters Commissioners, was found to be fairly rented? [*Kennedy.*—There is an appeal.]

20,012. *Mr Sutherland.*—The Arineckaig people lost the right of grazing over what you call a common?—Well, I don't think that, except as to the low ground that there is a tenant in and they would lose what the tenant fences; but the common was between them and others.

20,013. In other words, they had first the right of grazing and the right of cutting peats there?—Yes. Lochcarron.

20,014. And the one right was taken away?—It is not taken away yet. Kenneth Murchison.

20,015. The grazing right?—No; they could have their grazing. They have the grazing as well as ever, except the low ground that the one tenant has.

20,016. What was the extent of that?—The extent of this ground is this that was taken from us.

20,017. Forty acres?—I believe it was about that, between lochs and bogs.

20,018. And rights of peat cutting were given to others along with them who had no rights before?—Yes.

20,019. And there was no reduction of rent? They got no new right, but their old right was decreased?—The Achantee people were taken in with them, and the distilleries. It is called a common ground.

20,020. Yes, but what is it? Had these people at first a right of grazing and of peat cutting?—Yes.

20,021. They afterwards had to share that with others, and lost, as you admit, some of the grazing?—They lost the grazing.

20,022. And they got no reduction of rent?—It was raised for the improvement.

20,023. *The Chairman.*—Did Sir Alexander Matheson at the time make considerable improvements?—A great deal. It was for the improvements that the rents were raised; new houses, &c.

20,024. Did he build new houses for the tenants?—For some of them.

20,025. For several of them?—Yes.

20,026. And what other improvements did he make for the tenants?—He drained and fenced and ploughed their lands.

20,027. Their own lands?—He reclaimed new lands for them.

20,028. And was it after all that was done that the rents were readjusted and some of them raised?—Yes.

20,029. But was there any case of land being taken, the 300 acres being taken, and nothing else done for the tenant, and yet the rent raised?—I don't know about that; I don't think so.

20,030. *Mr Gordon.*—I quite understand that these additional townships got the right of grazing and cutting peats wherethey had not it before?—Well, it was the rule on the estate before, when it was in the hands of Mackenzie of Applecross, that they should cut peats where it was convenient for them, and it is for them that the people of Lochcarron are going from Mr Murray's ground to Sir Alexander's estate for peats,—their own peat ground is not convenient for them and they sign a book every year for liberty to cut peats there.

20,031. In point of fact, before the estates were broken up and sold, the Strathcarron people cut peats on this moss?—Yes, part of moss, where it was convenient for them.

20,032. Do you know the deer forest that the last witness spoke to before he mentioned the deer forest of Ben Dronnaig and the portion of it called Alltbeath?—I don't know about that, that is the south side, and I don't know about it. [*Mr Watson.*—It is part of the estate of Lochalsh.]

20,033. It was Achnashellach you spoke of first, was it not? [*Kennedy.*—Yes, on the east side of the township, above Loch Dhughaill.]

20,034. That was not part of Sir Kenneth Matheson's? [*Kennedy.*—No, it stretched from Loch Dhughaill upwards.]

20,035. You would like to get from Loch Dhughaill up to Loch Calaire? [*Kennedy.*—He would cut the march up to Bealach-an-Sgoltaidh and leave the rest for others.]

KENNETH MACDONALD, Crofter, Coulags (38)—*examined.* Kenneth Macdonald.

20,036. *The Chairman.*—What rent do you pay?—I pay no rent, I am not a crofter.

20,037. You are a cottar?—I am a labourer.

Lochcarron.
Kenneth Macdonald.

20,038. You have no land and no stock?—No stock.

20,039. You live solely by your labour?—I assist on the croft; the croft is held by my brother.

20,040. What is your brother's name?—Malcolm Macdonald.

20,041. What rent does he pay?—£11.

20,042. Was his rent fixed by the Crofters Commission?—No.

20,043. He did not apply to them?—No.

20,044. Is he under lease?—Yes.

20,045. A nineteen years' lease?—There are nineteen to run still.

20,046. It is a new lease then?—No, the lease was signed six years ago.

20,047. What is the length of the lease?—Twenty-five years.

20,048. At a rent of £11?—That is the rent of each; there are three in the township.

20,049. That is the township of Coulags?—Yes.

20,050. Are they all under lease?—All under lease.

20,051. Do you wish to get a holding for yourself?—Certainly.

20,052. Did you hear the evidence given by Roderick Mackenzie?—Yes, the most of it.

20,053. And does it state your views on the matter?—Yes, but there were some things he did not give evidence about.

20,054. I would like you to give your evidence with regard to what he omitted?—There was a township of Goirtean-Fraoich.

20,055. Where is that?—On the estate of Achnashellach.

20,056. When did it cease to be a township?—1863.

20,057. How many were in it?—Eight tenants.

20,058. Who cleared it?—Lord Hill.

20,059. When did Lord Hill come into possession of the estate?—I could not tell the year. [*Mr Stuart.*—1861.]

20,060. Did he make any other clearances?—No.

20,061. Do you mention any other place?—Not that Lord Hill cleared.

20,062. But anywhere?—There was some land taken off the township of Balnacra. All their hill grazing was taken away except a very small portion.

20,063. Where is that?—That is to the east of Coulags.

20,064. How many were there, do you say?—Six tenants.

20,065. And is there land there suitable for occupation now?—They have their crofts, the low ground.

20,066. But the hill grazing was taken away?—Not altogether; the lowest portion was left to them.

20,067. They kept the lower, and the higher was taken away and put under deer?—Yes, under deer.

20,068. Can you tell us how much was taken away?—I cannot give you the extent.

20,069. Can you give me the carry of it?—They would have between 300 and 400 sheep, I should say.

20,070. And how many have they now?—That would be taken for them, they lost the grazing of the number.

20,071. Now do you mention anywhere else?—The township of Coulags.

20,072. What about it?—Their hill grazing was taken away.

20,073. The whole of it?—The higher portions.

20,074. The whole of the higher portions?—Yes.

20,075. Anywhere else?—No, except the grazing that was taken from those townships in the year 1818.

20,076. I suppose we may take the evidence of Mackenzie as pretty complete on the point?—Yes, my father and grandfather and great grandfather were there.

20,077. What was your father's name?—Donald Macdonald.

20,078. When did he die?—1859.

20,079. Where was his township?—Coulags.

20,080. When he was living as a crofter or small tenant in Coulags, how many tenants were there?—Six, but not when he died; there would be six crofters when he died.

20,081. And they are all away now?—No, there are three left. Lochcarron. Kenneth Macdonald.

20,082. What became of the other three?—They left of their own accord.

20,083. What became of their holdings?—Most of it was added to the township.

20,084. It was not taken from the township?—Part of their low grounds was taken.

20,085. And the rest was added to the township?—Yes.

20,086. What became of the part of the low ground that was taken away?—It was added to the township of Balnacra when their hill grazing was made a deer forest.

20,087. To make up for the lost hill grazing?—Yes, but it was not half the loss.

20,088. That was the arrangement, at any rate?—Yes.

20,089. Is there any other place you would like to mention?—The land that was taken from Achnashellach, from Coulags and Balnacra.

20,090. Give us the names of the places taken from Coulags and Balnacra?—Coille-breac was taken from Balnacra in the year 1818; and Coille-bhan was taken from Coulags in the same year.

20,091. And is now under deer?—Yes.

20,092. Was that grazing land?—Grazing land. They used it as grazing land; they used to live there mostly all the summer.

20,093. But they did not live there all the year round?—No.

20,094. Have you mentioned all you wish to mention?—Yes, I think I have. In 1879 the hill grazing was taken from Coulags, the upper portion, and made a deer forest.

20,095. By Lord Hill?—By Lord Wimborne.

20,096. Can you tell us the extent of the carry of the land taken by Lord Wimborne?—I cannot tell you the extent of the land, but I know the number of sheep that were delivered to him.

20,097. How many were delivered to him?—494.

20,098. He took them over at a valuation?—Yes.

20,099. And I suppose paid for them?—Certainly.

20,100. Did he make any removals in 1879?—No.

20,101. *Mr Gordon.*—Is Coulags, to which you refer, the lowest place on the Wimborne estate?—Yes.

20,102. That burn that goes past Coulags, is that the march of the property?—The burn is the march between Sir Kenneth Matheson and Lord Wimborne.

20,103. Sir Kenneth goes up between Lord Wimborne and Mr Murray?—Yes.

20,104. Was the grazing common to Coulags and Balnacra?—No, each of them had their own common grazing.

20,105. But it was only the highest portion of the hill that was taken from them?—Yes.

20,106. How many sheep have they at present?—Close on 200.

20,107. And this place of Goirtean you have told us about, was that a sheep place?—It was a club farm; they were all made club farms, what was left of them.

20,108. Are there any crofters at Goirtean now?—Not one.

20,109. Are you acquainted with sheep stock? Have you been a shepherd at all?—No.

20,110. What are you?—I am a labourer.

20,111. Do you act as a gillie at all?—Yes, I have done that sometimes.

20,112. Do you usually do that?—No, not for the last six years.

20,113. Do you think it would be an advantage if Coulags and Balnacra got back their hill?—I know their whole class of stock deteriorated in value since they lost their hill grazing,—their sheep and cattle I mean.

20,114. Is it green ground up at the march of the burn there?—No, it is black ground at the burn; it is mixed pasture.

20,115. *Mr Sutherland.*—How far did the hill grazing of the Coulags people extend before it was curtailed?—It marched with the New Kelso and Balnacra grounds.

20,116. But how far outward did it extend towards the hill?—About six miles.

20,117. And how far does it extend now?—It extends now about a mile from the township.

20,118. What was done with the grazing as soon as it was taken away from the Coulags crofters?—Made into deer forest.

20,119. Was it taken away since the deer forest was formed?—Yes, certainly. Achnashellach was a forest long before that time.

20,120. And it was added to the forest?—It was added to the forest.

20,121. Then with regard to the township of Goirtean-Fraoch, how far does their pasture extend?—How far did it extend?

20,122. Yes?—It extended into the march with Sir Kenneth Mackenzie of Gairloch.

20,123. What is the name of the place?—It is called the Big Moss.

20,124. And what was done with it again?—It was made a deer forest.

20,125. Also added to the deer forest?—Yes, but it was some time under sheep afterwards.

20,126. It was added to a sheep farm first?—I don't think so, but it was put under sheep some time afterwards by another proprietor—the portion that came into the hands of the Coulin proprietor.

20,127. He put sheep on it, did he?—He had a tenant there.

20,128. And the tenant's holding was afterwards added to the deer forest?—When Lord Wimborne bought Coulin he turned out the tenant and made it deer forest.

20,129. Was it good stock that was in Goirtean?—It was the best crofter stock in Lochcarron.

20,130. Were they able to winter hoggs there?—Yes, they were sending them nowhere else. Two of them came to our township, Coulags,—three of them.

20,131. How many tenants are in Goirtean?—Not one.

20,132. They are all blotted out?—All blotted out. I would know their class of stock when they came to Coulags; I would have known it although I had been a stranger in the place.

20,133. And do you attribute the good qualities of the stock to the grazing?—Certainly; bad land would never make a good stock.

20,134. And that land is now devoted to raising deer?—It is devoted to a deer forest.

20,135. Now if there was a possibility of getting such a holding as this with the hill grazing extended, would you be glad to take one yourself?—Certainly.

20,136. You would be glad to get the chance?—Certainly.

20,137. And have you any doubt as to whether you would be able to stock it and work it?—Perhaps I might not be able to stock it altogether.

20,138. The first year, you mean?—Yes.

20,139. But if you got a reasonable time, would you be able to do it?—I think so; I don't know what I might do.

20,140. But taking all the circumstances into account with which you are acquainted, as I have no doubt you are acquainted with them all, you would be very glad to get the opportunity of taking such a croft?—Certainly.

20,141. And as to the question of rent, you would be perfectly satisfied to take the rent that would be fixed by a public tribunal?—A fair rent.

20,142. And you would be quite willing to leave the fixing of the fair rent to any competent parties?—Yes.

20,143. Or a public tribunal appointed by Parliament?—Still better.

20,144. *Mr Duncan Shaw.*—Are not the crofters of Balnacra getting some of the grazing back?—Yes.

20,145. Lord Wimborne spent a great deal of money on improvements at Coulags, did he not?—No, he never erected a post or fence to us.

20,146. Did he erect any cottages?—He gave us help to erect them.

20,147. And did he do any fencing?—No, he never erected a post to us. He gave us a few posts and about nine cwts of wire; that is all he gave us. Lochcarron. — Kenneth Macdonald.

20,148. I suppose you don't know what it cost him?—No.

20,149. *The Chairman.*—Would you mention, Mr Shaw, what was the extent of the land restored by Lord Wimborne? [*Mr Shaw.*—I cannot tell that, but I have it here that the crofters of Coulags and Balnacra now have about 2000 acres between them.]

20,150. What this man says is that only a very small portion was restored compared with what was taken away. (*To witness*). I want to ask you this, I think you said you had no stock?—No.

20,151. Have you any capital of your own, any private means?—Yes.

20,152. And would you be able to venture upon a new holding without assistance, or would you look for partial assistance?—Partial assistance.

20,153. *Mr Donald Macrae.*—Your lordship might ask him is he aware that there are others in this part of the country who have no land at all and yet who would be very glad if facilities were offered, and who are able to stock if they got the chance.

20,154. *The Chairman.*—Do you know of others in a position similar to yourself, viz., who are anxious to get new holdings if they could obtain them on reasonable terms?—There are very few left in the part of the district where I live.

20,155. How many?—I don't know one.

20,156. I mean in the district?—There are several in the parish.

20,157. How many?—I cannot tell you.

20,158. Will there be half a dozen?—Oh yes.

20,159. Any more?—I would not venture upon numbers. (*A voice*).—There is another here who would take land if there was a chance.

DUNCAN MACLEAN, Crofter, Balnacra (82)—*examined.* Duncan Maclean.

20,160. *The Chairman.*—Were you formerly in Slumbay?—Yes.

20,161. And you went last year to Balnacra?—I got possession of it last year.

20,162. Of a croft at Balnacra?—Yes.

20,163. What rent have you to pay?—£4, 10s.

20,164. You are not under the Crofters Act, I think?—Under lease.

20,165. You got a lease, did you?—Yes, the lease and the Crofters Act too.

20,166. We need not go into that subject. But did you get a written lease from the proprietor?—No indeed.

20,167. *Mr Shaw.*—I can explain about that. He succeeded his brother, who had a right in common with the other tenants to a lease of the Balnacra township, and the lease gives them the privileges of the Crofters Act; but it is a lease.

20,168. *The Chairman.*—For a term of years? [*Mr Shaw.*—For a term of years.]

20,169. Specially bringing the tenants by its terms within the scope of the Act? [*Mr Shaw.*—Yes. I understand, however, that the proprietor is entitled to take advantage of the lease.]

20,170. They must either be inside the Act or outside the Act? [*Mr Shaw.*—Well, but there are questions of compensation.]

20,171. You mean that they are partly under the Act and partly outside the Act? [*Mr Shaw.*—I fancy that is the way of it.]

20,172. Have they the security of tenure that the Act confers? [*Mr Shaw.*—No, I think not, because the lease fixes a term of years.]

20,173. I should like to see that lease; it seems to be a nondescript sort of document.

20,174. *Mr Sutherland.*—It ratifies the Act of Parliament, does it? [*Mr Shaw.*—It gives the crofter, as I understand it, the privileges of the Act so far as not inconsistent with the lease. I daresay Mr Manners will produce it if required.]

20,175. *The Chairman.*—Are you satisfied with the

Lochearron. Duncan Maclean.

holding you have got at Balnacra?—It is not easy to say.

20,176. What is it you wish to tell us?—I have seen nine proprietors on this estate.

20,177. Who were the nine proprietors?—There was one of the name of Thomas Og Mackenzie of Applecross. I mind of him well enough.

20,178. Who succeeded him?—A sister of his.

20,179. What was her name?—I don't know that.

20,180. Who succeeded the sister?—Another Thomas.

20,181. And who came after him?—The Duke of Leeds; he sold it to the Duke of Leeds.

20,182. Who succeeded the Duke of Leeds?—The Duchess. [*Mr Stuart.*—Lord Conyers succeeded him.]

20,183. Who succeeded the Duchess?—I think Lord Conyers succeeded the Duke of Leeds.

20,184. Who succeeded Lord Conyers?—The Hon. Sir John Stuart.

20,185. And who came after Sir John Stuart?—Mr Dugald Stuart.

20,186. Then Mr Murray?—Yes.

20,187. Do you know the land of Balnacra very well?—Yes, I know Balnacra very well; I was brought up there, and was there for forty years.

20,188. Is the land there suitable for new holdings?—There are too many on already.

20,189. Is there anything more you would like to tell us?—I would like to tell you about this village here that my brother told me of.

20,190. What was the name of the place?—Torr-nan-clar.

20,191. There were four tenants there?—At that time.

20,192. And are they away now?—Of course, they came down to this low place.

20,193. To Jeantown?—To Jeantown. That was when Jeantown was made plots; there are 35 plots in it and surrounding, about Tullich and Kirkton and New Kelso and thereabout. I join with Mackenzie there.

20,194. You agree with Mackenzie's evidence about Tullich and Kirkton and Aird?—And New Kelso. At Goirtean-Fraoich, where my mother lived, they had a hill pasture, on which there were 1000 sheep. I know about Moruisg; I was going to Falkirk, and I have seen about 600 wedders going from Moruisg to Falkirk.

20,195. During the season?—Yes, and there were about 200 going from the head of Coire-bhanie.

20,196. Were these crofters' sheep?—They were crofters' at one time, but Scott got it, and there were nine shepherds about that time in all the forest of Strathcarron.

20,197. How many sheep would they have?—About 400 or 500 each.

20,198. How many hirsels had they?—There were nine hirsels.

20,199. They would require 400 or 500 sheep each?—There is not the least doubt of that, and more, but I will make it as easy as anything.

20,200. Now do you wish to mention any other old township that Mackenzie referred to?—Wester and Easter Coire-bhanie and Coire-liridh and Craig.

20,201. You remember these places?—I remember them when they were evicted in the year 1818, and I know the name of the people that were there.

20,202. You remember the evictions themselves?—Yes.

20,203. And you remember the names of the people who were evicted?—Yes.

20,204. You saw the evictions taking place?—Well, I did.

20,205. Who carried out the evictions?—It was one of the name of Murdo Maclennan.

20,206. Was he factor, or ground officer, or what?—He was the man that took the place, of course; Thomas Og, the first Thomas that I mentioned, was the proprietor.

20,207. The removals were at his instance, and what became of the people evicted?—Oh indeed, they were put among other people.

20,208. Some were thrust in upon other townships?—Yes.

20,209. Some were brought down to the shore?—To these plots, and so on.

Lochearron. Duncan Maclean.

20,210. And some found a home in another country?—Some had pity on them, and got them homes; it was not so easy to leave the country at that time as it is now; the sea was very rough to them in those days.

20,211. They had not steamers in those days?—No.

20,212. Were you evicted yourself?—No.

20,213. Was your father evicted?—No, but my mother was evicted from Goirtean-Fraoich.

20,214. And where did she go?—She went as one of the intruders to Coulags.

20,215. Was your father dead at that time?—Long before that.

20,216. And how many of a family were you?—Six.

20,217. Including yourself?—Five and myself.

20,218. Were you in arrear of rent at the time?—No, not a penny. I have had crofts myself for forty years, and I never was in arrear.

20,219. You despise being in arrear?—Yes.

20,220. Who got the land from which your mother was evicted?—Lord Hill evicted them, and made a forest of it; and even this river you speak about as overflowing, it is like the river Nile, it would grow grass in the summer time just like anything.

20,221. The same as the Nile?—The very same. I know a great deal of the country, by driving and going about, and I know both the high ground and down the country.

20,222. Did you ever go to Falkirk with sheep?—Yes.

20,223. How often?—I went several times.

20,224. Helping to drive sheep to the market at Falkirk?—Yes, for Scott, and I have been for nine years with one Peter Brown, a brother of Col. Brown.

20,225. *Mr Sutherland.*—I would like to ask you one question. It is about the sheep that were put on this grazing; they were good sheep, you say?—Oh, they were that.

20,226. Those that you drove yourself to Falkirk?—They were cheviot sheep that Scott had.

20,227. And they fetched a high price, did they?—Oh, they were good sheep.

20,228. Did they winter them up there?—They wintered so many of them; some of them were sent down at any rate to the low country, and they would have them about on these moors. It was the first place that big sheep were ever put on. Well, then, when they were wintering the old would go away, and they would winter what you call the two-year olds.

20,229. But what did they send down?—The three-year olds.

20,230. The youngest sheep and the weakest?—Yes.

20,231. The rest were there all the winter, of course?—Yes.

20,232. And the land that reared these good sheep, how is it used now?—It is used as a deer forest.

20,233. Did you ever see deer on that ground the time the sheep were there?—That I did.

20,234. Plenty?—Several times.

20,235. The deer were there along with the sheep, were they?—Yes, a few would come now and then, but they were not so plentiful at that time.

20,236. You think there were not so many as there are now?—Oh, not at all so many.

20,237. Do you think the deer then come to a place when the sheep are cleared away?—I think they are rogues and thieves, the deer. They will take something from the croft whenever they can get it.

20,238. And when the deer forest is cleared, it gathers all the deer from the sheep farms round about?—Oh, they will be about the best ground.

20,239. And when one deer forest is made in a place where there is no other one made, do they all gather in there?—They know very well that there is such a place; they smell it.

20,240. And is that a reason why they are making deer forests, do you think?—I don't know what is the reason.

20,241. Do you think then that the deer come in

from the sheep farms all round when a deer forest is made?—Applecross was the only place where the deer were plenty in my former days, and it was mostly the home farm even. In the winter time, if it came heavy snow storms, you would see them coming down the side of the hill and going to Applecross and the sea-shore.

20,242. And do they die?—That they do, in scores every year.

20,243. Did you ever hear what is called the rate of mortality in deer? Did you ever hear how many of them die in a hundred?—There will not be some very well pleased to tell about that, those who will be following me.

20,244. Did you ever hear the number of deer that are now in the deer forest?—No.

20,245. Have you any idea of the number of acres it takes to keep a deer?—He will wander from here to there and everywhere.

20,246. You say they gather from other places?—So they do, in a good place.

20,247. Have you any reason to suppose that they are any more plentiful now than they used to be?—Oh, they are.

20,248. Where?—In the deer forest.

20,249. But they are less numerous in the sheep farms?—Oh, they are.

20,250. They are simply gathered from one place into another?—They don't like people to go in among them.

20,251. But is it your own opinion that the land would be put to far better use in rearing sheep, the same as it was?—The ground is not so good.

20,252. As it was?—As it was.

20,253. Why?—I don't know.

20,254. Is it because it is not grazed?—Oh indeed, it was better about my first days than it is now.

20,255. When it was carrying more sheep?—It was carrying more sheep, but the west country was never for anything but grazing unless what would keep the cattle, and green crop would grow, and these things.

20,256. Then about the river; you were saying it was like the River Nile. Did it give a better crop after the floods?—Yes.

20,257. Did it bring down soil on the top of the land, and top-dress it?—It brought some stuff or another on the green ground, and they could grow grass when warm weather would come. It would grow uncommonly well, better than any other place in the country.

20,258. What is the name of the river, the Carron is it?—Yes, the head of the Carron, Achnashellach river we call it at the head of the loch.

20,259. *Mr Gordon.*—Do you live upon your croft?—I live sometimes on the one.

20,260. Have you two crofts?—No, I have one son in a croft and another son in another croft.

20,261. When you were younger, did you work at anything off your croft?—I did, and was forty years on the croft.

20,262. You could not live upon your croft without making money otherwise?—I tried the best way; a croft hardly keeps a person, it would require a good croft.

20,263. What size of a croft up at Craig would be necessary to keep a man and his family?—It is not according to the arable land; I would not give too much arable land at all, for it is expensive; but three or four cows and about 100 or 130 sheep on the hill pasture would do.

20,264. You think that would be enough to keep a man and his family?—So I think. It used to do us forty years ago.

20,265. Is there any work about there that the crofters could get to do off their crofts, because the attending on the sheep, especially if it was a club farm, would not be required; the sheep would be under a shepherd? Is there any other work to be got in that quarter except what is on the croft?—Not any, except from these great people.

20,266. But if they are cleared out of the country, there would be no work?—If the deer forest was broken and the sportsmen sent out, there would be no work.

Lochcarron. — Duncan Maclean.

20,267. Then you mean that in the meantime, if on the one hand they have taken away the sheep ground, they are of use, on the other hand, in giving work to the people in the neighbourhood?—The sportsmen, yes. And those that come first they give work, and then they get tired of it and give it up.

20,268. Then you are the better of a change of laird occasionally?—Oh, it is not that, but I think I had a right to do as I did in Morayshire.

20,269. What were you doing in Morayshire? Were you a shepherd?—Yes.

20,270. At the glen of Rothes?—Yes. I knew a great deal of Morayshire; I know the whole of it.

20,271. So do I. You were a shepherd up there?—Yes.

20,272. Then you know well enough about sheep?—I ought to know about sheep.

20,273. Supposing these lands were put under sheep again, or a part of them, would you recommend their being put under the club farm system, or each man to have his own stock?—I know when Goirtean Fraoich was there, every one had his own sheep, but, of course, they had one shepherd between them. But it was about that time that they were put under the same mark by the factor.

20,274. Would it not be of importance to have the whole of them in a club farm; would they not sell better with one mark?—Most likely they would; I would approve of that.

20,275. And they would have a better chance of being kept clean and dipped in time?—Yes, they would.

20,276. There is always some man who would be behind,—a black sheep in every flock?—Yes, there is; sometimes two or three.

20,277. Then you would approve of the club farm?—Yes.

20,278. *The Chairman.*—You said you would not give too much arable for a croft up there. What extent of arable would you give?—I think it would be plenty if a man had about 12 acres or thereabouts, with plenty of hill pasture.

20,279. Hill pasture to carry 130 sheep?—Yes, and a few cattle.

20,280. And a horse?—And a horse.

20,281. How many cows?—I think four cows would do. It would not do to keep too many cows there; they are expensive to keep.

20,282. Now, I am going to read you a passage from Hogg, The Ettrick Shepherd's Tour made in the Highlands in 1805, that is ninety years ago or eight years before you were born. He says:—'Proceeding up the 'glen, I lost sight of Loch Carron, crossed a rapid river 'which issued from amongst the hills to the north, saw 'numbers of Highland cottages in clusters, sheep, mostly 'of the old Highland breed, and some goats, and at last 'came to a change-house, of which I do not know the name, 'at the north-east corner of a lake in the middle of the 'Strath.' That seems to describe the state of matters in his day pretty accurately. Do you remember the change-house?—That I do; I was for eleven years in it.

20,283. In the change-house?—In the old change-house.

20,284. Who kept it?—It was not a change-house in my days; when the new road was made there was a public house put up at Craig, and my father went and took it.

20,285. And you lived with your father in the change-house?—Yes, for eleven years, just close to where the lodge of Achnashellach is, at the end of the loch.

20,286. That is Loch-Dhughaill?—Yes.

20,287. Do you remember the name of the man that used to be in the change-house before?—He was of the name of Duncan Macgregor.

20,288. *Mr Duncan Shaw.*—You said the ground near the river was like the banks of the Nile, very good for producing crops of hay. Don't you think the land near about there would be rather dangerous for

Lochcarron. — Duncan Maclean.

producing crop?—Oh, the proprietor would have to bank the river.

20,289. *Mr John Stuart.*—Do you remember when Applecross and Lochcarron estate was sold to Lord Middleton and Lord Hill?—Yes.

20,290. Do you remember that at Achnashellach there was a man Scott who held as a sheep farm one-third of the whole of this estate?—Yes, I know that.

20,291. *The Chairman.*—Scott held the best of it, did he?—Oh yes, far the best of it.

20,292. What was the date of that?—I can hardly tell about the date; I would say about fifty years ago, and later. The farm was not taken from him until the Duke of Leeds got it.

22,293. He was a very large sheep farmer?—He was a very large sheep farmer.

20,294. The largest in the district?—Yes.

20,295. And he used to send his sheep to Falkirk?—Yes.

Alexander Macnair.

ALEXANDER MACNAIR, Crofter, Jeantown (67).
(Examined in Gaelic through an Interpreter.)

20,296. *The Chairman.*—Was your rent dealt with by the Crofters Commission?—Yes.

20,297. What was your old rent?—£4.

20,298. And what is the new rent?—£2, 8s.

20,299. Do you remember coming into Jeantown to live?—I was born in Jeantown.

20,300. Where had your father been before?—In Jeantown.

20,301. And your grandfather?—Not in Jeantown.

20,302. Where was he?—In Mid-Strome.

20,303. Why did your grandfather leave Mid-Strome to come to Jeantown?—He did not care for Mid-Strome, and he went east to Arineckaig for some time.

20,304. And then he came from Arineckaig to Jeantown?—No, he died there.

20,305. Do you wish to tell us anything about land?—No, but the hill pasture was taken from us twenty-three years ago, and we were still paying rent for it until the Commission came.

20,306. Who occupies that hill pasture now?—Captain Ferguson of Tullich, but one Mackenzie had it before.

20,307. Do you wish to get back that pasture, or to get other pasture?—We expect to get it back until we get repaid for what we paid for it.

20,308. Do you wish an extension of your hill grazing?—Yes, indeed we do.

20,309. Have you any hill grazing at present?—Very little but black moss.

20,310. What stock have you at present?—One cow and calf.

20,311. And no sheep?—Two lambs.

20,312. You wish to be able to keep sheep?—Yes, if we get the hill pasture.

20,313. Did you keep sheep when you had that hill pasture which you lost?—No, but cattle.

20,314. What cattle had you then?—Two cows and a stirk each, and whoever wished to keep a horse might do so; I myself kept a horse.

20,315. You don't keep a horse now?—No.

20,316. Are you willing and ready to pay the necessary rent for additional grazing, if you get it?—We are still paying rent for it.

20,316*a*. *Mr Munro.*—How many of a family have you?—Four.

20,317. Are they all living with you still?—Only one.

20,318. Did you manage to bring your children up and send them out to the world from a small croft?—Yes.

20,319. If you got additional land, would you be able to take it and stock it without assistance from outside?—It would be heavy upon me now, for I am an old man now and my family away.

20,320. From whom would you expect help to come?—From government.

20,321. Would you be able to repay the government any advance made?—Little by little, as the place itself repaid it.

20,322. And you think you could do that and pay rent as well?—If the fair rent was like fair rent. Lochcarron. — Alexander Macnair.

20,323. *Mr Gordon.*—Are you a fisherman?—I gave it up long ago.

20,324. Could you describe to us the hill ground that was lost, what extent it was?—Yes.

20,325. Did it extend over above the club pasture?—Yes.

20,326. It crossed over above Kirkton, and marched with the club? Did they keep sheep on that hill pasture?—No.

20,327. What did they graze on it?—Seventy cows in all, and a stirk each, and sometimes horses.

20,328. *Mr Sutherland.*—What was done with the grazing of theirs that was taken away?—Capt. Ferguson has it under sheep.

20,329. *Mr Duncan Shaw.*—You stated that you were still paying for the grazing that was taken away. But was not your rent fixed by the Crofters Commission?—It was.

20,330. Did not the Commission look at your arable land and your grazing?—Yes.

20,331. *Mr Sutherland.*—When was the grazing taken away from you?—Twenty-three years ago.

20,332. And when did the Commission hear your cases?—Two years ago.

20,333. Was your rent reduced twenty-three years ago when the grazing was taken away from you?—Not until the Commission came.

20,334. So that for twenty years you were paying for a grazing that had been taken away from you?—Yes.

20,335. *Mr Duncan Shaw.*—Did not the proprietor reduce your rent before the Commission came? Was not Mr Murray giving reductions?—I did not hear of it.

20,336. Did you get no reduction from the proprietor off that rent of £4 that you said you were paying before the Commission came?—Yes, a little then.

20,337. *Mr Sutherland.*—What date was that?—I cannot say.

20,338. Is it six years ago?—I believe it is.

20,339. *The Chairman.*—What was the reduction, Mr Shaw? [*Mr Shaw.*—15 per cent.]

20,340. When? [*Mr Shaw.*—That was in 1885–86, and then subsequently it was further reduced until the Commission came.]

20,341. At what date was it further reduced before the Commission came? [*Mr Shaw.*—In 1887.]

20,342. And what was the reduction then made? [*Mr Shaw.*—33½ per cent.]

20,343. It would simplify the matter if you could give us the original rent of this man's holding, the amount of the first reduction, and the amount of the second reduction before the Commission came, with the dates. Can you give the figures for his individual case? [*Mr Shaw.*—I cannot give you the dates exactly, because I have not the estate rental here, but the original rent was £4, 5s. 2d. with 5s. of interest.]

20,344. And what was the amount of the first reduction? [*Mr Shaw.*—It was 15 per cent. on that rent. As far as I recollect it was reduced in 1887 to £3.]

20,345. That was a reduction of—? [*Mr Shaw.*—33½ per cent.]

20,346. Additional or altogether?—[*Mr Shaw.*—Altogether.]

20,347. Then when the Commission came they reduced the £3 to £2, 8s.? [*Mr Shaw.*—Yes.]

20,348. But that does not quite meet the man's complaint. He says that for a long number of years he had been paying rent for grazing that was taken away? [*Mr Shaw.*—I don't see how he can hold the present management liable for that.]

20,349. *Mr Donald Macrae.*—Was this reduction offered in 1886 by the estate, confined exclusively to those tenants who paid up all their arrears? I know this case thoroughly, we had it thrashed out thoroughly in the land court?—I cannot say indeed, but there may be some one present who can.

20,350. Did the crofters all apply to the Crofters Commission for an extension of their holdings? Did

Lochcarron. — Alexander Macnair.

they apply for Corraig, for these lands of which you were deprived twenty-three years ago?—Yes, and we applied to Mr Murray himself when he bought the estate.

20,351. Did Mr Macintyre's branch of the Crofters Commission come and deal with that application?—Yes, they were speaking about it, but they said it was under lease.

20,352. When the crofters of Jeantown had Corraig originally, what lump rent did Jeantown pay for Corraig?—They paid £30, and four men collected it.

20,353. It was a separate rent, paid separately. Then how many years is it that that rent for Corraig was amalgamated with the rents of the crofts?—Mackenzie of Applecross put the rent of Corraig together with the rents of the crofts.

20,354. And then for twenty-one years, until the Crofters Commission came, they were paying that £30 for Corraig while the tenant of Tullich had it, and while the laird was getting another rent from the tenant of Tullich for it?—Mackenzie had it first, and we were paying rent for it while Mackenzie had it, and Captain Ferguson of Tullich, came after Mackenzie.

20,355. And there was no word on the part of the estate of reducing your rent in consideration of that until the Act of Parliament put the crofters in a position to apply for a fair rent?—No.

William Mackenzie.

WILLIAM MACKENZIE, Crofter, Jeantown (72)—*examined.*

20,356. *The Chairman.*—Was your rent fixed by the Commission?—Yes.

20,357. What was the old rent?—£9, 14s.

20,358. And the new rent?—£5, 14s.

20,359. I see the area of your holding is 8 acres 3 roods 30 poles arable, 1 acre 0 roods 31 poles outrun, and two shares in a grazing of 164 acres common to 27 individuals, with 35 shares?—Yes.

20,360. Did you hear the evidence of Roderick Mackenzie?—Yes.

20,361. And do you concur in that evidence?—I think I do.

20,362. Have you any addition to make to it?—I am not too well acquainted east there.

20,363. What is it you wish to tell us?—I would like to tell you about the land that was taken away from us.

20,364. What land was that?—Corraig.

20,365. When was it taken?—Twenty-three years ago; our stock w s given off.

20,366. Is that the land of which the previous witness, Alexander Macnair spoke?—Yes.

20,367. Is this the state of matters, that when the land was taken your rent was not reduced?—That was the reason of the proprietor granting an abatement,—so that he might get in the arrears.

20,368. Is it the fact that when you lost that grazing, there was no reduction made upon your rent?—No reduction.

20,369. And was the land that had been taken from you let to some one else at a rent?—Yes, and it is let now.

20,370. So that the landlord was taking two rents for the same ground, one from the new tenant, and one from you?—Yes.

20,371. And you would like to get hill grazing now?—Yes, indeed, why would we not get it, and we are paying for it.

20,372. Is that the principal thing you wish to tell us?—Yes.

20,373. What was the carry of the ground taken away?—Seventy cows and thirty-five stirks.

20,374. Any sheep?—No sheep.

20,375. Had the township as much stock as that upon it when it was taken away?—I cannot say if there was that much, but I remember when there was not that amount.

20,376. You have no desire to leave your present holding then?—No, not if we get that.

20,377. *Mr Duncan Shaw.*—You are not paying rent for Corraig now?—Not since the Commission came; but before for twenty-one years.

Lochcarron. — William Mackenzie.

20,378. But the proprietor gave you a reduction of rent before the Commission came?—On whomsoever arrears were he got no abatement. [*The Chairman.*—Does that consist with your own knowledge?—Yes.]

20,379. Is it not the case that when you came with the money to the landlord he always gave you the abatement?—Yes, if I paid the whole rent.

20,380. But you got back the abatement, did not you?—Yes, if I paid the whole rent.

20,381. But even though you did not pay the whole rent, did not you get the abatement?—No.

20,382. That is not the case.

20,383. *The Chairman.*—Mr Shaw, you don't seem to meet this man's evidence. The period of time from the date when the land was taken to the date when the first reduction was made on the rent was from 1870 to 1885. He says rightly or wrongly that he and others lost this additional grazing twenty-three years ago, and the previous witness said the first reduction was made in 1885. [*Mr Shaw.*—The estate changed hands in the meantime; Mr Murray bought the estate in 1882.]

20,384. And he began making a reduction in 1885? [*Mr Shaw.*—Yes. There were some abatements before that, but I will put in a separate statement.]

20,385. It would appear to be the case that for a considerable period, whoever the proprietor was, they went on paying rent for land that had been taken away; that is the gravamen of their complaint.

John Mackenzie.

JOHN MACKENZIE, Crofter, Strome-More (71)—*examined.*

20,386. *The Chairman.*—Was your rent dealt with by the Crofters Commission?—Yes.

20,387. What was your old rent?—I forget to a shilling, but it was somewhere about £16. [*The Secretary.*—£15, 17s. 8d.]

20,388. And what is your new rent?—£9, 10s.

20,389. I see your holding extends to 2 acres 3 roods 29 poles arable, 1 acre 0 roods 38 poles outrun, and a share in 682 acres, common to ten. What is it you wish to tell us?—I have nothing to tell, no trouble that I know; they went all over it before.

20,390. Did you hear the evidence of Roderick Mackenzie?—Yes.

20,391. And do you concur in that evidence?—Yes, I think it is quite correct.

20,392. And very complete?—Very complete. There are some townships in the heights of Kishorn where there were more tenants than he spoke about. I was born there.

20,393. To what townships do you refer specially?—I was born in Tornapreas, where there were eight tenants. And there were eight tenants in Rossal again.

20,394. Is there any other place you would like to mention?—Conamor or North-glen; I heard my father say there were sixteen tenants there between the two.

20,395. Any other place?—Several small places, but I forget them; I have heard my father speak about them.

20,396. But except for these corrections that you make upon the number of tenants in these townships, you agree entirely with Mackenzie's evidence?—Yes.

20,397. And you do not wish to make any additions?—No.

20,397*a*. *Mr Sutherland.*—With regard to your own township, do you wish an extension of the grazing, or would you like to change altogether if you got a better holding?—It is not worth my while to change; and we have plenty of grazing if the rent was reasonable; but the rent is now about double what it should be.

20,398. Do you think that if an opportunity was given to some others in the locality to form new holdings where these old holdings were, they would

Lochcarron. — John Mackenzie.

like to go there?—Part of them would; those who have strong families.

20,399. You think they would like to go to new places?—I think so.

20,400. And what would you suggest should be done with the holdings they have at present?—I cannot say.

20,401. Would it be an improvement to add them to those that remain?—It would by reducing the rent. If I had three shares for the rent of two, I might live on it perhaps.

20,402. But at present you think your holding is too small to use it to the best advantage?—It is far too small to keep people on; it requires three or four people to work a croft, and there is no income to pay that.

20,403. You think that, beyond a certain size, it is not so easy to make a livelihood out of the croft?—No, sir; if I had 15 or 16 acres of arable land and a horse on it and half a dozen cows, and perhaps a 100 sheep at a reasonable rent, a family could take a living out of that.

20,404. And it would be right for them, or it would be easier for them, to pay a rent in proportion to that than a smaller one?—Oh, three times easier. I will give you the plain fact of it. Last year we got £7, 2s. out of our sheep stock; my rent, which is the lowest rent in the place, is £9, 10s. I got £3 for two stirks, but I spent £3 in buying hay for them. Well, that was all my income off the croft for the twelvemonth.

20,405. So that the beasts you sold were not in fact raised upon your holding at all?—No.

20,406. And if you had a bigger holding, you think you could raise them off your croft entirely?—If I had plenty of arable land.

20,407. And is that holding you have indicated to us the size you would recommend as a minimum? Do you think it would be a wise thing not to have a smaller holding than that?—Not smaller than 12 to 15 acres. It is impossible for any man to take anything out of the ground without a horse as far as I can see. Of course, I am not a farmer; I was a sailor, and I know little about farming; but, of course, I found out this by experience.

20,408. *Mr Gordon.*—Are you a fisherman now?—I was not a fisherman; I was a sailor, going all round the world.

20,409. How long is it since you left the sea?—Five years since I lost the last vessel I had.

20,410. Had you a vessel of your own?—Yes, several of them, one after another.

20,411. And is this place you have nearest to Strome Ferry?—Just at Strome Ferry, exactly.

20,412. A man occupying the croft you have just now would likely be a fisherman?—Well, there were several people occupying the croft since the lots were made, before I got it.

20,413. Are the people mostly fishermen in your township?—Yes, all fishermen. They make their living by the sea and by working in the best way that they can get on.

20,414. Do many of your townsmen own boats?—Very small boats.

20,415. But it is more a fishing village than a crofting township?—Oh, it is more a crofting township, because the people go away to work.

20,416. How many crofts are there in it?—Ten.

20,417. And you have a tenth share?—Yes.

20,418. And you think it would keep three crofters comfortably?—Yes, I think it would keep three.

20,419. You want three lots for the rent of two? You think they are about a third too highly rented just now?—I know they are. I think for every cow in the Highlands here a rent of £1 would be plenty for the grazing and what would keep her in the winter time.

20,420. I quite agree with you that there is not much profit made off a cow. Have you any sheep in your township?—Yes.

20,421. How many?—About 400 between ten of us.

20,422. And is there not land in your neighbourhood that you could get added to your grazing?—No, there is another township to the east of it, and Mr Murray's property on the north of it; and there is no other land.

Lochcarron. — John Mackenzie.

20,423. The only way you could better your position would be to remove some of the people from your township to better land?—Certainly.

20,424. *The Chairman.*—You told us how much you made out of your stirks, and how much you made out of your sheep?—We made £7, 2s. out of our sheep stock.

20,425. And out of your stirks?—£3, 4s.

20,426. But against that you have to put the cost of feeding?—I paid £3, 5s. for hay and straw for them.

20,427. How did you live? Was it by fishing?—I live by the money I made when I was young.

20,428. You had a little laid aside?—Yes.

20,429. Have you not sons that go to the fishing?—No. I have one son at sea; he arrived in Dunedin, New Zealand, on the 21st of this month. I have another son in Glasgow, a policeman, and the youngest son is at home along with me; and that is all the family I have.

20,430. Do your sons help you?—I do not want help from them yet.

20,431. *Mr Donald Macrae.*—Your lordship might ask him, if your lordship considers it of any importance, with regard to the reduction made by Mr Murray. Is it a fact that the reductions were made only to those who paid up the full amount of rent and arrears, and if that was not done, was it not the old rent that was carried forward as a deficit?

20,432. *The Chairman.*—Were there any reductions given by Mr Murray except to those who paid up their whole arrears?—Not that I know of.

20,433. And when arrears were carried forward, were these the arrears of the old rent?—The arrears of the old rent.

William Mackintosh, Crofter, Kishorn (67). (Examined in Gaelic through an Interpreter.)

Willliam Mackintosh

20,434. *The Chairman.*—Was your rent fixed by the Crofters Commission?—Yes.

20,435. What was the old rent?—£5.

20,436. What is the new rent?—£3, 5s.

20,437. Did you hear the evidence of the previous witness with regard to Kishorn?—No, I was too far off.

20,438. What is it you wish to say to us about land? You do not wish to leave your present holding, do you?—No.

20,439. Well, what is it you wish?—I wish to tell you anything that you would ask me; that is the thing.

20,440. What stock have you at present?—Two cows.

20,441. And any stirks?—No, not at present; I might have.

20,442. Have you any sheep?—Two sheep.

20,443. Have you a horse?—No.

20,444. You have just two cows and two sheep?—Yes.

20,445. Have you enough of grazing for them?—I have plenty for that which I have.

20,446. Do you wish any more?—We were asking a bit of grass that was taken from us.

20,447. When was the grazing taken from you?—I cannot tell.

20,448. Did you ever make any application for additional grazing?—No, I did not.

20,449. *Mr Shaw.*—There was an application made by the township for some additional grazing on part of the farm of Reraig, which is at present in the proprietor's hands and is entered in the valuation roll at £75. When Mr Murray bought the estate he set great store by this farm for himself and was very anxious to keep it entire; and he objected to this application being granted on the ground that the farm was less than £100 a year. On that ground the application was thrown out.

20,450. *The Chairman.*—I see the decision is as

follows:—'Finds that the said objection is well 'founded in point of fact and law, and that the applica- 'tion is incompetent; therefore dismisses the same. It was a part of the farm of Reraig that you wanted?—No; it belonged to themselves, but it was added to us.

20,451. It is a part of Reraig now?—Yes.

20,452. And you wanted it back?—Yes, if that be your will.

20,453. Are you still desirous of getting it back?—I do not know indeed.

20,454. *Mr Sutherland.*—Would you take back the home farm of Reraig if you got it?—No.

20,455. Why?—We could not manage it.

20,456. Is it too large?—Yes, it is too large for us.

20,457. Do you know what stock is on it now?—No.

20,458. Why do you think it is too large? (No answer.)

20,459. Would you not stock it?—I don't believe we could.

20,460. Would you stock it in two or three years?—I could not say.

20,461. What part of Reraig farm was taken from you?—Glaican-dorain, the nearest part.

20,462. And who occupied Reraig before that time?—Donald Kennedy.

20,463. Did he hold the remainder of the present farm as a farm then?—Yes, he had the whole farm.

20,464. And then a piece of your pasture was taken away from you and added to the farm that already existed?—It was Kennedy that got it after that.

20,465. And there was nothing left with you, but what would hold two cows and two sheep?—No, nothing left but that.

20,466. How much stock would the tenant of Reraig have before he got your ground?—I don't know.

20,467. Had he 100 sheep, can you say?—Yes, and more than that.

JOHN MACLEAN, Labourer, Arineckaig, (40)—*examined.*

20,468. *The Chairman.*—You are not a crofter?—No, I have a house at Arineckaig. I am a cottar.

20,469. You have no land?—No.

20,470. And you pay no rent?—No.

20,471. Where do you get your labouring work mostly?—Railway surfaceman.

20,472. How long have you been a railway surfaceman?—Over two years.

20,473. What wage have you for that?—17s. a week.

20,474. And, of course, you have steady employment?—Steady employment.

20,475. What had you done before you were a surfaceman?—Every job that would come in the way; fencing.

20,476. A general labourer?—Yes, and taking contracts.

20,477. What sort of contracts?—Fencing contracts.

20,478. Are you anxious to take a holding if it can be got?—Yes, where I was born, at Achnashellach.

20,479. What part?—Goirtean-Fraoich.

20,480. You want to go back there?—Yes, where my forefathers were.

20,481. And where your father lived when you were born?—Yes.

20,482. And your grandfather?—Yes, and his grandfather too.

20,483. What size of holding had your grandfather and great grandfather in Achnashellach?—I cannot tell the state of my grandfather's, but my father's I will tell. There were eight tenants.

20,484. The houses were all in a cluster, I suppose?—They were near each other.

20,485. And the land was in runrig?—Yes.

20,486. What was the total extent arable?—I cannot tell you that, but I will tell of the sheep; there were about 1000 sheep among them.

20,487. And what cattle had they?—They would have six cows each and followers.

20,488. Had they a shepherd?—Yes.

20,489. Had they one hirsels or more than one?—Two hirsels.

20,490. And you think there is good land there that would afford a place for settling you as well as other people?—Yes, plenty land, and good land too, and about the river this man was speaking about.

20,491. Well, say this gentleman?—I mind when I was there, I was but a young boy at the time, my father and another man were working there three days, working at estate labour, embanking the river, and they were keeping the river from flowing out upon the arable land.

20,492. And did they succeed in keeping it out?—Yes, as long as they were there.

20,493. Then if you got a holding, what size of holding would you like?—I would take between 16 and 17 acres of good arable land.

20,494. And a carry of how many sheep?—100 or 130.

20,495. How many cows?—Five or six, and followers.

20,496. Could you venture upon an undertaking of that size without assistance?—No, with assistance.

20,497. You would need some?—Yes, I would need some, my family is rising and they would help me.

20,498. How many sons have you?—Three.

20,499. And you would depend upon their help?—Yes, if they would be living.

20,500. Is there a general desire among the descendants of those who lived at Achnashellach in the district to get back there?—Yes, some of them are wanting back there.

20,501. And you would be very glad to give up your job as a surfaceman if you got a croft at Achnashellach?—Yes, very glad.

20,502. And give up your 17s. a week?—Yes.

20,503. *Mr Sutherland.*—Did you ever hear anything said about the ground that the people had in Achnashellach forest before, as to its quality? Was it good grazing ground?—Yes, the best in the country.

20,504. And did you ever hear anything about the quality of the sheep it produced?—Yes, they were good.

20,505. Did you ever hear that all the sheep, or a great number of them perished from storms or floods, or anything of that kind?—No, I did not hear of that.

20,506. And do you think if that had happened you would have heard of it?—I think I would.

20,507. You think it is likely you would have heard?—I think I would.

20,508. Do you know how much pasture those people had attached to their holdings when they were there? how far east did they go?—They were marching with Sir Kenneth Mackenzie of Gairloch at some parts.

20,509. Could you tell us the boundaries? did they go to the top of Bealach-sgoltaidh?—Oh no, that is on the other side.

20,510. In what direction, then, did they go?—Towards Moine-mhor and Carnabreac.

20,511. Do you know that ground yourself now?—Yes, I do.

20,512. What use is it put to now?—Under deer.

20,513. What was done with it after the people were put out of it?—Under deer.

20,514. Was it put under deer at the time it was taken from the crofters?—Yes, so far as I remember.

20,515. How many years ago was that?—Thirty years.

20,516. You said, in answer to a question by the chairman, that you would very gladly take a holding if you got it under likely conditions of success?—Yes.

20,517. And you would be quite willing to give up your present occupation if you got such a holding?—Yes.

20,518. That is because you expect it would make a better livelihood?—To be sure.

20,519. And was there any other idea present in your mind when you made that statement? Are you secure of the employment you have from the Highland

Lochcarron. — John Maclean.

Railway?—Oh yes, but they might put me out of it any day they like.

20,520. And I suppose, in any holding you are contemplating, you would expect to get the benefit of the present Act which gives security of tenure?—Yes.

20,521. And then you would have a permanent home, you think, and a motive to work?—Yes.

20,522. And given all these conditions and the others you mentioned you think you could make a good livelihood, better than you have now?—Well, my forefathers were doing it whatever.

20,523. But quite apart from what your forefathers did, judging by the circumstances to-day, are you of opinion that you also could make a good livelihood?—Yes, I am.

20,524. Then with regard to the river that was said to overflow its banks?—Yes, I will tell you about that.

20,525. You stated, I think, that while people were there they kept the embankment in repair and did not allow the river to overflow?—Yes.

20,526. It is only since the people were put out of there that the bank was allowed to go to ruin?—Yes.

20,527. There is, in fact, no one interested in keeping it within its bounds in the deer forest, is there?—No, they are only wanting to get it away altogether.

20,528. But if it was occupied and tenants were there, it would be their interest to keep up the embankment in the part?—Yes.

20,529. And they did keep it up, you say?—Yes, they did that.

20,530. *Mr Munro.*—Did I understand you to say that you had 17s. a week in permanent employment from the Railway Company?—Yes.

20,531. And you would be prepared to give that up for a croft?—Yes, rather than be a slave all the days of my life.

20,532. 17s. a week is very nearly £45 a year. Now do you think you would make that out of your croft?—Yes.

20,533. And I suppose you would consider yourself very much more independent on a croft than in railway service?—Yes, to be sure.

20,534. That is one of the inducements that lead you to desire possession of a croft?—Yes.

20,535. *The Chairman.*—Has your wage been raised during the two years you have been with the company?—Yes, it was raised a sixpence, from 16s. 6d. to 17s. a week.

20,536. And are there surfacemen on the line that get a little more than you do?—Yes, the foremen.

20,537. What do they get?—They get 2s. over that.

20,538. They get 19s.?—And some of them over that.

20,539. What is the highest a surfaceman gets on the Highland Railway within your district?—I think it is £1.

20,540. So that you may, by diligence and attention to your duties, rise to £1 a week?—Yes, that is according if they leave me there; but they may put me out of that, may be to-morrow.

20,541. You are paying no rent at all?—No rent at all.

20,542. Have you a patch of potato ground?—No, except if the tenants will give me just a drill.

20,543. Have you any drills this year?—Yes.

20,544. How many?—I cannot tell.

20,545. More than one?—Yes.

20,546. Have you ten?—Oh no.

20,547. How many have you?—I cannot tell you.

20,548. As many as six?—Well, I have a drill from one or two of them; from two or three; yes, I will have six.

20,549. Do you pay anything for that?—No.

20,550. And do you get sufficient potatoes from your drills in an ordinary year to carry you through the winter?—Not half.

20,551. But they help you?—Yes, they help me.

20,552. What do you do for fuel? do you get peats?—Yes, I get peats.

20,553. Where?—At Arineckaig.

20,554. Do you pay anything for that?—No.

20,555. So that you have your house rent free, and peats, and some drills of potatoes from your neighbours, and 17s. a week?—Yes.

Lochcarron. — John Maclean.

20,556. Now do you think it would be safe, notwithstanding the fact, of course, that you may lose your employment from the company, to throw up all that and venture on a holding of the kind you describe at Achnashellach?—Yes.

20,557. You are quite prepared to do that?—Yes.

KENNETH MACLEAN, Crofter, Arineckaig (87). (Examined in Gaelic through an Interpreter.) — Kenneth Maclean.

20,558. *The Chairman.*—Did you hear the evidence of Roderick Mackenzie?—Yes, and he gave it correctly.

20,559. What was your old rent?—I was born in Craig and I was in Goirtean-Fraoich.

20,560. What was your old rent?—£8.

20,561. And your present rent?—I am not there now; they put me out.

20,562. Was the rent for your holding at Arineckaig fixed by the Crofters Commission?—Yes, but I would prefer to pay my rent in Goirtean-Fraoich rather than get the present place for nothing.

20,563. What was your old rent at Arineckaig?—£12 and a few shillings.

20,564. And what is the new rent?—£11, 3s.

20,565. You would like to get a holding at Goirtean-Fraoich, would you?—Yes, indeed I would.

20,566. Is that where you were born?—No, but at Craig.

20,567. Why are you so anxious to go to Goirtean-Fraoich?—Because I would prefer to be there and pay the rent for it, than though I got the place I have for nothing.

20,568. Is the land so much better?—Yes; one acre of it is better than four of those I have.

20,569. You would be ready to pay the rent of such a holding and to put up the necessary holdings?—Yes, indeed I would.

20,570. Have you a family?—Yes, my son is here.

20,571. What family have you?—Three sons and two daughters, and one son died two years ago.

20,572. How many of the family are at home with you?—Only one of the sons.

20,573. How old is he?—Twenty-nine or thirty.

20,574. And if you went to a new holding he would help you, I suppose?—Perhaps he would; yes.

20,575. Does the evidence given by Roderick Mackenzie express your views fully?—Yes, I think so.

20,576. *Mr Sutherland.*—What stock have you?—Three cows and followers.

20,577. Any sheep?—Yes.

20,578. How many?—About eighty or thereabout, a club stock.

20,579. Among how many?—Nine.

20,580. Do you mean the eighty among the nine?—No.

20,581. Eighty sheep each?—Yes, between lambs and others.

DUNCAN SHAW (42), W.S., Inverness, Factor for Lochcarron—*examined.* — Duncan Shaw.

20,582. *The Chairman.*—You have a statement to make, I think?—I should like first to make a statement on behalf of Mr Manners, the agent for the Achnashellach estate, who, as surveyor of the second district of the Inverness-shire County Council, was obliged to attend a meeting to day in connection with Beauly Bridge, and who is therefore unable to be present. [Mr Shaw read the statement.]

20,583. I think the circumstances under which you appear, Mr Shaw, on behalf of Mr Manners, are properly explained in his letter to the secretary of 26th July, in which he says:—'Dear Sir, Thanks for yours of 24th inst. As I find I have to go south to-day and cannot return before Friday morning in time for my Road meeting of C.C., so that I shall not receive a reply to my last to you in time to enable me to take any

Lochcarron. Duncan Shaw.

steps, I have asked Mr D. Shaw, who will appear on behalf of Mr Murray of Lochcarron, to kindly read my statement as to Achnashellach Forest. Of course I alone am responsible for this statement, but am quite ready to show my estate books showing the expenditure, if required.' The statement which you have read is not your own, but is a statement by Mr Manners, and, of course, as he says, you are not responsible for what is in it. Are you prepared to answer questions upon it?—No, I don't think it would do for me to answer questions.

20,584. Personally, I happen to know how Mr Manners is not here to-day; he had to attend a meeting in which undoubtedly the public interest is materially concerned, and it was a choice between coming here and attending that meeting. Therefore, the reason he gives for his absence is a good one; but as you say you are unable to answer questions with regard to that statement, it is difficult for us to accept it, unless Mr Manners can give us an opportunity of examining him upon the statements it contains?—I have no doubt Mr Manners will be prepared to do that at such time as will suit the Commission.

20,585. We can hardly come back here for the purpose of examining him?—He will no doubt attend any meeting, on getting sufficient notice of it.

20,586. Very well, we may have to take him some distance. Do you know anything of the transference of this property?—I do know a little; I have a reference to it in my own statement. It was originally part of the estate of Applecross.

20,587. You quite understand, with reference to the paper you have read, that we cannot take it without Mr Manners?—Subject to Mr Manners allowing himself to be examined.*

20,588. Quite so. Then you were going to read a statement with regard to the Lochcarron property?—Yes. It is as follows:—

I am factor for the estate of Lochcarron, and have been so since 1st January 1886.

This estate formed part of the old Applecross property and was sold along with another considerable extent of territory by the late Thomas Mackenzie to the Duke of Leeds in 1854. In 1862, the late Vice-Chancellor, Sir John Stuart, purchased the estate from the Duke of Leeds' successor. Upon his death he left the greater portion of it to his eldest son, Mr Dugald Stuart, but he left the portion now known as the estate of Kishorn to his younger son, Mr John Stuart. The division which the Vice-Chancellor made as between the two portions was very complicated and inconvenient.

With reference to this division it may be sufficient here to state that Courthill House, which is the Mansion House of the property, has only a few acres of land attached to it, and is surrounded by the estate of Kishorn while another portion of the estate of Kishorn cuts into this estate most inconveniently at the Eastern extremity of the former estate. In 1882 Mr Charles James Murray, the present proprietor, purchased the Estate that is the whole of what was known previously as the estate of Lochcarron—less that portion now known as Kishorn—from Mr Dugald Stuart.

In addition to the purchase money Mr Murray has spent in improvements on the property in the shape of building, fencing, draining, planting, and the like, up to this date upwards of £19,000. Of this sum upwards of £2000 has been spent in repairs on tenants' buildings.

20,589. How much on tenants' buildings?—£2000.

29,590. Do you mean by that crofters' buildings?—Both crofters and farmers.

20,591. How much on farmers?—I have not exact details; you may take it perhaps the half. Upwards of £800 has also been spent on fencing for tenants

20,592. Both crofter tenants and farmers?—Yes. And upwards of £800 on drainage for tenants.

20,593. The same observation applies there, I presume?—Yes, and upwards of £1300 on wages outside of the estate establishment, and of the wages paid by the contractors for the improvements of which the estate has no record.

Lochcarron. Duncan Shaw.

20,594. Did much of that £1,300 go into the pockets of the crofters?—Oh yes, it was all local labour. Of course there was a lot more that the contractors for the various buildings employed.

A great proportion of the people employed in carrying out the various works for the proprietor and contractors who were requested to give the preference to local workmen, both skilled and unskilled, were from the locality, and a large share of the expenditure thus found its way into their pockets.

I may here note as bearing further on the expenditure, that in 1887, in commemoration of the Queen's Jubilee, Mr Murray placed in the bank at Lochcarron a sum of £500 as a building fund, out of which the smaller tenants on his estate could get loans for the purpose of repairing or rebuilding houses, barns, steadings, &c. on the property without any charge for interest. These loans are made repayable by easy instalments, and the money is put back again into the fund, so that it is practically never exhausted. Mr Murray, of course, reserves to himself the right of considering and if thought proper rejecting any individual application. At present there are twenty-five loans out of the fund, averaging about £13 each, and the average instalments for the repayement of loans is eight. For house building about £40 is usually advanced in suitable cases.

At the date of purchase the rental of the estate was, exclusive of sporting subjects, £1963, of which £730 was paid by the larger tenants and £1233 by the smaller.

The present rental of the estate, exclusive of sporting subjects which are entered in the valuation roll at £730, is £1455, of which £603 is payable by the larger tenants and £852 by the smaller tenants. The Crofters Commission visited the estate in 1891-92 and fixed fair rents for these tenants who came under the Act. The proprietor had himself been previously giving these tenants large deductions. The Commission ordered £243 of arrears to be paid, but the present arrears on the crofters' rents amount to £309, upwards of 50 per cent. of the crofter rental.

The average estate expenditure for the last three years has been upwards of £2700, made up as follows:—

Public burdens and taxes, . . .	£500
Ordinary repairs and estate upkeep,	800
Expenses of management, . .	200
Game, garden, wood, . . .	500
Establishment at Courthill, . .	700
Total, ...	£2,700

And that for the preceding years has been, if anything, greater. It will be observed that the first three items alone, public burdens, repairs, and management swallow up the whole rents, even assuming them all to be punctually paid. Over and above the foregoing expenditure, which with the exception of some small items for raw materials is made entirely in the Highlands and principally in the district, there is the expenditure for the household at Courthill, also largely made in the district, which is seldom less than an average of £100 a month. There are twenty-four permanent employees on the estate and in the mansion house who are Highlanders, and several others who are employed pretty continuously on day's wages.

I have endeavoured to get any documents that would throw light on how the estate was divided and occupied in former times, but I have only been able to get an old plan prepared at the time the lots were laid out, from which it appears that in the year 1817 there were six crofters' lots in the township of Janetown or Lochcarron, 12 at Strome, 20 at Achintraid, and 49 in the Shieldaig district—or 87 lots in all. There may have been, and probably were more, but from all that can be learned now, the number seems to have been considerably less than at the present day.

There are at present from 165 to 170 lots on the estate, of which only 24 are in the Shieldaig district. Mr

* Mr Manners appeared at a meeting of the Commissioners at Tain on 2nd November 1893 and was examined. For his statement see report of Tain sitting (Question 31,905–31,915).

Lochcarron. —— Duncan Shaw.

Murray has not during his tenure of the estate turned off a single crofter or altered a crofter's holding, except where circumstances such as death rendered this necessary.

In the township of Lochcarron, the average holding of each crofter is about 4 acres, with a share of a common grazing of 164 acres. In addition to the crofters there are upwards of 70 other tenants or cottars in this township.

In the Slumbays which lie immediately to the West of Lochcarron, the average extent of the croft is about 4 acres arable, and these townships have common grazing which extends to upwards of 800 acres.

The township of Strome-Carronach which adjoins the Slumbays to the west is worked runrig for the arable land and as a club farm for the pasture by six tenants who have 40 acres arable, 98 acres low ground grazing, and about 530 acres hill pasture.

In the Stromemore township, which marches with Stromecarronach to the west and which absorbed another township called Stromemeanach, the average extent of arable land in each holding is about 4 acres and the 10 lots have 142 acres of old arable ground and wood pasture and about 540 acres of hill grazing in common.

In the township of Ardniaskan, at the north of Lochcarron, which is practically a fishing community, the average croft contains a little over an acre arable, and the hill pasture extends to about 330 acres and is common to the 19 lots.

In the township of Achintraid, on the south side of Loch Kishorn, the average croft contains about 3½ acres arable and the hill pasture extends to 580 acres and is common to the 21 lots of the township.

In the township of Shieldaig, on the north side of the estate, the average croft is about 2 acres, and there are about 344 acres of common pasture for the 8 lots. There are in this township upwards of 40 cottars and tenants not under the Crofters Act.

Altogether there are at present on the estate 154 crofters or small tenants and about 138 cottars.* There is one farmer who pays a rent of over £300 and whose farm extends to 88 acres arable and capable of cultivation and 8400 pasture; another who pays a rent of £48 and whose farm extends to 36½ acres arable and 1420 acres pasture; another who pays a rent of £105 for an inn and farm, the farm extending to about 113 acres arable and 300 acres pasture; and another who pays a rent of £37, 10s. for another inn, a ferry, and two shares in the Stromemore township. There is a small sheep farm in the proprietor's own hands valued in the valuation roll at £75, containing about 24 acres arable and 1465 pasture, and a large croft not included in the above with 8 acres arable and 800 acres pasture. There is a deer forest in the hands of the proprietor extending to about 11,000 acres.

The total extent of the estate is about 28,900 acres, of which 1050 acres may roughly be said to be arable and 27,850 acres pasture. Of this land the larger farms have 262 acres arable and 11,585 pasture; and the crofters 725 acres arable and 5270 pasture.

Of land not at present in cultivation there is only about 75 acres that could be cultivated. Of this land 20 acres are on Tullich farm, 24 on Reraig farm, and 31 in the deer forest.

The wintering ground on the forest is at Balgy, where 30 of the above acres are, and at Glenshieldaig, where there is about an acre of arable land. If these were taken away for crofts the deer forest would be ruined.

Assuming that the estate were to be divided up among the crofters and cottars, this would give a little over 3 acres arable and a little over 93 acres pasture to each.

* To prevent misconception, I think it right to add that when I stated there were 138 cottars on the estate, I used the term "cottars" not simply as applying to persons who had squatted down on crofts or held sub-tenancies from crofters, but as including all who occupy houses alone or houses and gardens as distinct from Crofts. Of mere squatters or sub-tenants there are comparatively few, and the other class of cottars includes about forty-two fishermen, fourteen tradesmen such as shoemakers, tailors, &c., eight merchants or dealers, and seven labourers. A number of the houses are occupied by women who earn their livelihood by keeping lodgers and otherwise.

Lochcarron. —— Duncan Shaw.

It is of importance, however, to consider what extent of land is required for a holding out of which a tenant could make a living without other resource, and it seems to me that the minimum is somewhat as follows:—about 20 acres arable of fairly good quality and 300 acres pasture. This would enable the tenant to keep approximately the following stock:—2 ponies, 6 cows and followers, and 50 sheep.

On the footing of this minimum extent, the estate would provide holdings only for between 50 and 90 tenants in all, as against 154 crofters at present on it, and these would require to be provided with better houses, offices and stock. The average cost of forming such a new holding might be taken as follows:—

House and Offices, . . .	£300
Stock, ...	170
Making a total of . . .	£470

for each holding, and for say, 50 holdings £23,500. Allowing an average rent of £25 for each croft, the rental of the estate with 50 crofts would then be £1250 as against £2185 (including the sporting land) at present. It is manifest that this large reduction of rental—nearly 50 per cent.—would, especially if similar reductions took place on the neighbouring estates, greatly increase the local rates, already very high, while the demands on the rates would certainly not diminish with an increasing population.

On the other hand, the large sums at present spent on the estate, and circulated among the people, would cease so soon as the attraction of sport should be withdrawn.

It is of importance, too, to consider how such a change would work out in the course of time, and a very important point to keep in view is the character and productiveness of the soil. There can be no question that the arable portion has deteriorated very much since it was brought into cultivation, and even the pasture will no longer keep such a number of stock as it used to. When the Crofters Commission visited this district, tenant after tenant complained of the poor return they got from their land. The following are instances:—

Alexander Macdonald, Slumbay, said that corn would not grow on his croft and he had to buy meal every year.

John Maclean, Slumbay, who has two lots extending to about eight acres, said he could not make a living out of his croft, that he made three bolls meal in 1890, but less the previous year, and had to buy seed.

John Stewart, Slumbay, complained of his land being full of stones and very small patches of arable land.

Angus Maclean, Slumbay Island, said he got little or no return out of the land.

Alexander Mackenzie, Stromemore, said he could not cultivate much on account of the thinness of the soil and also rocks, and had to plough sideways.

John Mackenzie, Stromemore, said the soil had deteriorated one third.

Farquhar Mackay, Ardniaskan, complained of the bad quality of the hill pasture.

Widow Margaret Maclean, Shieldaig, refused to make one holding of her house and land so as to come under the Crofters Act, because as she said 'we cannot 'make anything of it.'

It is not surprising to hear complaints such as these. The soil originally was poor. It has been cultivated year after year, in most cases without any regard to a proper rotation, and with almost no assistance from fertilizers, the great bulk of the manure used being seaware, which is more of a stimulating than a feeding manure. A large proportion of the annual crop is potatoes, and these make a great demand on the soil, being heavy feeders and rapidly using up all the organic matter in the soil. How this is to end it is hard to say. At present the average return from corn is said to be only about one and a half and from potatoes four fold as against a minimum return of three of corn and of from six to eight fold of potatoes in the Lowlands, but by-and-bye even these present scanty crops are bound to become still less, unless means are used to put a stop to

the deterioration. This can only be done in one of two ways, either by letting the ground get a rest, or better still, by sowing it down with grass and pasturing it with cattle, or by applying artificial manure. The one process is long, the other expensive, and it is the latter which has been generally adopted in the southern counties (for even they, with a much richer soil, suffer from continuous cropping) as they cannot there afford the long delay involved in the former.

What is to become of the people if the first plan be adopted, and where are they to get the money if the second is tried?

But there is almost a more important point than this. At the present day agriculture is universally admitted to be in a state of terrible depression. Even large farmers who cultivate their land with the highest skill and with unstinted application of artificial manures and who breed the very best of stock insist that they cannot make farming pay. How then can the poor crofter with inferior soil, little agricultural skill, inferior stock, and dependant on the sea shore for manure make a proper living out of his holding?

It seems to me a necessary preliminary to increasing the number of holdings, assuming this in itself to be a desirable thing to do something to relieve the present agricultural depression and improve the price of stock and produce. It would be out of place to enter into a discussion of this matter here, but many who have thought over the matter carefully are convinced that a great deal could be done by the alteration of the currency laws, the introduction of legislation for the marking of home produce as distinct from foreign produce, the more equitable distribution of taxation on land, and the bringing of the producer into more direct relationship with the consumer.

To divide up the land amongst cottars and crofters, and increase the number of small holdings without first doing something to relieve the existing depression, would only accentuate the evils at present complained of, and at the end of no distant period, with the increase of the population, the continued deterioration of the soil and growing poverty of the people, the same procedure would be applied for again, and if there were then no further land to divide, remedies quite outside of the scope of the present commission would have to be thought of.

(Signed). Duncan Shaw.

20,595. I want to call your attention to a passage from certain "Letters from the Highlands," reprinted from the *Times* by Messrs Blackwood & Sons in 1884, to see if it contains, according to the best of your knowledge, a correct account of the transferences of the estate of Applecross. On p. 59 we have the following:—'The 'late Duke of Leeds bought the whole of this property 'for £135,000, and I believe that the following remark- 'able figures may be relied upon. The acreage is '144,000, consequently the price per acre was 18s. 4d. 'On the death of the Duke, Lord Conyers, who inherited, 'broke up the property into three lots, Applecross 'proper, 63,000 acres, was sold to Lord Middleton for '£78,000; Courthill, 32,000 acres, to Vice-Chancellor 'Sir John Stuart, a cadet of the Stuarts of Ballachulish, 'for £52,000; and Achnashellach, 49,000 acres, to 'Lord Hill for £76,000. Lord Middleton is still in 'possession of his 63,000 acres. As for Courthill, '26,000 acres were sold by the Vice-Chancellor's heir in '1882 to Mr C. J. Murray, the member for Hastings, 'for £95,000. In 1866, Auchnashellach had been 'again sub-divided. Mr Robert Tennant bought 'Achnashellach proper, 19,000 acres; Lord Elphin- 'stone the 12,000 acres of Coulin; Mr Shaw the '8,300 acres of Glencarron; and Sir Alexander 'Matheson the 10,000 acres of New Kelso. The 'aggregate sum paid was £120,000. In 1872, Lord 'Wimborne gave £70,000 for Achnashellach; in '1873, £75,000 for Coulin; in 1875, £50,000 for 'Glencarron. Thus in six to nine years there was an 'advance of £75,000 upon £120,000; but it is to be 'noted that in the meantime the Dingwall and Skye 'Railway had been opened, a striking proof of the 'effect of improved communications upon Highland 'property.' I suppose we may take it that these figures are correct?—I think they are correct; but I cannot speak with certainty as to the prices, except that of the Lochcarron estate, which is correct.

20,596. So far as you are able to say it is correct?—So far as I am able to say.

20,597. Because these are very striking figures, and the matter is there put in a compact form. The name of the author of the book is not given?—I believe it may be quite correct. I have heard that there was a tremendous increase.

20,598. Now with regard to Jeantown, you mentioned that in 1816 there were six lots?—Yes, I said that was shown on the plan.

29,599. Well, we find from Hogg, *The Ettrick Shepherd's Tour in the Highlands in* 1803, at pp. 72–3, the following passage:—'I was exceedingly gratified at 'here meeting with a long straggling village, consisting 'wholly of neat, modern, commodious houses. Having 'never heard of it, I made enquiry concerning its 'erection, and was informed that it had lately arisen 'under the auspices of Mackenzie of Applecross, who 'had let it off in feus to the fishermen, and such as 'chose to settle there. This is a most laudable ex- 'ample set by this gentleman, an example of which 'every reflecting mind must approve, and which can 'never be too much encouraged, either by individuals 'or by public bodies of men. It is only by concen- 'trating these hardy and determined people into such 'bodies, that they shall ever be enabled to acquire the 'proper benefit of the inestimable fishings on their 'coasts, or that ever the germs of manufactures shall 'be successfully planted on these distant shores. This 'spot, pitched on by Applecross for so beneficial a 'purpose, is not so commodious in every respect as 'it might be wished that it were; but perhaps Apple- 'cross had no better. In this spot it is impossible to 'unite utility with compactness and elegance, for there 'being no valley the houses are drawn out in an 'irregular line along the side of the loch, and however 'well situated for taking advantage of trade and fishing, 'it is a very untoward field for improvements in agri- 'culture.' I suppose you agree with all that?—I think so; the plan shows a lot of little dotted houses along the line of the shore, but only the six lots on the land. There appear to have been houses without any land attached to them.

20,600. Do you know anything of the transference of people who had been evicted from various places that were mentioned in the course of our inquiry to-day, down to this parish?—No, I cannot say that I do; we have no documents to show that. Of course, we have only been in possession since 1882. I believe there were some changes made from one estate to the other.

20,601. You say there are 154 crofters and 138 cottars on the estate?—Yes.

20,602. These cottars have no land?—Nothing beyond perhaps a patch of garden.

20,603. Any patches they have, I suppose, are on land already in the occupation of crofters?—They are surrounded by crofting lands.

20,604. I mean to say, they are within the area of land occupied by crofters?—They are within the area of the townships.

20,605. And constitute, therefore, a very serious burden upon the townships?—Yes, I would think so.

20,606. That, I daresay you would admit, is a very undesirable state of matters?—Well, of course, they make their living, I suppose, in other ways; for instance, fishing.

20,607. But the living of a cottar is necessarily precarious; more precarious than that of a crofter?—If he were a good fisherman I should think he would do better than a crofter.

20,608. You would prefer a man to be a cottar?—If he were a good fisherman, beside the sea, I should say he could make more out of his fishing than he could out of land; that is my impression.

20,609. Don't you think that the exclusive occupation of land in forest and large farms, in the

Lochcarron. Duncan Shaw.

immediate neighbourhood of 154 crofters and 138 cottars, is rather an anomalous state of matters?—I don't know that it is.

20,610. That is to say, a total of nearly 300 families on the outskirts?—You would not have land enough for them all if you tried to divide it up to benefit them really. You would require to give them enough land, I take it, to be of real benefit to them, and I don't see how you could work it out, they are such a large number, and with the quantity of land available.

20,611. The crofter acreage, you have mentioned, is in some cases 4 acres arable and in other cases 2 acres arable, as an average?—Yes.

20,612. That I suppose you would admit to be a somewhat narrow holding?—As a holding by itself, it is a small holding.

20,613. Too small to live by?—I fancy there would be great difficulty under the present conditions, which have greatly altered from what they used to be long ago. In the days of old, the crofter got most of his living round about him; now, I take it, he incurs grocery bills, and that sort of thing, and consequently has to find much more cash than he used to.

20,614. You would be in favour, theoretically I mean, and if the thing could be done in a legitimate manner, of increasing such holdings?—Yes, to enable a man to make his living by his holding alone; if you want to benefit him in any way you would require to do that.

20,615. Are you in favour of crofters being divided into two classes, those who live by their holdings and those who live partly by their holdings and partly by labour?—Do you include fishing in the labour?

20,616. Yes?—I have a strong idea that those who are near the sea ought to live by the harvest of the sea rather than the harvest of the land, and that their holdings should only be something like a house and a garden.

20,617. You would be in favour of holdings where the occupant depended on the sea for his livelihood?—Yes.

20,618. Then you have other two classes,—those who live by their holdings alone, and those who live partly by their holdings and partly by outside labour other than fishing. Now, are you in favour of a continuance of that system as it exists?—I don't see any way of improving it and keeping the people there.

20,619. But I suppose you do not contend that that system in itself is a good system?—Well, when a man gets constant employment.

20,620. Yes, but we know they do not?—It is not a bad thing; but when he does get employment he may sometimes neglect his land; it sometimes tends in that direction.

20,621. I suppose you admit there are no holdings at present on this estate which enable the crofter to live exclusively upon his holdings?—There is no holding of the size I mentioned in my paper.

20,622. But is there any holding on the estate at present where the crofter lives by the cultivation of his croft?—I am afraid I could not say.

20,623. Do you know of any?—Well, I would not like to say.

20,624. Now don't you think, if the thing could be done in a legitimate manner, that it would be desirable both in the interests of the estate and in the interest of the inhabitants generally to have holdings where the men could live by their holdings, just as the farmer lives by his farm?—If you were commencing an entirely new laying out of the land that might do.

20,625. We are asked to inquire into available land. Suppose the thing could be done legitimately, would not you be in favour of the extension of holdings by which the crofter could live on his croft,—I say legitimately and properly?—I don't know; I don't go so much against the case of a crofter who supplements the produce of his croft by the earnings of his labour.

20,626. I am not at all saying anything against that. But don't you think it would be a good thing if there could be holdings legitimately got by which the crofter could live, in fair average circumstances?—Well, I certainly would not approve of increasing the number of crofters, if that is involved.

20,627. Then would you diminish the number of crofters, and add the holdings of the vacated crofts to the remaining crofters?—Yes, I think that would be preferable.

20,628. Then what would you do with the men that you remove? would they have to go to the Antipodes, or would you try to get them land elsewhere in the neighbourhood?—I should certainly say, from what I know and have heard, that they would do far better in the Colonies.

20,629. You would send them off to the Colonies?—I think they would be better there.

20,630. So that you would leave the large estate and the large farms untouched, but you would consolidate the crofts and turn off the crofters to find their living anywhere else on the surface of the globe?—That is not exactly what I said.

20,631. Does it not come to that? Don't you think it would be just as feasible a plan to consolidate some of the crofts, allow certain crofters to occupy the consolidated holdings, and remove the surplus of the crofters to available land near, if there be such land upon the larger estates?—I could not approve of that, because I am afraid you would have the same difficulty to deal with in a certain number of years hence.

20,632. In what way?—By the increase of the population.

20,633. The population is increasing under the old and bad system, you know?—And by the deterioration of the soil.

20,634. You would have an increase of population in either case?—But you would have cut away all remedy at the time when readjustment was required in the future.

20,635. I take it, you admit that the present system has its faults?—It is a great misfortune for a man to be born poor, with a scanty livelihood, and that is very apparent in the Highlands.

20,636. Is not that poverty and scanty livelihood to a considerable extent the result of evictions from other quarters, and men being pressed down upon the shore?—I do not think so.

20,637. You do not think so?—No.

20,638. Then are all the stories of evictions that we have heard to-day fables and romances?—I suppose there is a certain amount of truth in them.

20,639. A good deal of truth in them?—Yes.

20,640. And if it were right to take the steps which were done in the past by the large land-owners in putting these people down on the shore, it would be analogously equally defensible to send back some of them to the land from which they were evicted? if the one is right the other cannot be wrong?—You may make matters worse by doing that.

20,641. Is that your only answer?—I should much rather see them in the Colonies.

20,642. You would remove them from the country altogether?—I would much rather see them go, I confess.

20,643. Is it your doctrine that the best way would be just to clear off the whole of them?—No, no.

20,644. It comes a little like that, I think. Are some of the townships there what you would call congested?—Well, there are townships where there are cottars settled.

20,645. And these townships are congested?—I don't think there is very much of it on this estate.

20,646. But is not there some of it?—Well, there is this township of Lochcarron, where there are a number of crofters. But there is the fishing and other outlets.

20,647. Is not the number of cottars a much larger percentage to the crofter than is usual in Highland districts?—Yes, I daresay it is, but I have explained that I used the word 'cottar' in a wider than the ordinary sense.

20,648. It is much larger, I think, than any that we have come across yet?—An experiment of Mr Mackenzie of Applecross in a large measure accounts for that,—the establishment of this village, to which reference was made at first.

20,649. We have heard a great deal, both here and

elsewhere, of crofters who lived partly by the croft and partly by labour, and of crofters who live mainly, if not entirely, by the sea. Don't you think there is room for another class, viz., crofters who lived by their holdings alone, and that it would be a legitimate and proper thing to encourage the creation of this last class, if it could be accomplished?—I don't think it would be a good thing to go and create this class straight off; but where holdings fall in by death or otherwise, I think it would be a good thing to add them to other holdings, so as to enlarge them.

20,650. So that while you are willing to deal with crofters' holdings, and consolidate them, you absolutely refuse to deal with the larger estates, with the farms and forests?—In this case I do not think there is room for it.

20,651. Why? Do you mean because the forest and the farm are compact things which cannot be touched without material damage?—There is one great consideration to be borne in mind; the Highlands are very poor, and I think every inducement should be made to get capital to come here from other parts of the country. Now, if you go and divide up the deer forests and farms in that way, you will inevitably stop that inflow of capital.

20,652. The Highlands cannot have been very poor when these enormous prices which I have quoted were given for these properties?—But it was not the crofters who paid these prices.

20,653. I would like to ask you how many people belonging to the crofter class are under lease on this estate?—We have got none under lease, but we have got some who refuse to go under the Crofters Act.

20,654. Refuse?—Yes. At Shieldaig there were several who came forward and would not agree to make their houses and their land one holding as required by the Act. They preferred to continue as they were.

20,655. You mentioned a case which came out in the course of the inquiry, where parties were under the Act so far, and otherwise not?—That was on Lord Wimborne's estate.

20,656. And you say you have no cases of lease on this estate?—Not for the smaller tenants; there are long leases, what you would call building leases, in the parish of Lochcarron, and one or two feus.

20,657. *Mr Donald Macrae.*—Might I at this stage, in justice to Mr Murray, make the remark, as I acted as agent for those crofters before the Crofters Commission, that Mr Murray made all who were feuars at that time, or held down by legal documents of that kind, welcome to the benefits of the Crofters Act.

20,658. *The Chairman.*—And did they make use of that privilege?

20,659. *Mr Donald Macrae.*—The great majority of them did. [*Witness.*—What Mr Macrae refers to is the fact that where a technical objection might have been taken by Mr Murray, that was not done.]

20,660. *The Chairman.*—In fact, he in no way interposed to prevent tenants of the crofter class from coming before the Commission if so advised?—Nothing whatever, except that he always made the house go along with the land.

20,661. Of course, that was a natural thing to do. You indicated that a remedy might be found in the alteration of the currency laws?—Yes.

20,662. What do you refer to?—That is rather a complicated question; it opens up the subject of bi-metallism.

20,663. What is your view upon that matter?—My view upon it is that the present appreciation of gold and depreciation of silver affects prices; it increases foreign competition from countries which have a silver currency, and, of course, the appreciation of gold lowers the prices in this country. Practically all rents have to be paid in gold at present, and when gold is appreciated you require a considerable amount more of produce to make up the necessary amount of gold.

20,664. So that you invite us to direct the attention of Government to that instead of the problem of finding available land?—I think that is one remedy.

20,665. *Mr Sutherland.*—You read us a long statement, Mr Shaw, interesting in itself, no doubt, but you are aware of the object for which we are appointed, and the nature of the inquiry which we are asked to pursue?—I know generally the scope of it.

20,666. And did you in that paper offer us any help at all towards our object?—I gave you all the statistics I could about the estate.

20,667. But we are asked to report upon the existence of certain land; did you give us any help to do that?—I told you the amount of uncultivated land upon the estate which might be cultivated.

20,668. Would you call it evidence of a negative kind?—Oh, I don't think that; you cannot increase the amount of arable land.

20,669. Indeed; but you told us in fact there was no available land, that is, on the estate you are responsible for?—I told you where there was the land, but it happens to be a very small quantity.

20,670. But I took it that the whole of your evidence was directed to the point that there is no such land on the estate for which you are responsible?—I gave you a statement of what land there is.

20,671. How much farther on are we in our object on account of that evidence?—Well, I don't know that.

20,672. But surely it would occur to you while giving evidence here and knowing the terms of our remit, that you would come forward with the object of helping us?—I gave you all the information I could regarding the position of the estate, which I think is a very important element.

20,673. A commission issued to inquire whether any, and if any, what land in the county of Ross and Cromarty, among others, is available for certain purposes,—have you told us anything about that?—I told you of so many acres arable, or what you may consider arable on this estate, which were in the hands of the proprietor, either in connection with the farm or in connection with the deer forest.

20,674. But your general deduction is that there are none?—Well, that is my impression, but you have to make up your own mind upon that point.

20,675. Quite so, but I should think that a gentleman with your knowledge of the subject, and with the materials at your command, should keep before you when making the statements, the objects of our inquiry?—My object, of course, is not to help the Commissioners.

20,676. That is what I wanted to know?—The Commissioners must make up their own minds; I should not like to direct you in any way. My object was to give you all the information I could in reference to the estate.

20,677. Your admission, sir, that you did not wish to help the Commission forward, covers the whole case?—To arrive at a decision. I gave you all the information that I could, but would not it be out of place for me to put forward a special plea for the objects in view?

20,678. You might state shortly the conclusion to which you have come,—summarise your evidence?—The conclusion I come to, of course, is a very different one from what the objects of the Commission are.

20,679. Just so, that is what I mean. Then with regard to the information you have given us, did you not think of saying how the land is divided? Could you not have thought that the materials at your command that it would help us forward to know the number of people upon the whole estate, the number of people who have holdings over £30 of rent, the limit in the Crofters Act, and the number of people who have holdings under that, and the people who have no holdings at all?—I have given that.

20,680. Was that given in a tabular form or scattered up and down the statement?—It is all given in the same paragraph.

20,681. Could I trouble you to give us it again? How many families on the Lochcarron estate have holdings above £30, and how many acres do they hold?—There are 154 crofters at present on the estate and 138 cottars, using the term in the sense I have explained.

20,682. How much land have these between them?—725 acres arable and 5270 pasture.

Lochcarron. — Duncan Shaw.

20,683. Then over £30, how many families are there holding land?—I gave you the details of these; there are very few. There is what you call a big sheep farm and there is a small sheep farm.

20,684. Can you give me the acreage of the big sheep farm?—Yes, I gave it you. The rent is £300, and the extent is 88 acres arable and 8400 acres pasture.

20,685. The gross acreage will be sufficient for me?—Well, 8488 acres.

20,686. And the other farm?—It has 36½ acres arable and 1420 pasture.

20,687. I won't trouble you farther?—I have got here one holding containing more land than the holdings of the 292 people, the remainder of the population?—Yes.

20,688. Now, do you justify upon grounds either public or otherwise such a distribution of the land?—Yes, certainly, in the same way that I know plenty men have £100,000, and I should like to have that too.

20,689. But we are talking of acres just now, not pounds?—Oh, but I think the same principle applies.

20,690. Yes, if land and money were the same; but they do not happen to be the same?—Well, money buys land.

20,691. But have you considered that, apart from all these considerations, land-occupying must be the principal industry in a country like this?—Agriculture is no doubt the principal industry in this country.

20,692. And do you think that the means of obtaining a livelihood from agriculture here is sufficient; 292 families have between them less than 6000 acres, and one family has over 8000?—Well, there might be something in your argument if it were land in the Lothians.

20,693. But it is not land in the Lothians, excuse me?—That is just the difficulty. It is land which I really do not think it would benefit these families to have.

20,694. Then with regard to your proposal for rectifying this state of matters, was I right in gathering that your proposal is that, as the present holdings fall vacant by death or otherwise, they should be added to the remainder?—Yes, I think that would be desirable.

20,695. To what length would you recommend that that should be carried? where would you stop?—I gave a sort of idea of a farm which in my opinion would be self-sustaining.

20,696. But take what actually exists on the estate at the present time. There are 6000 acres in the occupation of crofters and cottars. There is one farm with 8400 acres. Don't you see that, according to your idea, before you would reach the 8400 acres for each family, you would practically exterminate the whole of the population?—How so?

20,697. Because you would require to evict other 292 people to form a holding of that size.—Oh, I did not propose to make a farm the size of that.

20,698. But we take what you have at present?—I gave a kind of estimate of holdings that might be self-sustaining.

20,699. But you have done nothing to bring about that state of matters. We must take what we find on the estate?—Mr Murray took the estate as he found it.

20,700. I am not talking of you, or of Mr Murray, or of any person; I am talking of the state of the facts as we find them on the estate. I am not saying who is responsible for that state, I am not blaming Mr Murray at all, but does it not appear to you that that is the view that could be rationally taken of the matter?—I do not think so, because I would only propose to consolidate up to that reasonably sized farm that I referred to.

20,701. May we take it that there is a desire on the part of the proprietor of this estate to carry out the proposal which you have stated?—I should think he would agree to it.

20,702. Is it a mere 'pious opinion' on your part?—I think that is Mr Murray's view.

20,703. You see you are in a position to carry this out?—Mr Murray is going to read a short statement to you.

20,704. Very good; I shall be very glad to have any information in regard to that. Then, with regard to the question of emigration, I don't suppose I need say much about it, but do you really for a moment mean to believe, or think, or state that the people of this country would stand quietly by and see the native population of the country driven out of it altogether, in order that you might keep intact your deer forest and your large farms?—Well, those people who have gone abroad, in my experience, have had no cause to regret it, and are very anxious to get their friends out to them. If you would allow me I would give you two personal instances.

Lochcarron. — Duncan Shaw.

20,705. I should be very glad to hear them?—My father was Sheriff of the Long Island district, and during the course of his holding that office there were some evictions from a township in the island.

20,706. Was that Sollas?—Sollas, with which he was supposed to have something to do. Well, he was standing at the pier-head when the people who were evicted from Sollas left the country by steamer, and as the vessel steamed out, one of these men, whose name was Macaskill, stood at the bow, cursing and swearing at my father as being the cause of his being sent away. Nothing was heard of that man for a long time; but about the year 1861 my father received a letter from him saying that he was getting on uncommonly well, along with the people who had gone out with him, and expressing gratitude for the part my father had taken, whatever it was, in his going abroad, and also enclosing a sum of money to buy a ring for my mother.

20,707. That was a case of doing evil that good might come out of it?—That is a matter of opinion.

20,708. Did you hear or do you know that some of the Sollas people had to be bound hand and foot and put aboard the ship in that state?—No, I don't think that is the case. There is a statement by my father to the Napier Commission on that subject, which I think disproves that.

20,709. I never saw it disproved. But apart from that altogether—I do not wish to pursue anything that is in any degree personal?—I have another personal case; this was a man in service, who went abroad to Manitoba, and who wrote a letter quite recently in which he says he is getting on very well. His letter is dated 20th December 1892, and he says that he and the man who is along with him have two pairs of horses, a pair of oxen, four cows, &c., and their crop had yielded 300 bushels of wheat and 200 bushels of oats. 'We are getting on well.' He adds:—'So far, we have nothing 'to complain of at all. I would like my sister to come 'out in the spring to keep house for me.'

20,710. Who is that letter from?—Archibald Stewart, the son of a shepherd that my uncle had.

20,711. Where is he now?—In Canada; Qu' Appelle is the name of the station.

20,712. Did you see a statement made by the Secretary for Scotland in the House of Commons a few nights ago, in regard to the Scottish emigration scheme to Canada?—No; this, of course, is a personal case that I know about.

20,713. It represents two isolated cases out of thousands?—Every case I have had to do with, and I have had several, has turned out well. I may have had the misfortune to know only the good ones.

20,714. Is it not a likely thing that it is only those who get on well that you hear about?—No, I don't think that is the case.

20,715. Sir George Trevelyan said the other night in Parliament, speaking of the Saltcoats settlement:—'I 'certainly think the money which was allotted could 'not have been worse spent than in the emigration 'which was conducted under the circumstances in 'which that of the Saltcoats settlement was conducted.' Have you noticed that statement?—I saw the heading of it, but I do not think I read it.

20,716. Are you aware that that was a deliberately organised scheme of emigration which it took seven years to mature, and where every possible precaution was taken, and this is the result?—Somebody must have been at fault there.

20,717. May it not have been the system which was at fault?—I do not think so; if they had got good land

and the thing was well managed, they should have done well.

20,718. You stated, I think, that 75 acres were all that in your opinion could be cultivated; to what area did you refer?—'That are not at present cultivated on the estate;' I think that was my statement.

20,719. Now let us come back to this spot upon which we are now. Of course, you know that in a statement of that kind a great deal depends upon what you consider arable land?—Yes.

20,720. There is no one standard of arable land yet agreed on?—No, I suppose not.

20,721. Take your mind back to the time when the Jeantown people were settled here. What do you think the lands up above this village were like; supposing you were to see it in its state of nature, would you be likely to put it down as arable land?—Certainly not, at that time.

20,722. But it is now?—It is now.

20,723. Well, supposing you take as arable land, all the land in the estate of Lochcarron equal in quality to that land in a state of nature, how much would there be?—I could not say; but a great deal would depend on its position; if it were up on the top of a hill it would be of no use even if the soil were good.

20,724. But at this level; how much would that increase the area you have put down? Would it increase it a hundred-fold? Supposing you took all the land like what these people got at Jeantown here, how much of that land is there on the estate?—I could not say.

20,725. More than 75 acres?—Not very much, I should think. You must take other considerations into view, besides merely looking at the nature of the soil.

20,726. What other considerations?—The position, for one thing.

20,727. Take all the circumstances you can think of into account, and how many acres do you imagine are in the estate as good as that land was before it was reclaimed?—I would not like to say; you will be able to judge for yourselves.

20,728. But we want the benefit of your opinion?—Well, I should not like to put it at very much more than I have stated.

20,729. There are not upon the estate of Lochcarron more than 75 acres of land better than that land when it was in a state of nature; is that your statement?—Well, you see, I did not see the land then.

20,730. But you see the land adjoining outside the fence; the breadth of a fence makes no difference?—Where?

20,731. Up there on the side of the hill?—But that is away up the hill; you would not go and cultivate it up there.

20,732. How much land do you think equal to that is on the estate? more than 75 acres, surely you would admit?—Probably there would be a little.

20,733. A little more?—You also talked of the deterioration of the pasture, and what was your remedy for the deterioration of the pasture?—I suggested that there might be two remedies; if you allow the land rest, of course that would improve it; then if you apply fertilisers, that is another way; or if you pasture with cattle and sow it down that is still another way.

20,734. You say that the land down here is exhausted with too much cropping and no rest?—If it gets no rest.

20,735. And the land in the upper reaches of the country is deteriorated from too much rest?—Oh, I cannot tell you that

20,736. Would not the obvious way of amending it be to allow the land down here to rest and give the other a turn of cultivation? Is not land that has lain waste for a long time improved by cultivation as pasture afterwards?—For a while it gives better returns.

20,737. I quite agree with you?—Only for a while.

20,738. If it is left waste for a long time it deteriorates very rapidly?—Well, I don't know.

20,739. You have admitted that it does?—It is the land that is cultivated, I say, that does.

20,740. But land that is allowed to lie waste too long, does it not also deteriorate? don't lichens and other things choke up the grass, and has it not a tendency to run back again to heather?—I suppose in the Highlands it would.

20,741. And would not the obvious cure for that be to turn it up and cultivate it?—I don't know that it is worth doing it, in these days the returns are so poor.

29,742. You think it is better going on cropping the old exhausted land?—I would stop that if I could.

20,743. You would stop all cultivation then?—Oh no; give it a rest for a while.

20,744. But if you don't allow these people to cultivate the old land that has deteriorated for want of cutivation, and if you say the cultivated land is also exhausted through too much cultivation, the obvious cure is to allow both to go out of cultivation; is that not your cure? What land then would be cultivated at all?—One of the difficulties I started with was what to do with the people while the land was under rest.

20,745. Do you think there is no suitable land in all the country we have been wandering over for the last fortnight?—But you have got a great many more people than the people of this estate to deal with.

20,746. I grant you that; but I think the reason you gave was that, as you could not give enough land to all, you would prefer to give land to none?—I don't think I said that.

20,747. I think you did. I think you said that there was not sufficient land on the estate to give enough to all?—I stated that there was a very small quantity of arable land on the estate, and if you gave that to small tenants you would spoil the existing use of the land, and I did not think it was worth while.

20,748. You would decrease the area the large farmer has got, and the deer forest?—You would spoil the deer forest, I pointed out.

20,749. But if it is to be a question of existence of deer as against the existence of men, do you not think it is a proper thing that the deer should go to the wall?—But it does not come to that point. It is a question of increasing the number of crofters, as against spoiling the deer forest.

20,750. But have you not admitted to the chairman that there was congestion of the population here? is that congestion voluntary on the part of the people?—It is because they do not seek employment elsewhere. The sons of families in better circumstances have always to leave the place where they were born; there may be one left, but the younger members of the family have to go and seek a livelihood elsewhere.

20,751. Do you mean to say they don't do that from Lochcarron?—I suppose they do it, more or less.

20,752. Especially more?—I cannot say as to that.

20,753. But is not the obvious cure for that to take the resources that are at their door first?—I don't think that.

20,754. You would people the Colonies first, before you people the Highlands?—I would apply the same rule to them as any other parts of the country.

20,755. A large farmer occupies 15,000 acres, and a cottar or a crofter occupies 4 acres; you say that it is open to both to do alike. Do you not know perfectly well that a knowledge of the world is a preliminary necessity for successful emigration? How can a man go into the wide world with any hope of success if he knows nothing of it?—I have seen cases where a man has done that, and has done uncommonly well. Men have gone from the island of Uist straight away to Australia or Canada.

20,756. But if you wish the people to emigrate, is it not the best way to put them into circumstances of affluence at home, so that they may know what the world is like?—They have the whole of this country before them to make money out of if they can.

20,757. How can they have the whole of the country before them if they have only got two acres?—They can go and get work.

20,758. Anywhere but on the land?—They may leave say the eldest son on the land to work it; the younger members may go away, that is what is usually done in other grades of society.

20,759. They go away?—Yes; you very seldom see

Lochcarron. Duncan Shaw.

the whole of a family at home. Take a farmer's family; they do not all stay on the farm.

20,760. And do the crofters stay at home more than any other class?—I think they have more of a tendency to do that.

20,761. Who have peopled the Colonies from Scotland; is it the sheep farmers?—They are of all classes.

20,762. Is not the overwhelming majority of emigrants from the crofter class?—Are you prepared deliberately to state that there has been too little emigration from the Highlands of Scotland in times past?—I have no statistics on the subject, but undoubtedly there is a large number of crofters, and the fact that the Colonies have been prosperous is in great measure due to men of their class.

20,763. Are you aware that there are more Highlanders in Canada alone than in the Highlands of Scotland?—No.

20,764. Will you take it from me as a fact that it has been officially returned that such is the case?—Yes, if it has been officially returned.

20,765. And in the face of that do you still hold that the crofters do not emigrate as much as any other class?—I suppose they may, but they probably increase rapidly.

20,766. Did you ever hear of ship loads of sheep farmers or deer foresters going away from this country? You told us, I think, of a transaction in which your father was concerned, where a ship-load of crofters was sent abroad?—No, I did not say that. It was a party from Sollas, and they went in an ordinary steamer, not an emigrant ship.

20,767. The ordinary steamer that went to America?—The ordinary steamer that went to North Uist.

29,768. You never heard of emigrant ships from the Highlands?—Yes.

20,769. And do you think these were loaded with large farmers or with crofters?—I should think they were principally crofters and cottars.

20,770. So that they have emigrated more than any other class, have they not?—I would not like to say that as regards the whole of Scotland.

20,771. But I am talking of the Highlands of Scotland?—Of course, they form much the largest proportion of the population there.

20,772. Then I wish to ask you a question with regard to what was in my mind the most interesting part of your statement,—the attempt made to better the houses of the people. I am very much interested in the success of the experiment; could you give us any information as far as it has gone?—I stated the facts, but I can give you the details if you like.

20,773. What I am interested to know is whether the instalments advanced to the people have been repaid within the time agreed upon?—No, they have not, but they have been fairly well paid. It was one of the conditions of giving the loan, that unless the instalments were regularly paid interest would be charged; but as a matter of fact we have not charged the interest.

20,774. But has the necessity for charging interest arisen?—It has in one or two cases.

20,775. You stated that the average advance was £13 or so?—Yes.

20,776. Now, can you tell us what amount of improvement has been made upon the holdings, take one particular case, or more if you know them, fora sum like £13?—I only took the average, but I could tell you all the sums that were advanced.

20,777. Kindly do that, without the names?—The sums were as follows:—£10, £8, £40, £40, £10, £40, £10, £15, £5, £7, £7, £27, £17, £9, £5, £40, £40, £40, £40, £12, £30, £40, £12, £10.

20,778. Does the amount advanced depend on the amount of capital a man may have already, does he only want to supplement certain means he has got already himself?—It depends very much on what he proposes to do; one man may want to rebuild his house entirely; another man may want to substitute a slated roof for a thatched roof; another to put a new end to a barn; it all depends on the requirements.

20,779. What is the greatest change you have seen yourself? have you seen the change from a small black house to a slated house with four or five apartments?—There have been slated houses built with the money.

Lochcarron. Duncan Shaw.

20,780. With the assistance of £40?—Oh yes; you will see several in the township of Ardaniaskan.

20,781. I am not talking of houses that have been repaired or changed, but built from the foundation?—Yes built from the foundation.

20,782. And houses of four or five apartments with a slated roof?—You will see some in the township of Ardaniaskan.

20,783. That has not been done for £40?—No, no; that is in addition to what the crofter may have himself.

20,784. With £40 of assistance?—£40 of assistance? I don't remember any case. [*Mr Macrae.*—Houses such as would cost £200 were so built.]

20,785. Houses that I have frequently heard credited as being of the value of £200 to £260?—I should think £100 to £150.

20,786. Now supposing you were making a statement to a Royal Commission on behalf of a landlord, and you actually gave an estimate of what was the charge for such houses,—do you remember what it was?—£150 for the dwelling-house, and £150 for the steading.

20,787. But here we have, as a matter of fact, a house built with £40 of assistance?—No, no; with the help of £40 of extraneous assistance.

20,788. May I ask the general question if there is the prospect of this scheme being a success?—Well, we hope so, we try to keep the fund going; whatever we get back in the shape of instalments is paid into the building fund account at the bank, and thus the thing goes on.

20,789. What is the amount of the building fund at present?—It was £500 to start with.

20,790. What is it now?—There is about £181 in bank just now.

20,791. I suppose you will not be able at any time to invest any part of this fund otherwise?—No.

20,792. It is always being used?—Always being used.

20,793. *Mr Gordon.*—You have indicated your disapproval generally of making new crofting townships?—Yes.

20,794. Assuming that you found tenants with sufficient capital, and willing to take small holdings of from £20 to £50 of rent, would you object to increasing the number of them on the estate?—If we had a suitable place for them I would not.

20,795. I assume that; assuming that some of the larger possessions could be broken up into holdings of that size, would the same objection in your mind exist as it does with regard to the crofter townships?—Not to the same extent.

20,796. If you got the rents paid, what objection would you have?—Of course, the buildings would be multiplied, and it is very difficult to keep up buildings on the west coast.

20,797. I don't suppose that any proprietor would put up buildings for a new scheme of this kind; but assuming that the buildings were provided by the tenants, would the same objection in your mind exist with regard to the small tenants that you say exists with regard to the crofter townships?—Oh, not to the same extent.

20,798. But why should you have any objections, if you get the same rent and if you were put to no expense for building?—Of course, if the buildings were put there for you, I suppose that would be a distinct advantage to the estate.

20,799. You would always have the buildings as a security of a class,—I don't say they would be of much use if they were not wanted, but at all events there would not be the same objection in your mind?—No, I don't think so.

20,800. Have you any idea what would be the relative rents obtained from land under crofters, and land under the larger tacksmen, or land under holdings of £30 and upwards?—I should not like to go into a question of that kind.

20,801. I mean with regard to crofts which would be

of a size that the tenant would expect to make his living from. If you were to break up a farm rented at £100 and divide it into ten crofts, would you expect that the ten crofters should be able to pay the same rent as the tacksman?—No, I should not think so.

20,802. Have you any idea what would be the difference?—I have not worked that out, and am not prepared to say.

20,803. But assuming that you could see your way to form small tenancies, you have not the same objections to their existence as you would have to increasing the number of the crofters?—Not tenancies of the size that I indicated.

20,804. £30 and upwards?—I think it was £25 or thereabouts.

20,805. I understand you do not object to the creation of these, provided you are not put to the expense of buildings?—Not occasionally, where there is suitable ground.

20,806. *Mr Munro.*—Did I understand you to say that crofts generally at Lochcarron were not paying the holders?—At the time of the Crofters Commission the majority of the crofters came forward and said they were not.

20,807. I understood you to say that some of them were not able to obtain a sufficiency of milk or even of seed?—That is what they said before the Commission.

20,808. And your only remedy for that is emigration?—I suggested that as crofts fell vacant, you could consolidate them, and thus enlarge the present holdings.

20,809. Don't you think that if these crofters who manage to exist upon their present limited holdings were to get an extension, they could maintain themselves in comparative comfort?—They might or might not; if they are sustaining themselves at present by labour, and if by getting a larger holding they could not go in for labour, they would have to devote themselves to the croft.

20,810. Do you not think it natural to infer that a man working for himself should make more than working for another?—Not always, because he may lose money when he is working for himself, whereas his wage is secured to him if he is working for another.

20,811. You stated, I think, that large farms are not paying at present or for some years back?—So I believe, from the tenants.

20,812. Would you suggest emigration in their case also as a remedy?—Certainly, if they thought they could do better.

20,813. Don't you think that is rather a heavy order?—Which?

20,814. To suggest that the large farmers should emigrate as well as the small ones?—You see there is not the same number of them. They have got much the best chance when prices are good.

20,815. I see you are evidently determined to make the number as small as possible, both of large and small tenants?—I would like to see such a number that each man could make his living on his holding.

20,816. You were good enough to suggest some remedies for the improvement of the condition of the crofters; and among others you suggested an improvement in the rotation of cropping?—I said that if the present deterioration of the soil, which I understand is usually admitted, were to be stopped, something would require to be done.

20,817. And a proper system of rotation introduced, I think you said?—I suggested that the land should get a rest, or that fertilisers should be used.

20,818. Now do you not consider that if crofters acquired larger holdings they could then manage to cultivate them to greater advantage than they do at present?—Yes, I think they could.

20,819. I have always heard it stated here, Mr Shaw, and I was glad to hear it, that Mr Murray has acquired the reputation of being a kind and considerate landlord?—I think there is no better in the country, and I appeal confidently to the people behind me.

20,820. Now if it can be shown that there are lands in the vicinity of Lochcarron not at present in the possession of crofters, which could be advantageously occupied by them, would Mr Murray of his own free will be disposed to concede these lands to the crofters?—We had a case before the Crofters Commission with reference to that land called Corrags which lies up from the township here. The Lochcarron crofters had that grazing, I believe, about twenty-three years ago, and it was taken from them by a former proprietor. Shortly after Mr Murray purchased the estate, application was made to him to see if he would give the people back this grazing. He showed every disposition to help them, but the land was then under lease, as it is still to another farmer. But he had a meeting with the crofters who wanted this land, and he said to them that as the land was under lease, he would do some drainage for them in the village, and only charge them 3 per cent. interest, I think it was, on the outlay. At that meeting he understood they were quite agreeable to go in for that arrangement, and that they accepted that as in full of anything he could do for them in regard to Corrags. But afterwards it turned out, though the drainage went on, that some of them did not hold to what was the understanding, and, therefore, the drainage was stopped. Then the application was made before the Crofters Commission to get Corrags as an extension of the common grazing. Well, Corrags was still under lease then, and Mr Murray could do nothing without the consent of the farm tenant. He approached the farm tenant, and got him to agree to give a certain portion of the Corrags land, the lower portion, and the better grazing, and really about the only portion that could be profitably used by them as an addition. This was offered, but they declined it.

Lochcarron. — Duncan Shaw.

20,821. Another remedy which you were good enough to suggest for the improvement of the crofters was bringing more into direct contact the producer and the consumer?—Yes.

20,822. How would you propose to bring about that arrangement?—I suggest that more as a general remedy; it does not apply so much to this case in particular as to agriculture in general.

20,823. What is the value of the suggestion if it does not apply to this district, with which we are now immediately dealing?—I stated it with reference to the general improvement of agriculture throughout the country.

20,824. All over Scotland?—Yes.

20,825. But we are not dealing with the subject of agriculture all over Scotland. How would it materially affect the position of the crofter now?—It would not affect him, of course, unless he did get into closer contact with the consumer.

20,826. You would not propose, I suppose, that the crofter should slay his own beasts, and go about with them in a barrow and sell them retail?—Oh no; but there have been proposals to form farmers' associations, and in fact to start butchers' shops.

20,827. I have seen such proposals more than once made, but these could not properly be applied to the Highlands here, with the small farmer, is that your view?—It would be more difficult to apply them, certainly.

20,828. Now as to this question of currency, that is rather a large subject to enter on. Supposing now that you got your ideas carried into affect, how would it improve the position of the crofters themselves? give us an illustration of it.—I think it would raise the price of stock.

20,829. How would it raise the price of stock?—At present there is a great deal of stock coming from South America. They have got a silver currency there, and if you were to send out gold to South America to buy produce there, you would get a very much larger number of dollars for it, and through the dollars a very much larger number of sheep and cattle than if silver were high. When the silver goes down, it pays a man to send out gold from this country and convert it into stock, and bring the stock to this country to compete with the home market.

20,830. I quite understand that?—The same applies to wheat from India.

20,831. And your recommendation would be that the same standard for silver should prevail as now prevails for gold?—That is my personal view.

20,832. But have you any hope of ever attaining such a result?—Oh yes.

Lochcarron.

Duncan Shaw.

20,833. You think the time is coming when there will be a standard for silver as there is for gold?—I think a crisis will come some day that will necessitate something of that sort.

20,834. And your advice now is that crofters should wait patiently until that silver standard is obtained?—I merely point out that that would improve the condition of matters if it did come about.

20,835. Do you not consider it a very great misfortune for a country to see such an immense area of land absolutely unproductive, while there are hundreds of people wanting a small holding to live upon?—I tried to show in this statement how much money is involved in a small deer forest connected with this estate. Where would you get that money from if there were no deer forest?

20,836. I am not going to enter into any argument with you upon this question; but you would surely make some distinction between the mere circulation of wealth and its production?—How do you mean the production of wealth?

20,837. If a crofter occupying a farm, say of fifteen acres arable and 100 or 200 of hill pasture, produces a certain quantity of food for the country, is that not adding so far to the wealth of the country?—I suspect he would require all the food for his own consumption.

20,838. Now can you point out to me any single article of wealth that a deer forest produces?—It produces deer.

20,839. Where is the wealth there?—You would be astonished at the price of it, and the amount of food that is involved.

20,840. Does it produce any wealth for the country?—To the extent of that feeding it does, and it brings a lot of money into the district.

20,841. Is venison, generally speaking, a marketable commodity, to any extent I mean?—It is comparatively limited.

20,842. Very limited, I should say?—Yes.

20,843. *The Chairman.*—It is only fair to Mr Murray to mention that in the case of the Tullich application, to which you referred, Mr Macintyre was obliged to refuse it on account of a lease with Mr Ferguson for fourteen years from Whitsunday 1883. Mr Macintyre, while refusing the application, adds this note:—"The 'respondent, though unable to accede to the application as 'made, made offer to the applicants, provided he obtained 'the consent of the tenant of the farm of Tullich to add 'to their common grazings that portion of the said farm 'lying to the south-east or south of a line drawn on 'the ordnance sheet produced and marked B1283, 'provided the applicants fenced the said land and 'undertook to keep the fence in repair, and provided 'also that the Commissioner was satisfied that the 'applicants were able and willing properly to stock the 'ground and paid a fair rent therefor. As the applicants 'refused the said offer, and the respondent has in con-'sequence pressed his objection, which is good in point 'of law, it has been sustained, and the application dis-'missed." But if the applicants had accepted the offer, it would appear from the nature of its terms that Mr Murray was perfectly willing that they should have the assignment of grazing from the farm of Tullich?—There was a minute to that affect lodged.

20,844. There was no indisposition on his part to let them have the portion of land described here, provided they agreed to fence and maintain it, and provided the Commissioner was satisfied that they could properly stock the ground and pay a fair rent for it?—That is so.

20,845. *Mr Donald Macrae, Plockton.*—I understood Mr Shaw to say that as crofters' holdings fell out, it was the disposition of the estate to add them to existing holdings?—I said I thought it might be of advantage.

20,846. Does Mr Shaw remember of an application for more land made by the crofter township of Daoraonair several years ago?—Yes, I do.

20,847. And of that application coming before the Crofters Commission two years ago at Shieldaig?—Yes.

20,848. It is a fact that the crofters modified that application, which was an application for a stretch of hill grazing out of the deer forest, to another proposal, an alternative proposal, that if the proprietor objected to this land being taken from the deer forest and added to the crofting township, they would take crofter holdings that had fallen out in the township of Rudha-Rhoin?—There was something said about Rudha-Rhoin.

Lochcarron.

Duncan Shaw.

20,849. The most of the old pasture land was in the deer forest, and they applied for the restoration of the old boundaries; and the objection was raised that it would materially damage the deer forest. We then agreed to amend the application or "alternately the crofting 'township of Rudha-Rhoin." All the crofters in Rudha-Rhoin and the adjoining township had either died or left, and we applied alternately for the lands of Rudha-Rhoin; is that not the fact?—I rather think so.

20,850. And did not the proprietor put every obstacle in the way of our getting them?—The proprietor offered certain extension of grazing to the township of Daoraonair, provided the Commissioners were satisfied that those applicants could stock the additional ground. It turned out that there were only two who could at all reasonably be supposed to be able to do that; one of them was more or less a pauper.

20,851. *The Chairman.*—I think it is right to read 'the order in the case:—"Finds that the respondent 'by Minute marked C/1282, and under reservation of his 'objections, offered to let to the applicants, at such a rent 'as might be fixed by the Commissioner, certain lands 'which partially included the land applied for, but under 'reservation to himself of certain souming rights of cattle 'and sheep; Finds farther that the said offer is made on 'the footing that the Commissioner is satisfied that the 'applicants are able and willing properly to stock the 'ground offered, and to pay a fair rent therefor; Finds 'as the result of the inquiry, that the applicants failed to 'satisfy the Commissioner that they are able properly 'to stock the said ground offered under and in terms of 'Sect. 12 [2] of the Act; Therefore refuses the applica-'tion, reserving to the applicants to apply further if 'they and the respondent can come to an arrangement 'for extension of their holdings to which the Com-'missioner may interpone authority."

20,852. *Mr Donald Macrae.*—May I put a further question with regard to that? [*The Chairman.*—Yes].—My further question is this. In approaching the discussion of that subject, did not the proprietor reserve all the arable land within the boundaries of the township?—Of which township?

20,853. The township of Rudha-Rhoin; so that the proprietor would have to himself all the arable land to graze his own cattle, and that his gamekeeper would have a right of souming over the hill grazing of Rudha-Rhoin?—I don't think Rudha-Rhoin was mentioned.

20,854. *The Chairman.*—There is nothing about arable land in the order; the application was to take land from the deer forest of Shieldaig, the part applied for being known as 'Daoraonair Hill.' It says nothing about arable land, and the obligation on the crofters was an obligation to stock.

20,855. *Mr Donald Macrae.*—That is not inconsistent with my contention. They applied for Daoraonair Hill, but the application was amended 'or alternately 'the crofting township of Rudha-Rhoin.'

20,856. *The Chairman.*—I do not wish to take up time, but there is no reference in the order to Rudha-Rhoin, not the slightest.

20,857. *Mr Donald Macrae.*—I know that perfectly well, I signed the minute; these are the facts of the case. There was a minute signed by the two of us.

20,858. *Mr Sutherland.*—May I ask what has become of this vacant croft at Rudha-Rhoin?—We are looking for a tenant. I think it was only one tenant who was there latterly.

20,859. *Mr Donald Macrae.*—Would you tell us what is the arable land of each crofter in Daoraonair?—*A propos* of what you said about the offer, there was an increase of 800 acres offered to this township of Daoraonair by the proprietor.

20,860. What is the arable acreage of each crofter?—One has 3 acres 1 rood 32 poles, another has 1 acre 1 rood, a third has 3 roods 38 poles, and a fourth 1 acre 3 roods 3 poles, and they have a large stretch of grazing.

Lochcarron. Duncan Shaw.

In the case of Maclean, who is one of these crofters, he actually gave up Rudha-Rhoin where he had been.

20,861. But he was one of the most strenuous applicants for arable land as well as grazing?—That is surely inconsistent on his part, because he had Rudha-Rhoin before.

20,862. Exactly so; but Rudha-Rhoin was too small also; he cleared out of it because it was too small, and there were too many tenants—Rudha-Rhoin has 8 acres arable. [*Mr Sutherland.*—Can you give us the hill pasture?—It has not been laid down, but I think about 500 acres.]

20,863. Is not this Rudha-Rhoin immediately adjoining the crofting township of Daoraonair? It could not be nearer than it is; is not that so?—Yes, I think it is.

20,864. What use is made of that old township at the present moment?—We are looking for a tenant for it.

20,865. What use has the proprietor been making of it for the last six years?—While it was vacant he was grazing it with cattle of his own.

20,866. How many years is it since it became vacant?—About five years.

20,867. It has been in the hands of the proprietor for five years?—Yes.

20,868. Don't you think it would have been an advantage to the crofting township of Daoraonair, especially to those crofters there who have less than an acre of arable land, if the arable land in Rudha-Rhoin was added to their present holdings?—The arable land of Rudha-Rhoin is separated by a good distance from Daoraonair; I would not like to say how much, but a considerable distance.

20,869. A mile?—What I referred to was the case of crofts lying side by side; supposing it was a mile away, that makes a considerable difference.

20,870. Oh, not at all, when the arable land is enclosed. Don't you think it would have been of advantage,—don't you think it was a splendid opportunity for improving Daoraonair by adding this old crofting township to it? don't you think you would have put the land to better use, from the public point of view, than by conserving it in your own hands as an addition to your home farm?—We had one tenant at Rudha-Rhoin, and he went to Daoraonair, and three tenants, it was proved, could not stock, so I don't think it would have been of any advantage to them.

20,871. Do you remember our signing a joint minute at that time, departing altogether from the original form of the application, that is an application for a stretch of the deer forest,—departing altogether, from that application, on condition that the proprietor would give the arable land and the hill grazing of Rudha-Rhoin to Daoraonair?—Oh no, there was no joint minute to that effect; there was a joint minute to this effect, that you restricted your application for additional grazing to certain ground which I was willing to agree to, then if the Commissioners were satisfied on these other points, that additional land would be given; that is my recollection of it.

20,872. And do you not remember the people standing upon this, that they would have nothing to do with the hill grazing of Rudha-Rhoin unless they got the arable land also, because they stood as much in need, more in fact, of arable land than of hill grazing?—I think that came up afterwards. They agreed to this at the time, and then after several weeks interval, probably when they had thought over it and changed their minds, they withdrew from this joint minute, and the Commissioners, I understand, repeatedly asked them whether they were willing to abide by the proprietor's offer.

20,873. Is it not a fact that at that time you said that the proprietor could part with the hill grazing of Rudha-Rhoin, but that the arable land of Rudha-Rhoin was absolutely necessary as a pendicle of the home farm?—It was required at that time for certain cattle that the proprietor had.

20,874. How many miles is the arable land of Rudha-Rhoin that we are speaking about from Courthill House?—Oh, it is a long distance, but that does not matter with grazing cattle.

20,875. Can you say how many miles?—I would not like to say. Lochcarron.

20,876. Is it less than 15?—Twelve miles I should say. Duncan Shaw.

20,877. Or more. Now at that very time was not the proprietor in possession of Reraig farm?—Yes, he was.

20,878. And was not he also in possession of Glenbeg?—No; there may be a small portion of Glenbeg, but it is divided up.

20,879. Was he not in possession of Achavanie?—That is not his own; he rents Achavanie and Glenbeg from Mr John Stuart, but the greater part of Glenbeg is sublet, I think, to Mr Jackson.

20,880. Was he not in possession of Laganduin as a portion of the home farm at the head of Loch Kishorn and of Sanachan?—He has not got that, it is on the Kishorn estate. Reraig is the only farm he has suitable for a home farm that he can call his own, the other is simply rented from the proprietor. [Explains it on map.]

20,881. Is not the big farm of Glenmore on Mr Murray's estate?—Yes.

20,882. Could not Mr Murray make Glenmore, or a portion of it, his home farm?—He would require to evict the tenant first.

20,883. Could he not at the end of the lease make Glenmore or a portion of it his home farm?—Certainly not, because if the tenant wanted to stay on he would not like to be turned out.

20,884. And what do you propose to do with the crofters of Daoraonair who have only three quarters of an acre of arable land? You refuse to extend their arable holdings by giving them the lands of Rudha-Rhoin; what do you propose doing?—We offered at that time to extend their grazing.

20,885. Their hill grazing only?—Yes.

20,886. Did you not refuse the arable land?—The arable land is not in their township, it is a mile away.

20,887. It is in Rudha-Rhoin?—That is a different township.

20,888. But they said before the Commission that it was sufficiently near for all practical purposes?—I should doubt that.

20,889. Do you not consider the low lying land at the head of Lochcarron between the inn and the extreme east boundary, pasture land, very suitable for cultivation, more suitable than the patches behind the houses?—Which land is that?

20,890. Straight east of the hotel, on the farm of Tullich, the low lying lands there?—Yes, but that would spoil the farm of Tullich.

20,891. But would it not improve the condition of the people to give them an opportunity of making that into arable land?—You would require, I suppose, pasture along with it.

20,892. And is not the mountain behind it with a southern exposure?—There again, you might be spoiling a good farm and not benefitting the crofters.

20,893. But you might be creating half a dozen or twenty splendid farms?—Who is to build the houses for them?

20,894. *The Chairman.*—I think the matter has been sufficiently discussed.

CHARLES JAMES MURRAY, Proprietor of the estate of Lochcarron—*examined.* Charles James Murray.

20,895. *The Chairman.* — Do you desire to be examined, Mr Murray?—Yes, I should like to say a few words, as some statements have been made of a hostile character.

Looking to the general 'Small Holdings Question' as affecting the estate of Loch Carron, it is submitted that in this estate small holdings are proportionately well represented.

There are on the south side of the estate opportunities, developed by facilities of communication, for remunerative work; specially at the fishing, but also in other ways. Here then we find that the system of small crofts—crofts on whose exclusive produce no man can pretend to live and thrive—is working fairly satisfactorily.

Further investigation tends to show that larger crofts are less satisfactory until they assume the proportions of small farms and fully occupy the time of a man who decides to devote his life to agriculture.

The smaller crofts are unsatisfactory (1) where there is individual want of enterprise and the family tries to drift along just trying to exist on the croft. Where you see an able-bodied man spending days herding one or two cows among scanty patches of crop. (2) Whereas in the northern part of this estate there is no facility for disposing of fish and no regular demand for labour. In this latter case, while there is no reason for interfering with the traditional habits of the people, we can certainly only look for evil results from artificially stimulating such a system, or from actually laying out national funds in planting a population where it may vegetate but cannot really prosper.

Looking to the question generally of replanting this ground with crofters, there is no doubt that a certain additional number could be planted by ousting larger tenants and landlord. The individual wrongs of the latter are small matters. Capital brought hopefully across the seas in the hope of good work and useful development in the Highlands, can, though diminished in quantity, go back whence it came at very short notice. But the question remains, is the state of crofter farming so admittedly prosperous that a graduated scale now working fairly satisfactorily should be arbitarily upset for the supposed good of one section of the community until the result to that section of the almost complete withdrawal of capital and employment has been considered—and the question pondered by the nation whether it is prepared to lay out for the benefit of that one section exclusively the sums necessary to provide houses, steadings, and stock.

While the numbers of small crofters are moderate, the opportunities of work, estate, railway, domestic, and sporting come fairly round to all. Increase those numbers out of proportion, and while the opportunities of work, estate, domestic, and sporting disappear, the prizes of local railway and trade employment would be competed for by largely increased numbers, and wages would sink below their present level.

The outlay represented by the owner of an estate of this character has been referred to by my factor; the other class, the sheep farmer, is well represented here by industrious men, the tenant of the principal sheep farm is a man whose record of life, while he enjoyed good health, is a local record of useful public service to which he has devoted knowledge, experience, and education which would be beyond the reach of an average crofter.

The remaining class the crofter tenantry have now the opportunity of showing how they can thrive under the system of state fixed rent emancipation from the mingled system of estate partnership and estate control which formely held good.

In the future of many of those who are active, intelligent, and industrious I have every confidence, but I am bound to say that, looking to the returns given respectivly by sea and land, I forsee that the more enterprising will continue to devote themselves to the former, and I should look with grave anxiety to the development of any scheme which proposed to apply a sudden and artificial stimulus to the crofter system.

By well considered extension of small holdings in districts more favoured by climate, soil, and accessibility to market for garden produce we may do some good. But such proposals point to a system having for its very aim and object the development of individual energy and agricultural skill.

We have here, where the crofter system exists, a system already working which is in some respects similar, but is in others very inferior—for the crofter township system, with all that may be said in its favour, is obsolutely antagonistic to individual enterprise and the standard of township management and stock selection is not always the standard of the most go-a-head or of the most sagacious individual.

(Signed) Charles Murray.

July 1893.

20,896. Your factor, Mr Shaw, has been examined at great length; may we take the answers he gave to questions put by the Commissioners and otherwise as representing your views?—With regard to estate management, certainly.

20,897. You do not wish to express any difference of opinion from what he has said?—No; with regard to the management of the estate I wish to lay stress on the fact that, taking the estate as I found it, and looking to what has been laid out upon it, I have always looked to the possibility of improving the condition of the large number of small holdings. I certainly admit that, while looking to the maintenance of the general state of affairs on the estate, I have looked in one or two cases to see how I could be of use locally. I appear before the Crofters Commission, and I admit here that the outrun of the tenants in this township is too limited. I tried to see whether we could arrange for a small extension towards Corraig. That extension I admit was small, but it was specially with a view to providing outrun and cows' grazing for the western portion, which is confined by the other township grazing coming in behind them which we cannot touch. This rather shuts them off, and I had in view a small part of Corraig which I thought would give facilities to the inhabitants of that part of the village, at all events, to pasture their cows. With regard to what has been said about Daoraonair, I do not wish to go back upon the evidence given about it; but as to the ability of the people to stock that if they had got it, the thing was simply ridiculous. I admit that that is a case where extension of holding should be given if at all possible; but this is a small forest, and looking to what has been laid out, and my length of residence, and the record of what I have spent on the place, I submit that it would be injudicious to touch it. The forest is, comparatively speaking, a small one, and it is also a low lying one; and to take out a large slice of it would be simply to destroy the forest. There was an area of some 800 acres which I was willing to add to the holdings of the Daoraonair people; but some of these proved to be perfectly incapable of stocking it, and it really would have meant adding it to only one or two, considering the large amount of assistance they would require. To have given what they asked for generally, would, as I say, have absolutely spoilt that part of the forest; to have given what I did offer would, I think, have materially assisted them. The question of Rudha-Rhoin has also been raised, and my answer to that is very simple. Some of the applicants were absolutely incompetent to stock anything; in fact they are almost paupers. I had to thatch their houses for them, and never expected payment. When the request was made for Rudha-Rhoin, I looked to the possibility of letting that as a separate holding. There was nothing whatever mentioned about a gamekeeper. In the event of my subletting the cultivated part of Rudha-Rhoin to a new tenant, I naturally wished to keep a portion of outrun. In giving the hill outrun to two townships, which, of course, is a great deal more than 800 acres, I reserved what was considered to be suitable for any tenant who might afterwards come to occupy Rudha-Rhoin.

20,898. *Mr Sutherland.*—I do not wish to ask any questions regarding the personal management of your estate; I think there has been enough said about that; but you made some general observations with regard to the crofter system as it is called?—Yes.

20,899. I take it that you rather disapprove of the whole system?—I cannot say that, generally speaking, I am very glad to see the people here, and where they have additional work, or where you can get them additional work, I think it is a very good thing that a man should have a croft for his family and a cow's grazing. But I think when you increase the size of the croft you get cases which do not give satisfactory results until you reach about the size that was indicated by Mr Shaw,—in fact until you have a holding which will occupy a man's whole time.

20,900. I do not dispute that at all, but I think you took exception to some things which you characterised as want of enterprise, where a man spent part of a day attending a cow?—Yes.

Lochcarron. — Charles James Murray.

20,901. Did you consider whether that man voluntarily accepted that position?—I take him as I find him.

20,902. But you are speaking of the system that produced him?—I am talking of what I find, I am not going into theories, but simply dealing with matters of hard fact.

20,903. This is not a theory at all, it is a very hard fact. Did the man make the system under which he lived?—None of us made the system under which we live.

20,904. Was the crofting system made by the people or by the landlords?—I should think the crofting system,—I am not dealing with any special developments of it, but the system generally, I should think, has a pretty long history.

20,905. Was the crofter, as you find him, a free agent in forming that system?—I really could not answer that question.

20,906. The distinction you made between a farmer and a crofter is that the one is more restricted in regard to the amount of land that he holds?—Yes. That is, the small holding which a man can work for the comfort of his family, and for his general benefit, in addition to other work; and if you go beyond that I say you would do better when a man has a holding which will give him continual occupation.

20,907. As to the holdings, when they were made of their present size, was that done in accordance with the wishes of the people, or against the wish of the people?—I cannot tell you.

20,908. Is it natural to suppose that a man would come forward publicly and ask for a larger holding if he could get it otherwise?—Yes, I daresay it is quite a natural feeling; we would all desire more than we have.

20,909. Every one wishes more land rather than less land?—Yes, generally, if a man wishes land at all; some men would have none.

20,910. Then you think they were quite free agents in making the system under which they exist?—That I cannot tell you; it is going too far back, I am afraid.

20,911. We heard certain evidence regarding the formation of this village; you do not see any reasonable occasion to doubt that?—No, I don't.

20,912. And the circumstances under which they were removed from other places and sent down here were truly detailed to-day?—Well, I would expect that if men were put into holdings of that size, they would take what they could get.

20,913. And this man attending one cow on a miserable patch,—is that the natural result?—I am not talking of the general state of things as they might have been; I talk of the man as he exists, and I say it is a mistake to produce such results as that. But please don't run away with the idea that I make any such general accusation,—I said there were one or two cases in which the small crofting system had failed, and this is one.

20,914. I see; it is an accusation against the system which produced that state of things?—I don't think so, because I say if that man had energy he would instead of that be doing something else.

20,915. What would he exercise his energy upon?—Chiefly fishing.

20,916. But supposing he were in such circumstances that he could not get a boat or nets?—Well, I daresay all through the world there are poor people who are in distress. But a man who has no boat of his own can generally assist others. That is a system very common all over the country; and by that means a man might in time save money to enable him to have a boat of his own.

20,917. Coming away again from the personal case to the system, I take it that you approve of the Crofters Act,—I think some observation dropped from you to that effect?—Well, there is no doubt that there are many cases where harsh measures had been adopted towards crofters, and in these cases the Act was a very necessary measure of precaution; but there are other cases where the same necessity does not arise.

20,918. Was not that the first statutory interference with the power of landlords in the Highlands?—I should think not.

20,919. But you admit it was good?—I admit it did good in many cases.

20,920 And therefore necessary?—It does not always follow that if a thing is good it is necessary. But I do admit it has gone a long way to improve matters in certain cases.

20,921. This is a question you may answer or not, just as you choose. Were you opposed to the Crofters Act at the time it was being made part of our legislation?—No, I took no active part in regard to it; I was not in the House at the time.

20,922. Had you any opinion on the matter?—No, I looked upon it with some regret, for the reason that it prevents a man from making a bargain with his tenants, and may thus put a stop to a good deal of useful expenditure on an estate; but taken generally I daresay it did good in some cases.

20,923. Supposing any measures were passed for getting people rationally placed upon the land under favourable circumstances, once such measures were passed would that make you change your mind in any way? Would you accept such a measure loyally and try to carry it out?—That would depend on how it might interfere with the objects I had in view in purchasing this estate.

20,924. Have you any hope that you would become reconciled to such a measure?—I am afraid I cannot be reconciled to things which are directed against myself.

20,925. That is a very natural view to take of it.—I have given instances in which I have been perfectly willing to meet all reasonable demands.

20,926. I take no exception to your statement, which could not, I think, have been better?—But I wish to point out, in regard to sheep farming, that a man in the position of Captain Ferguson is an advantage to a countryside.

20,927. Only you will admit that it is a great pity that the same consideration was not shown to the people when they were deprived of their small holdings, and when these grazings were taken from them?—Even when I say that small holdings are good, I do not suggest that there should be nothing but small holdings. I suggest both small holdings and sheep farmers on a graduated scale.

20,928. And you anticipate that if such a system were established, it would result in good to the public generally?—I believe so.

29,929. Then I think you said it was your opinion that some of the statements made by witnesses, with regard to their financial ability I suppose, were ridiculous?—Yes. Well, I would rather not dwell on that point.

20,930. I will not insist upon it; but you think at all events they were exaggerated?—With regard to their powers of stocking.

20,931. You think they had not such powers as they said?—No.

20,932. But apart from that, dont you think, supposing they were to begin in the easy way you spoke of, and with a graduation of holdings, there might be a ladder constructed by which they could rise up to bigger things?—Certainly, I should like to see that.

20,933. And that though they might not have the means to stock large places, they might have the means to stock small places?—Yes, that is why I wish them rather to remain in the small place; not increasing a man's holding beyond his power of stocking.

20,934. But his power of stocking would increase?—Take the case I spoke of. If these crofters had been in a position to stock land at that time I should have accepted them as tenants.

20,935. And if they got larger holdings, perhaps in a short time they would be able to stock them also?—You cannot put more than a pint into a pint pot. It becomes a question of doing away with the forest, or giving them that part.

20,936. Don't you think the disproportion of acreage held by the individual is very great?—No, I don't admit that at all. I hold that it is quite in accordance

Lochcarron.

Charles James Murray.

with the fitness of things that one man should have more than another, unless you go in for undiluted socialism, and a dead level all round.

20,937. I would not anticipate such a result for a moment; but is not the inequality too great where you find 292 families living on an acreage of about 4000?—I do not go by acreages. I fancy some of them would not care for the hill tops that are included in my own acreage. I think you will find that, round the fringe of this estate, the crofters occupy a very considerable portion of land. Of course, there is the farm of Tullich; but take from this village right away round to the point where you come to my small farm of Reraig, it is all in the hands of crofters. The whole of Achintraid is in the hands of crofters.

20,938. And how do these places compare with the hill?—Naturally it is the lower ground, and more convenient for access to seaware.

20,939. Is it not the most rocky part of the country which they have?—No, I should say not altogether.

20,940. What sort of land is up the glen?—Rossal is good, but beyond that I should think crofters would prefer to remain on the sea-shore, where they can get their seaware for manuring purposes.

[Adjourned.]

TWENTY-FIRST SITTING.

Wick.

WICK, August 23, 1893.

Present:—

David Brand, Esq., Advocate, Sheriff of Ayr and Chairman of the Crofters Commission, *Chairman.*
Michael Hugh Shaw Stewart, Esq., M.P.
Angus Sutherland, Esq., M.P.
Rev. Malcolm Maccallum.
Henry Munro, Esq.
William Mackenzie, Esq., *Secretary.*

20,941. *The Chairman.*—Gentlemen, as this is our first sitting in Caithness, it may be convenient to remind you of the terms of reference. We are directed to inquire whether any, and if any, what land in the county of Caithness now occupied for the purposes of a deer forest, grouse moor, or other sporting purposes, or for grazing, not in the occupation of crofters or other small tenants, is capable of being cultivated to profit or otherwise advantageously occupied by crofters or other small tenants. These are the terms of the remit. We have received the names of a number of those who are desirous of giving us information upon these matters, and we shall take these names in the order in which the list has been made up.

Donald Reid.

Donald Reid, Crofter, Slickly, Canisbay (60)—*examined.*

20,942. *The Chairman.*—Are you a crofter?—Yes.

20,943. What rent do you pay?—I pay £14, 6s.

20,944. Was your case dealt with by the Commission?—Yes, the Commission sat on our croft and fixed the rent.

20,945. £14, 6s. is the rent you pay now?—Just now.

20,946. What rent did you pay before the Commission dealt with it?—£23. It is my nieces that hold the farm; I manage it. Their names are Margaret and Johan Reid.

20,947. The area is 28 acres 2 roods 27 poles arable, and 58 acres 3 roods 31 poles outrun. The common pasture is 103 acres and 860 acres; you hold one share of that, and it is described as held in common by the crofters of Slickly and Brabster and the tenant of the farm of Brabster?—Scoulary is included also in the pasture.

Wick.

Donald

20,948. Are you to give your evidence orally, or have you a written statement?—I have nothing but the names of the tenants evicted from these grazing farms.

20,949. What are the names of the grazing farms of which you wish to speak?—The first is Brabstermire.

20,950. Who is the tenant of it?—The present grazing tenant?

20,951. Yes?—Messrs Murray & Angus.

20,952. Is it under lease?—I think so, but I am not sure.

20,953. What do you wish to tell us about that farm?—All that I have to tell is the tenants that were evicted off it when it was put into a grazing farm.

20,954. Do you remember when it was turned into a grazing farm?—It was before my day; it was in or about the year 1813.

20,955. What are the names you wish to give us?—The first name is John Mowat; there are two John Mowats.

20,956. And who are the others?—Alexander Harper; Misses Reid—I don't know their first names—Barbara Rosie; D. and M. Murray; Alexander Cormack; George Sinclair; Adam Sutherland; there were other two crofts, but I could not find out the names of the tenants.

20,957. These were all separate holdings?—All separate holdings.

20,958. And now all included in this farm of Brabstermire?—And likewise the proprietor, Mr George Sutherland, had his home farm on along with them.

20,959. What do these holdings consist of now?—It is all included in the grazing of Brabstermire.

20,960. Sheep grazing?—Sheep grazing.

20,961. Can you give me the total extent of land which was occupied by these holdings?—No, I cannot give any decided answer to that.

20,962. Is there any evidence of remains of these holdings still?—There are still remains of a good many of the old stances of the old houses on the ground, but the extent of land that they occupied is a thing that I can't give any decided statement upon, but they all had less or more crofts.

20,963. Where did you get that information?—I got it from old people that I spoke to.

20,964. You mean people still living, or people who are now dead?—Some of them that were alive remembered from their fore people; my father herded on it when old Captain Sutherland or the old proprietor had the farm of Brabstermire.

20,965. Can you give me any idea of the extent of arable land upon that farm?—What was arable or what could be made arable?

20,966. No, I mean under cultivation at present?—There is not very much under cultivation at present, about 15 acres, I think.

20,967. I mean under rotation?—Yes, the new tenant has taken in about 15 acres, this Murray.

20,968. Can you tell me what sheep stock the farm carries?—It carried at one time between 400 and 500, when Mr Clyne of Reaster had it, as near as I can calculate.

20,969. And does it carry that still?—Well, I suppose not, as sheep runs are deteriorating fast, and I suppose it is like the rest, it won't carry the same stock.

20,970. Is there one hirsel or more than one?—One hirsel. I think 300 is the regular stock now, as near as I can guess.

20,971. There are no tenants on the farm now, I suppose?—None but one; he has about four acres.

20,972. He labours on the farm?—His father was grass-cutter on the farm to the late proprietor, and he had a small part included as part of his pay and he fenced it in and his son still holds that—about 5 acres I think, 4 or 5 acres. He has that, but he does not work on the farm.

20,973. Do you consider that land from which these persons were evicted long ago, and which you have been

describing, suitable for occupation now?—Certainly, I think so indeed.

20,974. Now what form of occupation? By cultivation or for grazing purposes?—By cultivation.

20,975. And is it your opinion that that land, suppose it divided into crofts of a suitable size, could be cultivated to a profit?—I think so; that is my opinion at any rate.

20,976. What would the land grow?—It would grow oats and turnips and clover grass, such as other farms on rotation.

20,977. And potatoes?—And potatoes.

20,978. What size of holding would you be in favour of forming upon that land?—Really that is a gey critical question for me to answer, it depends on other men's opinions from my own.

20,979. But I want your opinion?—But at the same time I would consider that a man, if he got at a reasonable rent from 40 to 50 acres, would make a reasonable croft for a man.

20,980. Including arable and grazing?—Not grazing, as there is an outside hill which, if they had the farm for cultivation, they would have along with it.

20,981. Does the hill form part of the farm?—Yes, there is a piece of hill that forms part of the farm too, and there is a piece of common that the tenants have together. You referred to it already.

20,982. Is there a desire among persons in the locality for such holdings as you indicate?—There was one time that they had a demonstration about getting the farm of Brabstermire.

20,983. How long ago is that?—I think seven or eight years ago.

20,984. Have you heard anything more of a desire to get land on the farm since that?—They made a deputation to the late factor on the estate, and he objected to give the thing altogether; he said he had by far too many crofters on the estate.

20,985. And it did not come to anything?—It did not come to anything, because, of course, they would not get it.

20,986. You mentioned that there were other farms of which you wished to tell us. You have dealt with Brabstermire, what are the names of the others?—Holland Mey.

20,987. Who is the tenant there?—The present tenant is Finlayson.

20,988. Is it a grazing farm?—It is a grazing farm.

20,989. Can you give me the extent of it?—Mr Purves left it at the last term and this man entered it then—at Whitsunday.

20,990. Can you give me the extent of it?—I consider it would be about—taking the whole extent, the hill and all perhaps—2000 acres. I never measured it; that is my calculation.

20,991. Were there persons at one time living upon that part of the farm?—Yes, I have some of the names as far as I could gather; perhaps there might be more.

20,992. Give me the names?—Adam Barnie; Peter Nicolson; Andrew Harper; Bell and Margaret Laing; Hugh Mackay; William Mackay; Alexander Mackay; David Nicolson.

20,993. Any more?—There are some more, but not in connection with Holland Mey.

20,994. That is all?—That is all I could find out, but perhaps there might be some more.

20,995. How long is it since these occupants ceased to live on the farm?—As near as I could calculate or can find out it would be something passing fifty years.

20,996. And that land, I suppose, is now under sheep?—Under sheep.

20,997. As permanent grazing?—Yes.

20,998. Can you tell me how many sheep the farm carries?—That is more than I can decidedly and definitely say, but I think at times it would be 600, but to say that it carried that exactly is more than I could say.

20,999. Is there one hirsel?—There are two herds on; you may call it two hirsels if you like.

21,000. And do you remember the extent of the arable on that farm?—As to the extent that these tenants had I can't say.

21,001. But I mean the farm now?—I think there should be about 700 acres that could be cultivated on the farm.

21,002. But what is the extent of arable land under cultivation at present?—There was no cultivation until this same year, for many a year back.

21,003. There are only a few acres, I suppose?—Mr Purves in his lease had to leave Holland Mey—there were 65 acres enclosed on Hollnad Mey and he was bound under lease to leave it in a kind of rotation; he ploughed up three parts of that; I suppose that would be about 30 acres.

21,004. But you say there are between 600 and 700 acres that might be brought into cultivation?—I think so, as near as I can guess, though I never measured the ground.

21,005. Is that land old arable?—A good many acres of it, and there might be some that never was in cultivation that is quite capable of cultivation.

21,006. And capable of growing the same sort of crops as you mentioned with reference to Brabstermire?—The same crops.

21,007. On that farm are there farm buildings?—There is one farm steading on it; there is a house and byre, a stable and a barn.

21,008. I should have asked you the question, are there similar buildings on the farm of Brabstermire?—The old mansion house is on Brabstermire that the proprietor lived in.

21,009. And a steading, I suppose?—There is a small steading. There is a byre that holds some cattle, and there is a stable put up since the present tenant came to it that holds from two to three horses. During Mr Clyne's lease there were no such things as a byre, more than a one-cow byre for the shepherd's cow.

21,010. Did Mr Purves occupy the farm of Holland Mey as an adjunct to other farms?—He occupied Holland Mey as a joint farm with Barrogill Mains.

21,011. And he lived on Barrogill Mains?—He lived on Barrogill Mains.

21,012. And had he a manager or a shepherd or anybody living upon Holland Mey?—He had two shepherds.

21,013. Are they there still?—No, there is only one shepherd now.

21,014. Now are there any other farms that you would like to mention?—There is something that I will mention in connection with the farm of Barrogill. There is what is called the Scrime Hill Park.

21,015. Who occupies the farm of Barrogill at present?—The proprietor has it in his own hands.

21,016. And is it a grazing farm?—No.

21,017. An arable farm?—Yes, but this Scrime Hill is a grazing.

21,018. But would you describe the farm as an arable farm?—Certainly.

21,019. What is it you wish to say?—There were three tenants in Scrime Hill at one time.

21,020. What part of the farm did they live on?—On the Scrime Hill park or grazing.

21,021. What were their names?—John Banks; Alexander Bremner; Donald Mackay.

21,022. How long is it since they were there?—I hardly could give a decided answer to that, but I consider it would be passing forty years.

21,023. And they each had separate holdings?—Separate holdings.

21,024. Which are now absorbed in the grazing of the farm of Barrogill; is that so?—Yes, that is correct.

21,025. What extent of land there is capable of cultivation, in your opinion?—Well, I think as near as I can calculate the park would include 100 acres or fully that. I don't think I am over-reaching it. And the most of that park I think could be cultivated. There might be some that would not be very fine or productive ground in it, but I think the most of it could be cultivated.

21,026. And grow the usual crops grown in the neighbourhood?—The usual crops.

21,027. Are there any other farms you wish to bring

under our notice?—There is a small patch yet, that is Rigifall.

21,028. Is it a grazing farm?—It is into grazing along with Philips Mains.

21,029. And who occupies Philips Mains?—The proprietor, Mr Heathcote Sinclair.

21,030. What is the extent of land at Rigifall?—I could say nothing just exactly definite on this, further than a bird's eye view of it, but I think there should be two or three reasonably sized crofts on it. There is a piece of hill that is not fit for cultivation along with it, but there were two crofters on that; I have the names.

21,031. What are the names?—John Banks and John Mackay.

21,032. And they left that long ago, I suppose?—They left when it was turned into grazing; they were put out. To give you the proper sense of it, all this Philips Mains and Rigifall was all in with Holland Mey at one time. Now when the late Lord Caithness took it into his head, he had laboured Philips Mains, and it was taken off the grazings of Holland Mey, and this is a patch now on the north east side of Philips and it is along with Philips; but at one time the whole thing was along with Holland Mey.

21,033. The farm, as it now exists, was formed partly out of land that belonged to Holland Mey and partly out of this crofting land?—It was all crofting land at one time, and it all went into the grazings of Holland Mey. He took this off the grazings of Holland Mey and cultivated a portion of this farm.

21,034. Are there any other lands to which you invite our attention?—Well, there is nothing of grazings that I have anything further to give in my district that I was appointed for.

21,035. What shall we say was the name of the district you were appointed for?—The name of the district I have been over is the Mey district.

21,036. You say you were appointed, was that at a meeting?—I was appointed at a Land League meeting in Canisbay.

21,037. Recently?—Recently, when we came to the knowledge that we were to get a hearing before this Commission.

21,038. In coming here to-day you are representing the views of those who appointed you at that meeting?—Certainly.

21,039. *Mr Shaw Stewart.*—Is it your opinion that crofters would get more value out of the land of Holland Mey farm, taking it first, than one tenant as at present?—Really at present I don't think crofters have any good of it at all.

21,040. I don't think you quite understand my question. Looking at the land itself from an agricultural point of view only, would crofters get more value out of the land than one farm tenant?—That is a question, of course; do you mean the crofters would take more value than one tenant?

21,041. That is what I am asking?—Well, I would think so, because I suppose even the corn that would be grown on that place would pay more, would give more money than the sheep it would keep; the corn crop alone. That is my opinion.

21,042. Is it good land; we have not seen it yet?—You have not seen it, but in my opinion it is like other places; there is a lot of good land upon it and perhaps there might be some on it that might be cultivated that was not so good; but the land will speak for itself. I think there is plenty good land on it. There are a good many acres of capital land on it.

21,043. Supposing it were divided into holdings of 40 to 50 acres, if there is good land in it would not the rent come to over £30 a year?—That depended on how the rent was levied on. That is a question I don't think I could answer.

21,044. Not even as a practical agriculturist?—Because the proprietor has the power to rent it, and he might rent it according to his own idea, and I have no power of renting. If I had the power of renting I might speak.

21,045. Let us take your view of a fair rent. I won't ask you what you consider a fair rent to be, but supposing it were rented on what you consider to be a fair rent, and divided into lots of 40 or 50 acres each, would not you expect that for land capable of such cultivation as that the small tenant would pay over £30 rent?—Well, the tenant is paying I say £125, the present tenant, and I consider about 700 acres is under labour, and it is a pretty good calculation what the rent per acre would be at the present time.

21,046. At any rate your divisions would be of 40 to 50 acres?—That is my calculation.

21,047. That is more like a small farm than a croft, isn't it? It comes to be almost a two-horse farm?—It is but a small farm; just what a pair of ponies would work.

21,048. Now, with regard to the tenants who were formerly on the farm, do you know anything of their circumstances, whether they were prosperous?—Well, I was speaking to some of the families that were on, not long ago, and they were quite confident that if they had been allowed to stay on it they would succeed.

21,049. Do you know how they derived their profit, whether from the sale of grain or from the sale of cattle, or both?—The times that they occupied Holland Mey, between fifty and sixty years ago, rents were quite low in Caithness besides what they were of late. I did not ask how they made the rent, but they told me they were quite comfortable; but it would likely be off the produce of the farm, there was no other way to make it.

21,050. I want to know what the produce was; whether it was more grain or cattle?—It would be grain and cattle combined.

21,051. But the prices of grain and cattle fifty years ago were much better than they are now?—I believe they were; well, I don't know fifty years ago if they were better.

21,052. Surely grain?—Grain might be better, but not cattle, I think, but the rents were very low then besides now, I think, if I am not mistaken. The rents were not so high as they are now.

21,053. *Mr Munro.*—You mentioned just now, in answer to Mr Shaw Stewart, that the price of grain fifty years ago was higher than it is to-day?—Well, I can't say that, because I don't quite recollect. I might say that the price of cattle, I think, was not much higher then than now, but the rents were lower.

21,054. But assuming that the value of grain fifty years ago was higher than it is to-day, you no doubt are aware that at that time there was a heavy import duty levied upon grain?—Yes, I believe there was.

21,055. Are you quite satisfied that if crofters got this land you speak of in small holdings they could cultivate it to advantage?—Why wouldn't they cultivate it to advantage as well as other holdings, if they got it at a reasonable rent?

21,056. And when you speak of a reasonable rent I suppose you would be prepared to submit to the rental that would be fixed by a competent tribunal?—Well, at the time that the rental was fixed, of course, it was kind of reasonable and fair, but the times are altered since then, and we have as much need now for a Crofters Commission as ever, with the fall of the times.

21,057. But speaking of to-day, you would be perfectly prepared to say that people would take these farms at such rental as might be fixed by a competent tribunal, say like the Crofters Commission?—I would think so; I would go in for that.

21,058. *Mr Sutherland.*—I think you stated that about twenty people were moved from these holdings to make these large farms that you spoke about. Where were they sent to?—They just went away and tried to get holdings anywhere they could. They were put off the ground altogether.

21,059. Did a large proportion of them remain in the county of Caithness?—Well, I suppose they did; most of them took some place in some kind of hole or other that they could get into. They did not all get crofts.

21,060. Do you know the successors of any of these men living in Caithness now?—Yes, I have one man; that is William Mackay.

Wick. Donald Reid.

21,061. What is he doing?—He is dead. I have his daughter living next neighbour to me.

21,062. What was he sent to do?—Old William Mackay was a pensioner; he was a sergeant in the army.

21,063. And as a rule did they get new holdings upon which there was no cultivated land?—They went to the estates, as far as I know.

21,064. And got land in a state of nature?—Some not.

21,065. Did you know or did you hear of any person who got new land to reclaim?—That Alexander Mackay that was in Crackadale, I am not sure if he was put out, but he went out to the Gill burn, and to put a holding up on the side of that burn; it was most iniquitous to put a man to live in it.

21,066. And what did he make of it?—Nothing at all.

21,067. Did he reclaim any of it?—About half an acre.

21,068. Was it inferior land?—It was not fit for cultivation at all. It was a wee bit strip between two high braes; it was quite unfit for cultivation.

21,069. Was it inferior to the land from which he was removed?—It was not the least like that at all, and being alongside a burn it was subject to mildews and frost.

21,070. Was it worth fourpence an acre when he went there?—I would not give twopence an acre for it when he went there.

21,071. And what was he paying afterwards?—I never asked, and I did not hear, and I could give no decided answer as to that.

21,072. But supposing that man was cleared out of there a second time?—He was cleared out of there a second time.

21,073. What was done with the holding?—It was knocked down and put into grazing.

21,074. Do you think it was better?—The grazing where he was it was quite right enough to put into grazing.

21,075. Did his labour improve that grazing?—Well, of course, it improved it for a time, the bit that he did labour; no doubt about that.

21,076. Now going back again to the places they were sent from; these farms Brabstermire, Holland Mey, Scrime Hill Farm, Barrogill Farm and Rigifall Farm; these places had all tenants before?—All tenants.

21,077. And they partly improved the land?—I would think so; of course, I could not say who improved the ground, but they laboured the ground.

21,078. You are pretty sure it was not the grazing farmer that improved it?—It was only when these tenants were put out that it was put into a grazing farm.

21,079. And it got value from the fact that their improvements were on it?—The proprietor confiscated that to his own behoof.

21,080. As to the question of value; it was the crofter that gave the value?—Certainly. There was no compensation for any improvements to a crofter though he had to make the whole thing and leave it as it was.

21,081. And he gave the value to the field?—Certainly, or to the laird at any rate.

21,082. Now with regard to that land, it is not land of any great elevation above the sea, is it?—Well, it is not of a high elevation but it is pretty far.

21,083. Have you any idea of the height of it?—No, I could not give a very decided opinion.

21,084. But it is not very high land. You live at Slickly?—Yes.

21,085. There are a number of families in Slickly?—About nine or ten, I think.

21,086. How long have there been nine or ten there?—You are giving me a pretty difficult question.

21,087. Has the population been added to by making new holdings since you remember?—Since I remember, of course, they have improved a good deal of ground, but the most of the holdings are in yet since I remembered. I think they have doubled the ground since I remember.

Wick. Donald Reid.

21,088. They have doubled the amount under cultivation?—Yes.

21,089. Did you ever know a large farmer to double the amount of arable land on his holding by reclamation?—I don't know, it may be possible, but I don't know it.

21,090. And do you know of any other way of adding value to land except by reclaiming it?—I don't think it.

21,091. Is it your opinion generally that the most of the value of the land in Caithness was given to it by crofters or small tenants?—Given from crofters.

21,092. That the value that it now has was given to it mostly by the labour of small holders?—Certainly. A great part of it was cultivated by small holders and turned into large farms or grazings, and the tenant or proprietor received the benefit of the crofters.

21,093. So you would say generally, I suppose, that the value of the land of Caithness was given to it—three-fourths of it at least—by the small holders?—I think so.

21,094. And none by large grazing tenants?—I don't think it. I think they looked cut quite well for themselves.

21,095. And, in your opinion, could holdings be made to advantage in those places you have referred to?—That is my opinion.

21,096. You are decidedly of that opinion?—Yes, decidedly.

21,097. And are you of opinion that there are a number of men in Caithness both willing and able to take these holdings if they got them on reasonable terms?—There are plenty men willing to take it if they had the capital, but the people have been so distressed and trodden down that the capital has fled from them and they have no way of making capital, but I think if we had gotten the money from the government that was given for boats, and given for emigration, and turned to benefit our own country, we would get men quite willing to cultivate the ground.

21,098. But have the people of Caithness hitherto been given any money by government for reclamations they have made?—Well, of course, the large farmers have got money from government.

21,099. But the small farmers who have made most of the reclamation?—Got money for improvements?

21,100. Yes?—Not to my knowledge.

21,101. And don't you think that to the same extent they would still be able to reclaim without assistance?—No, I don't think so.

21,102. Are they poorer than they were?—Yes, and this last year back the fishing has been bad.

21,103. What has the fishing to do with the cultivation of the land?—We have a great many fishermen here who, if they had made money, would take land.

21,104. That is to reclaim land?—Ay.

21,105. And to occupy it afterwards?—Many of the fishermen have small crofts.

21,106. Do you mean this, that they are paying the rent of the land out of the sea?—I do mean it and I am sure of it; paying the rent of the land out of the sea. I am perfectly assured of it, and I can give proof to that effect.

21,107. But your opinion is this, that the land you have already referred to is land that could be profitably occupied under the reference referred to by the Chairman?—I think so; that is my opinion.

21,108. *Mr Maccallum.*—You did not say why these tenants were removed?—No, I did not say that, but my opinion is that it was to get the land into a grazing farm.

21,109. Were they removed against their will do you think?—Certainly. It is not many tenants put out, four or five at a time, who go out of their own will.

21,110. Did the farmer who took these lands pay a much higher rent than was paid by the tenants?—I could not say decidedly.

21,111. And can you say whether the rent of these

farms has fallen since they were consolidated?—Well, of course, I don't know what Mr Smith paid out of Holland Mey when he had it. He was the tenant of Holland Mey, and I think that Lord Caithness had it in his own hands, if I mistake not, at the first start of the grazing. I am not sure what was paid by the first tenant. It was long back, and I never expected to be questioned on the matter and I did not pay much attention to it.

21,112. You cannot say whether the rent is now higher or lower?—The rent of the grazing has fallen considerably. Mr Purves, the last tenant, paid £147, and the present tenant pays £125. That is a good bit of downcome on the rent.

21,113. Can you give us any idea of the amount of land that was cultivated on Brabstermire?—Well, as to the extent—it is so long ago—it is as near as I can guess 1813 or thereabout. That was the time the proprietor left Brabster and went to Canisbay and that is the time that Brabster was turned into grazing. He had his mansion house at Brabster, and the house still stands yet, and he went down to Canisbay in 1813, and I think as near as I can calculate that was about the time that Brabstermire was turned into a grazing farm. It was turned into a grazing farm for horses and cattle.

21,114. Can you give any idea at all of the amount that was formerly cultivated?—I believe the most of them had middling sized crofts, but I can't give any knowledge of the extent of the ground of what they had cultivated, but the ground will almost speak for itself to see what had been laboured on it because the rigs are perfectly visible on the most of it yet.

21,115. Can you say how many acres on Brabstermire have been cultivated?—I think about 600, as near as I can say.

21,116. That was with regard to Holland Mey?—No, 700 for Holland Mey.

21,117. *Mr Malcolm* on behalf of the Highland Property Defence Association.—Am I right in saying that the information you have given the Commission about those farms was not obtained from any of the former tenants directly who occupied that land?—Well, I got some of it not from a tenant, but from some of the tenants' family, because the tenants that occupied these farms are all dead.

21,118. I am right, am I, in saying that the information you have just given the Commission is derived mainly at all events from hearsay sources?—The most of it from people that were acquainted with the ground, and knew the tenants on the ground, old people, I can name some of them, I think. I did not get any writings to that effect.

21,119. But from nobody who occupied the ground himself or herself did you get any of the information?—Yes, I got it from some of the occupants' family.

21,120. But not the actual tenant?—The actual tenant was dead and I could not get it.

21,121. *The Chairman.*—In every case the actual tenant was dead?—As far as I know; either dead or away to some other place distant.

21,122. Was your information derived for the most part from successors of the actual tenant who had lived in the croft along with him and survived him?—In that way and from people that had lived near by when the tenants were in, in close proximity.

21,123. Your information is based upon the best evidence you could get in the district?—That is it.

21,124. *Mr G. M. Sutherland.*—Did you make any examination of Sheriff Court Records?—I did, and I could not find Brabstermire but I found Canisbay. The proprietor of Brabster left Canisbay in 1813, and that was the time he evicted the tenants off the estate of West Canisbay or the present farm of West Canisbay. It was all into small holdings before the proprietor went there.

21,125. *The Chairman.*—Did you get any information from the Sheriff Court?—Not as to Brabstermire; I could not find it, but I got the time that the proprietor left the farm, which was 1813. I consider that was on or about the very time the tenants were put off and it was turned into a grazing farm.

21,126. What was it you found in the records. Was it decrees of removal or what?—Decrees of removal.

21,127. How many did you find?—It is a pity I did not think I would be questioned on it or I would have brought them with me.

21,128. Did you find more than one?—I did, five or six.

21,129. *Mr Maccallum.*—Are you personally acquainted with these farms?—Personally acquainted; I was born on the estate of Brabstermire.

21,130. And in speaking of the number that could be accommodated there you gave us that as the result of your own personal knowledge?—Personal knowledge.

21,131. And not hearsay?—Not hearsay, my own eyesight.

THOMAS INNES, Fisherman and Crofter, Gills, Canisbay (58)—*examined.*

21,132. *The Chairman.*—Are you a crofter?—Fisherman and crofter.

21,133. What rent do you pay?—£1, 17s. 6d.

21,134. Your case was not dealt with by the Crofters Commission?—No.

21,135. Did you not apply?—No, I did not. It is my mother's name that is in for the place.

21,136. Do you live along with your mother?—Occasionally.

21,137. But you have a separate holding of your own?—No.

21,138. Are you here only as representing your mother or yourself?—I am representing the same district as the previous witness, Mr Reid, simply to corroborate his statement.

21,139. You heard his evidence?—Yes.

21,140. And do you concur in it?—Yes, I think it was very much to the point.

21,141. But does it accord with your own information and knowledge on the matter, so far as it goes?—Yes.

21,142. Were you appointed at the same meeting as Mr Reid was appointed?—Yes.

21,143. For the district of Mey or Canisbay?—Yes.

21,144. Is there a desire among your neighbours for new crofts?—There is, very much.

21,145. Are the crofts they have near the sea?—Yes, most of them are.

21,146. Where do they desire to get such new crofts?—Anywhere where the land is fairly good.

21,147. But would they go away from the sea?—Oh, I expect they would.

21,148. Would you yourself?—If I got a good enough place I would.

21,149. As I understand, you obtain your livelihood at present mainly from the sea?—Yes.

21,150. Then are you desirous of giving up the occupation of fisherman and becoming a crofter wholly?—Well, yes, at the present state of matters.

21,151. What do you mean by the present state of matters?—Because the fishing industry is very bad at present.

21,152. Is the crofting industry good?—It is bad too, but I believe the fishing is even worse; this season at any rate.

21,153. Were you brought up a fisherman?—Yes.

21,154. And if you had a croft inland of considerable size, would you know how to manage it?—I think I would.

21,155. What size of holding have you in view?—Well, I should say that for suiting the district a graduated system of crofts along the seashore, smaller crofts would do, because they might make something out of the sea.

21,156. Now in that case of small crofts do you propose that the occupants should live wholly by the sea or mainly by the sea?—Partly, I think the one should assist the other.

21,157. Is that a good sort of croft do you think; is that not a kind of croft where there is a danger of

the occupant failing in both?—Well, if the one industry failed he might fall back on the other a little.

21,158. But is there not some danger of a man who has both the croft and the sea to look to, to succeed in neither, because he spends his time between the two?—No, I don't think so, a sensible man would look after them comfortably enough.

21,159. What size of holding would you give to a man who has to live partly by the sea and partly by his holding?—From perhaps ten to a dozen acres.

21,160. Arable?—Yes.

21,161. Do you think a man could cultivate ten to a dozen acres arable and attend to the fishing besides?—Well, two of the fishings at any rate, but perhaps if he could not manage two, he could have one.

21,162. Which fishing?—The present one that is about finished.

21,163. The July and August fishing?—Yes.

21,164. The harvest here is generally later than that?—Yes, generally.

21,165. It is earlier this year?—Much.

21,166. Now you said you would be in favour of a graduated system of holdings. Apart from fishermen's holdings such as you have described, what size of holdings would you next be in favour of?—I think if a man had ground at its proper value, he could live on from 20 up to 50 acres; I should say not more than 50.

21,167. Do you mean arable?—Yes.

21,168. And a corresponding pasture?—Well, he might live if he had not pasture if the land was good and not too dear rented.

21,169. Would you be willing to undertake a holding of that size away from the sea?—I think I would, if I had the means.

21,170. But are you clear about it or are you in doubt?—Not much doubt.

21,171. Some?—Well, I would just consider the matter a bit.

21,172. Could you put up the necessary buildings without assistance?—No, I don't think so, but I think the government might do a little in that way if they saw it was a feasible project.

21,173. But would you require considerable assistance?—Well, yes, I think most people in my class would.

21,174. And you say that you yourself would?—Yes.

23,175. Then you believe that all those whom you represent to-day, as well as yourself, if they got a holding each of them of the size you have in view, would require considerable assistance to start with?—Some not, but a good many would.

21,176. The majority?—Well, perhaps the majority.

21,177. Now what rent have you in view?—It depends on the ground very much.

21,178. But you know the ground in the neighbourhood?—Well, say for 10 acres, about £3 or £4 I think would be plenty, and it should be good ground, fairly good ground.

21,179. Of course you would have to pay the interest upon your loan in addition?—Yes.

21,180. And would you look to repaying that loan in full in the course of years?—Certainly.

21,181. Now would you be in favour of holdings larger than that and higher rented?—No, I don't think so; I don't think a man requires any more land than he can live comfortably on and cultivate with the assistance of his family.

21,182. And you think 10 or 20 acres would be sufficient?—Up to 50 acres in some cases.

21,183. What stock would a crofter with 50 acres keep in the ordinary case?—Perhaps two or three horses and corresponding number of cattle.

21,184. How many?—It depends if the farm is good.

21,185. Have you considered what the stocking of a holding of 50 acres would be?—I have never given that matter particular attention. I am better acquainted with smaller places.

21,186. Have you considered what the stocking of a holding of 10 acres ought to be?—Yes.

21,187. What ought it to be?—Well, one horse would work that and perhaps two cows and a stirk or so, and perhaps a few sheep.

21,188. Perhaps a few sheep?—Ay, if he had any outrun, but if he had not he could not keep any sheep. That is the general stock that crofters keep.

21,189. Would you at present leave the holding you have, and undertake the formation and carrying on of a larger holding without assistance?—Yes, if the terms were to my mind, if the terms and conditions were suitable.

21,190. *Mr Shaw Stewart.*—I am going to ask you a question which I won't press if you don't wish to answer it, but is it the general idea among the people in this part of the country that government is going to help crofters to stock their land and build houses?—Well, they have hoped so, they have hoped for that, but they are not very sanguine on the point.

21,191. Did you hear what the last witness said about the money that was advanced for boats?—Yes.

21,192. And do you agree with it?—Well, partly.

21,193. I gathered from him that he looked upon it as rather a mistake?—Well, I am rather inclined to think that way too, because there were plenty of people engaged in the fishing industry before that, and certainly it was worse for those who were engaged when they had to compete with those others.

21,194. Well, but do you think that the results of the government advance in the fishing industry have not been very successful?—I do.

21,195. You don't think they were very successful?—No, I don't think so.

21,196. Then I suppose it is not very encouraging to Parliament to suggest that the government should advance money for land?—Well, it is a different affair altogether, the land.

21,197. In what way?—Any industry connected with the sea is very unstable and very unsteady; the land is more of a solid substance anyhow.

21,198. But the produce of the land depends a great deal upon bad and good seasons?—Certainly.

21,199. And to that extent it is uncertain and unstable?—But not so much as the sea, I think.

21,200. Of course on the sea you depend so much on the herrings as well as on the weather; but a man requires capital to embark on agriculture as well as in fishing?—Yes.

21,201. Do I understand you to say that it would not be easy to find men with capital enough to embark on new holdings without assistance?—I believe it would be quite possible to find a good many, but it would leave out perhaps the most necessitous; those who were not able to take these places; what I mean is that the worst off class of the people would be left out if there is no assistance given from government for stocking on these new places.

21,202. I suppose I may take it that a man who is able to stock and start agriculture on the small holdings, if he has got capital enough for that he has got capital enough to become a tenant of a small farm?—Yes.

21,203. And, therefore, the men we will say of the crofter class whom you would like to see in possession of more land would not be able to work that land without some assistance?—Not in a great many cases.

21,204. In the majority?—In the majority; I believe that would be the case; but they have built new houses on very poor bits of land at their own expense and stocked it too. They were forced to do so. That was one case on this estate of Lord Caithness, they were forced to build good slate houses or else leave their holdings, so they accomplished it.

21,205. They did accomplish it?—Yes, with small assistance I believe, they got a small assistance from the landlord.

21,206. That means an abatement of rent, does it, or do you mean a money payment?—No, I mean that he gave them the slate and I think lime and a small amount of money if they finished within a certain time. I am also informed that he supplied flooring, ridging, and tabling. [*The Chairman.*—And made no addition to the rent?—No addition to the rent, so far as I am aware.]

Wick.
—
Thomas Innes.

21,207. I did not quite gather what size of holding you would suggest in connection with the sea?—Well, I would have them of various sizes.

21,208. But your own view; I understand you would like a holding where you would be able to help your profits from the sea; you would like to work the sea and the land together, wouldn't you?—Yes, and a good many of the people along the seashore would like the same.

21,209. Take a man who has got an interest in a boat and would like to prosecute the fishing to a certain extent. What size of holding would he wish to have on the land?—I should say from ten to a dozen acres or thereby.

21,210. And you think that would be more profitable than a croft upon which alone the occupier would be dependent without the sea?—Well, I think it might be quite as profitable, and some people would like that way of living better. I refer here to small crofters along the shore.

21,211. It is what you yourself would like?—Yes, I would like that very well.

21,212. *Mr Munro.*—To return to this question of advances to small tenants, you no doubt expect that the money would be advanced for the purpose of enabling a tenant to build the necessary houses and offices in connection with a small farm?—Yes.

21,213. And the money so expended would, of course, afford a fair security for the advance?—Yes.

21,214. Now in such a case do you expect that the tenant himself would be able to advance a portion of the money that he would require?—In a good many cases I think he would.

21,215. So that in that case there would be a fair margin of security for any money that might be advanced by the government?—Just so.

21,216. And there is no comparison between money advanced to enable fishermen to buy boats and money advanced to enable a farmer to stock a small farm; there is no comparison, I mean, between the two in the value of the security, you allow that, don't you?—Yes.

21,217. I think you said that you were in the habit of cultivating a small croft and prosecuting the fishing at the same time?—Yes.

21,218. Now is it possible to follow the fishing industry and to cultivate the croft as it ought to be cultivated?—Quite possible, but you just can't prosecute the fishing the whole year round; you have sometimes to leave the fishing and attend to the croft, but it is quite possible if a man is active and pays attention.

21,219. Now if you got a small croft of the size you mentioned, 10 to 12 acres, could you pay the rent of that croft from the produce of the croft itself or would you require to supplement it out of your fishing?—That would depend upon if it were cheap enough, for one thing, and also on the price of any animals you would have to dispose of.

21,220. But assuming that you got the croft at its fair value, could you pay the rent out of the croft itself?—Yes, I think you might pay the rent, yes, I believe you would pay the rent.

21,221. Out of the croft itself?—Yes.

21,222. *Mr Sutherland.*—You said that if the one failed you could fall back on the other?—Yes.

21,223. Which do you mean to fall back on?—The one that did not fail, if the fishing failed you might have a good harvest.

21,224. Which one have you in your mind that you would fall back upon?—I had none in particular.

21,225. As a matter of fact, which have the men mostly to fall back upon, the land or the sea?—On the land, I should say, when unable to follow the fishing, but at present the rent is mostly paid out of the sea.

21,226. And you say that you are in favour of a man being a crofter and a fisherman at the same time?—Yes, along the seashore.

21,227. In certain circumstances?—Yes.

21,228. Do you know any such?—Many.

21,229. Where?—All along the coast here.

21,230. Of Caithness?—Yes.

21,231. Do you know them in any other part of the country?—Yes, they are in some other parts of the country too, I believe.

21,232. But not to the extent that they are in Caithness?—I could not give a definite answer to that question.

21,233. You have been all over Scotland, I presume?—Yes.

21,234. And have you seen crofter fishermen elsewhere to any large extent, or to the same extent as in Caithness?—I believe not.

21,235. And I have no doubt that your mind was influenced by the fact that you have been brought up among such people when you advocate such a thing?—Very likely. All are influenced by their surroundings.

21,236. What is the experience of these crofter fishermen with regard to living; are they more or less comfortable than other fishermen?—I should say since the fishing industry has turned bad, the crofter fishermen are the better class of the two, because if there is a bad fishing they have the land to fall back upon. Although perhaps it is not worth very much as a crofters' ground.

21,237. Have you any opinion regarding the matter of how they became fishermen at all?—Yes.

21,238. Well, what is it?—Because they were evicted from the ground, forced off their holdings by the landlords. They were forced to do something for their living, and they naturally went to the sea.

21,239. But couldn't they get their living out of the land?—They could not stay on the land.

21,240. But what made these men who are crofters and fishermen together take to the sea?—Well, I believe the landlords would allow them to take some barren patches along the seashore and they occupied that and cultivated that, and to eke out a living they had to try the sea too.

21,241. Wasn't it to get the rent?—I expect so, that was one great thing.

21,242. Because the crofts were not self-sustaining?—Yes.

21,243. Is that your opinion?—Yes.

21,244. Do you think the starting of such a class was actuated by that, to a certain extent?—Yes, I feel certain of that.

21,245. Now is it your experience that all these people who were crofters and fishermen in Caithness twenty years ago are the same now; have some of them dropped the fishing altogether in your experience?—Yes, a good many have.

21,246. And do you know any reason for that?—Well, one reason is that a man could start to the fishing formerly much easier than now.

21,247. There is more capital required now to embark in the fishing?—Yes.

21,248. How much capital is required to start as a herring fisherman now?—It depends on the share you want.

21,249. But suppose yourself to be the owner of a boat, what is the value of a fishing boat and nets and all in Wick at the present time?—A good boat and proper drift would cost—(*Turning to audience.* Is there any practical fisherman here?)

21,250. £700?—£400.

21,251. Would not a man require to be a pretty large capitalist before he could start as the proprietor of a boat?—Yes, but they perhaps don't require to have all the money just at once, they might get some time to pay out that amount.

21,252. Would he require to be a bigger capitalist to take a small croft?—Oh, I don't think so.

21,253. You could as easily then take a reasonably sized croft as you could start as a fisherman?—Yes, if you were to have the whole boat and drift for yourself.

21,254. I am supposing you could make the same arrangements regarding the land as you could for the fishing?—I should say it is as easy.

21,255. And a man that could start as a fisherman without government aid could as easily start as a small farmer?—Yes, that is my opinion.

21,256. Now with regard to the advances that were

made to the fishermen, do you admit that they were a failure?—Well, I think it was.

21,257. What is the ground of your belief that they have been a failure?—Because many of them have been unable to pay up the policies.

21,258. Do you know how much money had to be written off for the Wick district?—No, I don't.

21,259. You have no idea how much it was?—No, I don't know.

21,260. Would you be surprised to learn that it is only about a tenth of the whole of the advances?—Yes, I would.

21,261. Did you think that the loss was greater than that?—Yes, I thought so indeed.

21,262. Now with regard to the advances themselves, did you ever hear that an agitation had been got up over the country by fishermen for the purpose of getting these advances for buying boats?—No, I never heard them.

21,263. Do you know who advocated the giving of the advances; was it the fishermen themselves?—I don't think it was the fishermen.

21,264. You never heard of any agitation or any demand on the part of the fishermen to get these advances?—No.

21,265. As a matter of fact they were offered to them by the Executive of the government of the time?—Yes, that is my opinion.

21,266. So it was not the demand of the people at all?—No, I don't think it.

21,267. At any rate there was not any amount of demand for these advances to fishermen like what there is with regard to giving the land to the people now?—No, not in our district anyway.

21,268. *The Chairman.*—Do a considerable number of fishermen on the coast of Caithness go out as hired hands?—A few, not many.

21,269. A good many go out as holding a share or part of a share of a boat?—Yes.

21,270. And it does not need much capital for that?—Not a great amount.

21,271. Do you know of any fishermen on this coast who have only patches of potato or garden ground and trust for their livelihood entirely to the sea?—Yes, there are a few of them.

21,272. How do they succeed?—Well, they just have a pretty hard time of it I think in most cases.

21,273. Have they a harder time in your judgment than those who have crofts?—Yes, I think so.

21,274. Or are they, upon the whole, better off?—I don't think so.

21,275. Are there any cases of fishermen who have only patches of land and not crofter holdings in the district you represent?—Yes, there are a few but not many.

21,276. And you represent them as well as the others I suppose?—Yes, they just asked me to appear here.

DAVID MACKAY Crofter, Auckingill (50)—*examined.*

21,277. *The Chairman.*—Are you a crofter?—Yes.

21,278. Was your case dealt with by the Crofters Commission?—Yes.

21,279. What was your old rent?—£26.

21,280. And what is the new rent?—£20.

21,281. The area is 26 acres 1 rood 0 poles arable, 2 acres 2 roods 12 poles outrun; one share in a common of 1305 acres. Have you any written statement?—No.

21,282. Were you appointed to come here at a meeting?—I am here in the place of one who was appointed; he is absent, and I am here in his place, John Manson.

21,283. You come here instead of Manson who was appointed?—Yes.

21,284. What district do you represent?—Auckingill.

21,285. How many tenants are there for whom you are appearing?—I am not sure.

21,286. A considerable number?—Yes.

21,287. There are about twenty tenants in the township who appeared before the Crofters Commission?—There are more than twenty altogether.

21,288. Is there any land to which you wish to ask our attention?—Yes, the farm of Stroupster. That was a farm at one time.

21,289. Is that a grazing farm?—Yes, now.

21,290. What is the name of the tenant?—Alexander.

21,291. Do you know what rent he pays?—I am not aware.

21,292. Do you know if he is under lease?—I believe he is under lease as yet.

21,293. Do you know what number of sheep the farm carries?—I could not say, but I believe about 600 or 700.

21,294. Were there tenants there in former days?—Yes.

21,295. Do you know how many?—There was one in my recollection, Alexander Nicolson.

21,296. Alexander Nicolson within your own recollection, and were there any before your time?—I could not say.

21,297. Is there old arable land on that farm?—Oh, yes, good ground there, some of it.

21,298. Suitable for cultivation?—Perfectly.

21,299. And occupation by crofters?—Yes.

21,300. And you think that holdings could be made there which crofters could occupy at a profit?—I am sure of that.

21,301. In average years?—Yes.

21,302. You are certain of that?—Certain of that.

21,303. Can you tell us what extent of land there is on that farm?—I could not tell exactly the acres.

21,304. But will there be some hundreds of acres or only a few?—It is all included in one park with a dyke round it, about 80 acres I think.

21,305. What is the name of the park?—There is not a special name for it.

21,306. Is it enclosed?—All enclosed with a dyke round it.

21,307. And was it within that park that this man Alexander Nicolson once lived?—Yes.

21,308. How far is that park from the neighbouring crofters' land?—It is in the middle of their hill pasture.

21,309. What is the name of their hill pasture?—No special name.

21,310. Then is that park separate from the rest of the farm of Stroupster?—That is the part of the farm that was made into sheep grazing; the arable ground was put into sheep grazing.

21,311. Had all that park at one time been under cultivation?—Not altogether; to make it square they took in some that was never under cultivation.

21,312. Some of it had and some of it had not?—Yes.

21,313. Are the crofters whom you represent in want of additional land?—Some of them.

21,314. You mean their holdings are too small?—There are some grown up that have to leave the place for want of ground.

21,315. And would relief be afforded by consolidating some of the holdings becoming vacant with others that are occupied and transferring the persons who leave to this new ground?—Undoubtedly it would.

21,316. And would you be in favour of such a course as that?—Yes, I would.

21,317. Is there any other land in your mind which you wish us to look to?—No.

21,318. Only this part?—This part, and it has been a great disadvantage to the people, because at one time we put two or three yeld cattle there and got them away to the summer, and he charged the nominal price of half-a-crown a head and when we got them home, of course, they helped to pay the rent.

21,319. But you can't do that now?—No.

21,320. The land is wholly occupied by the farmer?—Yes.

21,321. What use does he make of it mainly?—It is all under sheep.

21,322. He has one hirsel I suppose?—Yes.

Wick.
David Mackay.

21,323. Is there any crofter in Auckingill pays as large a rent as you do?—No.

21,324. They are all below you?—Yes.

21,325. What stock do you keep yourself?—Two horses, three cows sometimes, and sometimes two or three stirks.

21,326. Any sheep?—Sometimes six, sometimes twelve.

21,327. Have you any desire to leave your own holding?—No, if I would get it at a reasonable rent I have none.

21,328. I take it that the other holdings in Auckingill are all smaller than yours?—Most of them are.

21,329. Do you remember the size of the smallest holding there?—About four acres, I think three or four acres arable.

21,330. What rent was paid for that?—I could not say, about £2, 10s., or something like that.

21,331. *Mr Sutherland.*—Do you desire more an extension of your grazing than anything else?—No, not an extension of the grazing.

21,332. How far does your present grazing go? Does it go as far as the Loch of Auckingill?—We could not tell exactly our grazing, because the big farmer, when he got that farm, intrudes on what is called our grazing.

21,333. Haven't you a properly defined boundary between you?—No, not that I am aware of.

21,334. How is that?—He comes down sometimes to our corn.

21,335. What is the boundary you claim? Do you go as far as the loch?—I don't know how far our march is. There is no march between us and him that I know of.

21,336. You are returned in the official list as having 1305 acres of pasture?—That is what the big farmer would not take.

21,337. But you are credited with 1305 acres as the township grazing; how many share in that?—I am not aware; Farquhar Mackay might let you know.

21,338. But surely if you have a share of the grazing you will know how many are interested in it?—Oh, the whole of the people.

21,339. Have you any idea of the number of families?—About sixty, but I am not sure.

21,340. You said that you kept about six sheep, could your share not keep more than that?—I cannot keep that at all times.

21,341. You cannot give the acreage of Stroupster farm can you?—No.

21,342. But you think it has 600 or 700 sheep stock?—There is sometimes that on and sometimes more.

21,343. What farm bounds with it on the west?—Brabster I think is nearest on the north west and Slickly on the west.

21,344. And does it go south of the Kirkburn?—I don't think so.

21,345. In your opinion there is some land on the Stroupster farm that could be profitably occupied by crofters or other small tenants?—I have seen as good corn growing there as ever grew in Freswick estate.

21,346. Is the park at Stroupster cultivated, the whole of that enclosed land?—Yes.

21,347. How many acres is it?—I am not sure how many, it is a great big park. I think about 80 acres.

21,348. And it is under cultivation?—No, it is not under cultivation.

21,349. Not now?—No, it is under sheep.

21,350. It is allowed to run out in pasture is it?—Yes.

21,351. *Mr Shaw Stewart.*—Is there a resident tenant at Stroupster?—None but the shepherd.

21,352. Are there any steadings of any size?—There was a steading at one time and then there was a mill put up there and steadings for cattle and horses, but it is all demolished almost.

21,353. How many holdings would you like to see on Stroupster?—I could not say I am sure; a man would require from 20 to 30 acres at least and pasture besides.

21,354. How many acres of land that might be cultivated are there in Stroupster?—I am not sure. I know there is some outside the boundary that might be in cultivation, outside the 80.

Wick.
David Mackay.

21,355. But I am not speaking now of the land under cultivation at present, but how many acres of land on Stroupster farm could be cultivated?—I believe it could be all cultivated inside that park.

21,356. How many acres is that?—I suppose about 80, not that I am sure.

21,357. Well, then if each man should have 20 acres at least, that is four holdings?—Yes.

21,358. What would be the rent of such holdings, in your opinion a fair rent?—I will not meddle with the rent at all. I will not say anything about the rent.

21,359. But supposing you were offered a holding on this farm of 20 acres, before you declined or accepted the offer you would have to consider what the rent would be?—Well, in the present state it is in I would say 7s. or 8s. an acre was plenty.

21,360. Take it at 7s. an acre, that is £7 for each holding?—Yes.

21,361. Do you know what the present rent of the farm is?—No, I am not aware.

21,362. At any rate it is more than the rent that these tenants would be able to pay I suppose?—I could not say.

21,363. You have no idea what the present rent is?—No.

21,364. The valuation roll gives us the rent of the farm and house of Stroupster as £110, 4s.?—Is that including the pasture and all?

21,365. Yes, I take it so, but I suppose the rent of this land that you speak of would come to more than £28. I mean the part that you allude to?—There is a great number of acres of pasture along with the place.

21,366. You say you can't always keep six sheep now?—Yes.

21,367. Why is that?—Because their sheep come and eat all our pasture, the big farmer's sheep that occupies Stroupster. We have no pasture on the hills; we have the name of it but that is all.

21,368. You mean that there is not keep for them all?—That is it, and we have to keep our sheep on our own pasture at home.

21,369. If you had keep you could keep the sheep?—Certainly.

21,370. You don't complain that your rent is too high?—It will not help me at the present time to complain. I am saying nothing about my own rent.

21,371. Is it managed as a club farm this thousand acres of grazing of the township?—Everybody can go there that chooses to go.

21,372. Just to look after their sheep?—Certainly, but when we come on his pasture he dogs our sheep and cattle, but we never get a chance to dog his. He has the victory over us.

21,373. But I suppose if he can drive his sheep on your ground you can drive your sheep to his ground?—It would take some time to drive off his stock, and then we might damage some and get into trouble.

21,374. The township and the farm would be the better of a sheep fence between them?—Certainly, we would know then how far we could go.

21,375. *Mr William Mackay*, factor for the estate.—How long have you been tenant on your holding?—Six years past, seven years now.

21,376. What induced you to come to that holding?—Because it was larger than the place I was in.

21,377. *The Chairman.*—Where had you been before?—On the same estate, in the same town.

21,378. A smaller croft in the same town?—Yes.

WILLIAM REID, Boat Builder, Keiss (60)—*examined.*

21,379. *The Chairman.*—Are you here as representing the township of Keiss?—Yes.

21,380. Appointed at a meeting?—Not at a meeting but by a committee.

21,381. You are described as a boat builder; is that your main means of livelihood?—It was.

21,382. Are you not that now?—Oh, yes, when I can get work.

21,383. Was your case dealt with by the Crofters Commission?—Yes.

21,384. What rent do you pay?—I have got no croft.

21,385. I thought you said your case was dealt with by the Commission. Now is there land to which you wish to call our attention?—The land that I wish to call attention to is Auckhorn on the Keiss estate.

21,386. Is that a grazing farm?—Partly, both grazing and arable.

21,387. What is the name of the tenant?—Finlayson.

21,388. Do you know what rent he pays?—No.

21,389. Do you know the extent of the farm?—I don't know the acreage exactly.

21,390. Does Finlayson live upon the farm?—Yes.

21,391. He has a dwelling-house and steading there?—Yes.

21,392. Do you know the number of sheep upon it?—Perhaps about 200 I suppose.

21,393. Does he pay a rent of less than £100?—No, he pays more.

21,394. What is it you wish to say about land on that farm?—It is about the evictions when that farm was made a sheep farm.

21,395. How long ago is it since that?—Whitsunday 1842 when the tenants were evicted.

21,396. Where did you get that information?—I was personally born there.

21,397. And you were living there; you remember it yourself?—Yes.

21,398. How many were turned out?—There were nine altogether.

21,399. Do you know their names?—Yes.

21,400. What were they?—Henry Budge, Alexander Reid, George Inrig, and the successors of William Miller, Rose Cormack, Alexander Miller, John Harper and John Smith.

21,401. Was that farm formed entirely out of these holdings?—Yes.

21,402. Had there been no farm before of Auckhorn?—No, except the nine tenants represented the whole of Auckhorn.

21,403. And it was consolidated into one farm?—Yes.

21,404. Who was the first tenant?—A brother of the proprietor's held it in his own hands for a time; Mr Macleay was proprietor at that time.

21,405. His brother became the first tenant?—Yes, Alexander Macleay.

21,406. Do you know what rent?—No.

21,407. But ever since that time it has been occupied as one farm and occupied by a succession of tenants?—Yes.

21,408. And in your opinion is it suitable for occupation by crofters now?—Quite as suitable now as it was and there is a lot of ground that was arable then that is now under sheep pasture.

21,409. Under permanent pasture?—Yes.

21,410. But could it in your opinion be easily restored to cultivation again?—Oh, yes.

21,411. Do you know what became of those who had to leave this place?—Yes, I know pretty well what became of the most of them.

21,412. Did some of them get holdings in the vicinity?—They did; but some had to leave and go to other places.

21,413. In the county?—Yes, through their getting that place.

21,414. Do the crofters whom you represent desire to get new holdings if they can be obtained?—Well, I believe it is the general opinion, the general desire as far as I understand.

21,415. Are some of the holdings of the crofters for whom you appear rather small?—Yes.

21,416. Are they too small for a man to live by his holdings?—Oh, certainly they are.

21,417. Do you know crofters in your neighbourhood with holdings which enable them to live by their holdings?—They have to do it, but some of them, of course, have done pretty well at the fishing before and had to give it up.

Wick — William Reid.

21,418. But I am speaking of those who do not depend on the fishing. Do you know any crofters at present who live by their holdings exclusively?—Excuse me I meant to explain that, that all the crofters on that estate had to go to the fishing when Mr Macleay had Keiss.

21,419. To eke out the livelihood they got from the holding?—Yes.

21,420. But do you know of any crofters at present in your district who live by their holdings?—I do.

21,421. A number?—Not many.

21,422. Do most of them live partly by the holdings and partly by fishing or labour?—That is so.

21,423. Is that a system of which you are in favour; I put it to you in this way—would you be in favour of what I would call a self-subsisting holding, or of a holding whereby a man partly lived, and partly by fishing or labour, which?—I think they should be distinct as a rule, except there might be a few small cases round the seaside.

21,424. A few cases where they lived partly by the sea or labour and partly by the croft?—Yes.

21,425. And others where they lived entirely by the holding?—Yes.

21,426. Would you be in favour of the system of self-sustaining holdings being considerably extended in the county of Caithness from what it is?—It would be my opinion that the crofts are generally too small.

21,427. And you would be in favour of self-sustaining holdings?—Yes.

21,428. The Caithness crofters as a rule are good farmers?—I should think so.

21,429. That is my own experience. Is there any other land besides Auckhorn that you wish to speak of?—There is another place called Long Green, in connection with the Auckhorn farm, occupied as pasture along with Auckhorn now.

21,430. Occupied by Mr Finlayson?—Yes.

21,431. Grazed by him along with the farm of Auckhorn?—Yes.

21,432. Do you know the extent of it?—Not definitely. I should think there might be perhaps about 40 acres that could be cultivated or put under cultivation, but I could not say definitely.

21,433. Is it suitable for cultivation?—It was cultivated; there were three tenants occupying that place; and they were evicted.

21,434. Do you know their names?—Yes.

21,435. What were they?—Kenneth Alexander, Donald Macadie, Alexander Alexander.

21,436. Do you remember their being put out?—Yes. It would be thirteen or fourteen years after the Auckhorn evictions.

21,437. And that land is now grazing, and is grazed along with the farm of Auckhorn?—Yes.

21,438. Do you know what rent Finlayson pays for Long Green?—I cannot say.

21,439. The total rent is £150. That, of course, includes Long Green?—Yes, and the hill pasture.

21,440. Do you know what extent of hill pasture he has?—The whole of the hill on the estate, I suppose the whole of the moor; there is a border along the crofting part.

21,441. Does he go up to the sky line?—He goes away up to the burn where the boundary is.

21,442. Do you mean the Kirk burn?—Yes.

21,443. He goes up to that burn?—Yes.

21,444. That is above the hill of Clayton?—Yes, that is so.

21,445. That is a large extent of ground?—It is certainly a good bit.

21,446. Now besides Auckhorn and Long Green, is there any other land?—Well, there were more evictions in connection with the home farm.

21,447. The Keiss home farm?—Yes.

21,448. How many removals occurred there?—Six, I think.

Wick.

William Reid.

21,449. Do you know the names?—Yes.

21,450. What were they?—George Sinclair, Malcolm Groat, John Ross, William Ross, William Keith, William Bain, and a John Groat, I think.

21,451. Do you remember these evictions?—Oh, quite well.

21,452. The whole of them?—The whole of them.

21,453. And that land is now part of the grazing of the home farm?—It is under rotation.

21,454. Is the whole of it under rotation?—Oh, yes.

21,455. Is there a considerable extent of grazing on the home farm besides, not under rotation?—No.

21,456. It is an arable farm?—It is an arable farm.

21,457. And does this land that was in the possession of these persons you have mentioned include all the arable?—That on the lower part of the farm; that is the hill part of the farm.

21,558. Can you give me the extent of arable occupied by these people?—Not definitely, but I might give a rough guess.

21,459. Then are all these the lands you wish to speak of?—That is all.

21,460. *Mr Sutherland.*—When the seven tenants were turned out of the Keiss home farm, was it arable land they had?—It was not all arable that is now, but they had small patches of arable land.

21,461. And what remained as their outrun was also brought under reclamation when the home farm was made, is that the way?—Not quite. All the moors were outrun for the whole of the estate at that time.

21,462. The whole of the moors?—Yes, in the vicinity. Of course, every part of the locality had the moors right opposite where they were situated.

21,463. The small tenants had got grazing on the moors?—Yes.

21,464. And their arable land is now included in the home farm, is that it?—That is so.

21,465. And does the farm of Auckhorn come down to the back of the holdings of the people of Keiss, the grazing part of it?—Yes.

21,466. So that you are shut in on the one side by the sea, and on the other side by the farm of Auckhorn?—Yes, by the outrun, the hill pasture.

21,467. What is the distance between the high road through Keiss and the boundary of the Auckhorn grazing?—In some parts it may be nearly a mile and in some not half a mile or much more.

21,468. So you are hemmed in on the west side by the Auckhorn grazing, in some places within a mile and in other places half a mile, is that so?—That is so.

21,469. What do the people there propose themselves as a relief?—I cannot give any definite statement on that point.

21,470. Is their idea mostly that some of them should be shifted from there, or that they should get an addition to their present holdings?—I cannot say that.

21,471. Have they formed any idea with regard to that?—I suppose their idea is that they would like to have larger holdings.

21,472. In what direction do they look for an enlargement of holdings?—Long Green would be quite available, of course.

21,473. But Long Green is under cultivation, isn't it?—No, it is under pasture.

21,474. But was it cultivated at one time?—Oh, yes.

21,475. So that is quite available for arable land now?—Yes.

21,476. There is a considerable deal of arable land in the farm of Auckhorn, is there not?—It is not considered a large farm.

21,477. Does it come south of Wester Loch at all?—No, it borders on the north-east side of Wester Loch.

21,478. *Mr Shaw-Stewart.*—Which would be the greatest benefit to the people of Keiss; would it be that a few should get new holdings elsewhere, or that there should be an extension of grazing to the present tenants; that is to say part of Auckhorn farm grazing?—New holdings I think would be the greater benefit. I am speaking my own opinion only.

21,479. How would the new holdings be a benefit to the whole township?—It would be an outlet for some parties who have none.

Wick.

William Reid.

21,480. It would be a benefit for those who could occupy the new holdings, but how would that benefit the rest of them?—It would be very difficult to make one thing a benefit for the whole of them.

21,481. Would part of the farm grazing of Auckhorn suit the Keiss crofters for grazing as a club farm?—It would suit a part of it, but not convenient for many of the Keiss crofters.

21,482. The Auckhorn grazing runs behind the Keiss holdings?—The hills of course would; the moors.

21,483. If they could get that hill for grazing, would that not be a benefit to the Keiss crofters?—Yes, as a whole.

21,484. Would that not be a greater benefit to the whole than the removal of three or four to new holdings?—I think there is room for both of these.

21,485. But supposing it were an alternative; supposing there was no ground for new holdings as well as an extension of grazing, which would be the greater benefit, in your opinion, to the township of Keiss?—A benefit to the whole would be better than a benefit to a small part.

21,486. And therefore the extension of grazing would benefit the whole?—Yes.

21,487. Going back to the question of the small holdings. How many tenants could occupy Auckhorn farm in small holdings?—I have given you a statement of nine that did occupy it at one time.

21,488. But in your opinion, at the present day, because the circumstances are not the same. The prices of farm produce are very different from what they used to be, and agriculture is not so prosperous altogether; looking at the whole circumstances of the present day, how many crofters, in your opinion, could profitably occupy Auckhorn farm?—Perhaps five or six.

21,489. Would that be taking the whole farm, grazing and all?—No, clear of the moors. I mean the grass pasture on the farm.

21,490. Would you not give them any pasture on the hill ground?—They don't require it; they have plenty of pasture in connection with the farm.

21,491. Did you say four or five tenants?—I said five or six.

21,492. If there were holdings made for five or six tenants on the better part of the farm, that would leave the grazing unoccupied?—The grazing would be the same as it was when I remember in connection with the croft.

21,493. The grazing of the farm would then be held in connection with the new holdings, the hill grazing?—Not the hill grazing.

21,494. How was that occupied in the former days?—There is a lot of pasture in connection with the farm that is not the hill.

21,495. But the hill is now grazed, isn't it?—Yes.

21,496. How was it formerly occupied?—By all the tenants in common through the whole estate.

21,497. The Keiss tenants?—Yes.

21,498. What kind of rent would these five or six tenants be able to pay for the small holdings?—I suppose a ratio the same as other grounds, I can't say exactly.

21,499. You know the land?—Yes.

21,500. What value would you put upon it per acre?—I can't say that; I am not a practical farmer you know.

21,501. But that lessens the weight of your evidence you know with us. You are giving us evidence on very practical questions and you tell us you are not a practical farmer?—Well, of course, I am telling you the truth.

21,502. I don't doubt that for a moment, but you see it rather lessens the weight we attach to your evidence on the agricultural part of it. The fact is you are only able to speak to what has been in the past; you are not able to give any opinion as to the best way

Wick.

William Reid.

of occupying the land in the future, isn't that so, as a practical farmer?—Not as a practical man.

21,503. *Mr Sutherland.*—Have you ever cultivated any land?—I have wrought on land.

21,504. And isn't that a practical farmer?—But that is a good while since.

21,505. Do you mean that you are not a practical hand at paying rent, or at fixing rent, but you have worked on land?—It is forty years since I wrought on land.

21,506. But you were in connection with a farm?—I was, in my youth.

21,507. *Mr Munro.*—I suppose you consider a fact, if it be a fact, stated by a boat-builder is just as good as a fact stated by a farmer or anybody else?—Certainly, it is a fact, whoever states it.

21,508. *Mr James Nicolson* (Factor on the Keiss Estate).—Is the evidence you have given to-day got at from second hand, or do you know from your own information?—I am speaking from my own personal knowledge.

21,509. You have said that there were in 1842, I think, nine tenants evicted from Auckhorn Farm?—Yes.

21,510. Did they remove voluntarily, or was there any arrangement made for them occupying holdings on other parts of the estate?—That is more than my memory can tell me; they did not do it voluntarily as far as my father was concerned, I am sure. [*The Chairman.*—Was he evicted?—Yes.]

21,511. Were there no terms in regard to his removal?—

21,512. *The Chairman.*—Were there any terms made with your father?—He got the offer of the place, and he was not much inclined to go, because there was another that would have to leave if he went there; and ultimately he did go.

21,513. *Mr James Nicolson.*—My lord, I have here a plan,—I am sorry I have not any prior information before 1842, but all I can say is that this plan does not agree with the witness's evidence.

21,514. *The Chairman.*—What is the date of the plan? [*Mr Nicolson.*—1843.]

21,515. But it might be made before the removals, you know. This witness is sixty years of age—and his evidence is based, according to the statement he has given, entirely on his own personal knowledge, and it seems to be confirmed by this that his own father was one of those who were turned out. You were born on the place? [*Witness*]. Yes; I was nine years old when I left.

21,516. *Mr James Nicolson.*—What year did that occur?—Whitsunday 1842, when we were put from it.

21,517. You admit that the landlord offered your father another holding on the estate at that time?—Yes, I do.

21,518. Doesn't that go to show that he was not evicted?—It does not. I don't think it does, because another was evicted in his stead. I don't think that makes the case any better.

21,519. Then you say further on that there were six removals from the second part of Auckhorn?—I said three from Long Green.

21,520. Were these tenants also evicted?—Yes.

21,521. Without voluntarily and freely going?—I cannot tell what were voluntary. They did not volunteer to go out.

21,522. You have used the word "eviction," and, from your own point of view, doesn't that indicate that they did not go voluntarily and freely, and that there was no arrangement made?—I call it an eviction if there is a lot of tenants cleared out of any place to make room for a big farm.

21,523. *The Chairman.*—Did they go willingly or against their will?—None of them went willingly, I think, as far as I remember.

21,524. *Mr James Nicolson.*—Didn't these three tenants get other holdings on the estate?—No, not all.

21,525. Didn't John Ross?—That is not from Long Green.

21,526 Well, Alexander Alexander, didn't he get a holding upon the estate?—No, I don't think so.

21,527. Didn't Kenneth Alexander get one?—Yes; Kenneth got a new place. Wick

21,528. He was just transferred from one part of the estate to the other?—He was transferred from a pretty good bit of croft to a "delvin." William Reid.

21,529. Wasn't he transferred from one part of the estate to another?—Yes.

21,530. What was the other tenant's name?—Donald Macadie.

21,531. Did he get another holding?—I don't think it; I think he went to Watten, and Alexander Alexander went to Reith, I think.

21,532. *The Chairman.*—That is not on the estate?—Not on the estate.

21,533. *Mr James Nicolson.*—Is it possible, my lord, that any relatives of these tenants could be summoned to appear here to give evidence before your lordship? [*The Chairman.*—If you wish to lead evidence with regard to these matters]. Because my information is certainly—my information is that they were not evicted, at least not all of them, but they voluntarily and freely removed to other places. [*The Chairman.*—Very well, Mr Nicolson, if you submit names of witnesses to us we will consider as to the opportunity of getting evidence from them.]

21,534. Thank you. (*To witness*).—Isn't it a fact that the tenants, the crofters, hold in common about 600 acres of hill ground which lies in between the pasture occupied by Auckhorn and the arable farm?—I think I have given expression to that. I think I said there was a boundary line outside the crofts, but it is all cut up in peat banks.

21,535. So that the Auckhorn sheep pasture does not adjoin the arable land of the crofts?—No.

21,536. *Mr Sutherland.*—With regard to these removals, were the people served with summonses of eviction, do you know?—That is past my memory.

21,537. You have no knowledge of that?—No.

21,538. Now, with regard to the people who were transferred from one part of the estate to the other, were there such within your memory?—Oh, yes.

21,539. And how did the land they got compare with the land they were removed from?—There might not be much difference with regard to the land.

21,540. Did they in any case get arable land where they were?—Not all.

21,541. Some of them, what land did some of them get?—They all got less or more; they did get places on the estate, I think, except one or two from Auckhorn; it might be better and it might be worse. I don't remember; but in most cases it was worse.

21,542. But did they in every case get arable land such as they left behind, do you know?—They did, but less quantity; some have more.

21,542*a*. Do you think that most of them lost by the transaction?—I do.

21,543. And they got no compensation for that loss?—No compensation.

21,544. *Mr James Nicolson.*—I presume the evidence that has been given with regard to the home farm is altogether as to arable land?

21,545. *The Chairman.*—I quite understand that.

21,546. *Mr Donald Macrae.*—I should like to ask a question. Are there two classes in this township, a class of fishermen having an interest in a boat and having an interest in the land; and another class having an interest in a fishing-boat without any land; and which of the two classes is in the better circumstances?

21,547. *The Chairman.*—Do you know whether there are two classes of tenants on this property; those who have an interest in a boat and a certain interest in land; the other having an interest in a boat and no land?—I do know that.

21,548. The next question Mr Macrae desires to put is this,—which of these classes prospers best?

21,549. *Mr Donald Macrae.*—The fishermen who have no land, or the fishermen who have some land?—I think, generally speaking, that those who have a bit land are perhaps the best; that is, of late, since the fishing interest has fallen so low.

Wick. William Reid.

21,550. *The Chairman.*—Take the time when the fishing was good, which of them did best?—I believe that there were some few fishermen then that were better than those who had the small crofts.

21,551. In other words, when the fishing is very good it is better to be a fisherman and nothing else, and when the fishing is not so good it is convenient to have the land to fall back upon?—There is no doubt there is force in that.

21,552. Are you of opinion that those fishermen who have land would be better off still if they had larger holdings, and remained fishermen, of course?—They cannot attend the fishings properly and have anything of a larger holding, that is my opinion.

21,553. You would not be in favour of giving to a fisherman, who is partly fisherman and partly crofter, any larger holding than he has already?—Not more than from 7 to 10 acres altogether; that is my private opinion.

21,554. And is that the average size of the holding at present, the crofter-fishermen holdings?—I think something like that.

21,555. Isn't it generally a good deal less?—They may in some cases be less, but I think the generality is something like 7 acres or thereby.

21,556. And you think it would be a good arrangement that a man should depend partly upon the sea for his livelihood, with the cultivation of a croft of from 7 to 10 acres arable?—I don't approve very much, really, of crofting and fishing together; that is my opinion.

21,557. Then you would have a man to be either the one or the other?—Yes, I think so.

21,558. Either a fisherman with a potato patch or a crofter exclusively?—Yes, with as much ground as could keep his family.

21,559. And what extent of the kind of land you know of would you assign to a man having a wife and family, say of five?—From 30 to 50 acres, I should say.

21,560. Of arable land?—Yes.

21,561. *Mr Malcolm.*—Can you tell me where the present tenant of this farm was employed before he came to this farm?—His father had a farm in Greenland in Dunnet.

21,562. Was that a small farm or a farm of considerable size?—It is a medium size, I think.

21,563. Did the present tenant ever occupy a croft, a holding as small as a croft?—That is more than I can tell. I suppose that he did, but it was only hearsay.

21,564. Don't you know the place which his father occupied?—Well, I have very slight acquaintance there.

21,565. Was the name Greenland?—Greenland, I think.

21,566. Was that a croft?—No, it is a pretty large farm.

21,567. You don't know that the present tenant of this farm was at one time a crofter himself?—I cannot say at all.

21,568. *Mr G. M. Sutherland.*—Does he occupy another farm, Wester Loch?—Yes, at least the family do, and another.

Donald Sinclair.

DONALD SINCLAIR, Crofter, Roster, Clyth (67)—*examined.*

21,569. *The Chairman.*—Are you a crofter?—Yes.

21,570. What is your present rent?—£11, 2s.

21,571. Was your case dealt with by the Crofters Commission?—Yes.

21,572. What was your old rent?—£19, 10s.

21,573. The area is 13 acres 1 rood 37 poles arable, 12 acres outrun, no grazing. Were you appointed to appear?—Yes.

21,574. At a meeting?—Yes.

21,575. Along with Macleod you represent the whole of the Clyth tenants?—Yes.

21,576. Now, what land do you wish to call our attention to?—In the first part, the grazing was taken from us. Wick.

21,577. What was the name of the grazing taken from you?—It was added to Camster in the year 1840. Donald Sinclair.

21,578. When did that occur?—In the year 1840.

21,579. Can you give us any idea of the extent taken away?—It was supposed to be of the value of £30 or £35 when it was taken from the crofters.

21,580. Can you tell us, from your information, what was the carry of that ground?—I cannot say.

21,581. When it was added to the farm of Camster, did you get any land instead of it?—No.

21,582. That land, I suppose, has since been under sheep?—Ever since. We were evicted from that township in the year 1840.

21,583. Was that the township of Camster?—Yes. It belongs to Sir George—the Thurso estate.

21,584. How many were removed?—Twenty.

21,585. And were they put down upon the shore?—They were put anywhere they liked to go.

21,586. Did a number of them go to the shore?—They went to Forse, and they went to America, and they went to Reay.

21,587. Very few remained on Clyth?—A few got places on Clyth.

21,588. Now is this what you wish to say, that the crofters are in need of having their grazing extended, or rather to get grazing?—Yes.

21,589. At present you have no grazing?—We have very little grazing.

21,590. And you represent a body of men who wish both new holdings and additional grazing?—And in the year 1859 the whole was cut off from the estate—the rest of the grazing.

21,591. What land was taken in 1859?—The hill pasture belonging to the estate.

21,592. Who was the proprietor at that time?—Sir Tollemache Sinclair.

21,593. What was done with that land?—It was given to another tenant for sheep pasture.

21,594. Of Camster?—Mr Horne, Camster.

21,595. Whom was the pasture taken in 1859 given to?—To another tenant.

21,596. Do you know his name?—Yes; Angus Falconer.

21,597. Has it been occupied since as a grazing?—He occupied it for nineteen years, and other two had it since that. It is now in the hands of Mr Sharp.

21,598. Can you tell us what the rent of that piece of hill pasture was, or estimated to be, before it was taken away?—I could not tell about the value of it at that time, because it was all considered to be part of the estate; but the first rent was £40 when Falconer got it.

21,599. Was there any other land taken away?—A few small crofts that were connected with that hill pasture were put into the grazing.

21,600. You represent crofters who wish to get that grazing back if it can be got?—Yes, if it could be got.

21,601. And is the township of Clyth congested? I mean to say, are they too much crowded upon each other?—Yes.

21,602. Is the land in good heart, or is it exhausted?—We have the poorest land, and the best land is given out for sheep pasture.

21,603. Then, is the land presently in possession of the crofters in good heart and good cultivation, or is it exhausted?—Some of it is not a great deal, and some pretty fair.

21,604. Would it be an advantage to that township if some of the smaller holdings were consolidated, and those who left their crofts were supplied with holdings elsewhere?—Oh, yes; if all those who would leave it would get others, and they would be divided.

21,605. Where would you send those that left; could they get ground upon this grazing, or would they have to go farther afield?—Yes, if they would get it.

21,606. But is the land suitable for cultivation?—Yes, Camster, but the other hills are not.

21,607. How many tenants are in Clyth altogether?—I don't know.

21,608. But there are a large number?—A large number. Mr Macleod perhaps can tell.

21,609. Is this estate one where there has been a great deal of complaint and discontent for a number of years?—About the hill pasture.

21,610. And the rents?—The ground is not worth the present rent besides what it was four or five years ago; not near.

21,611. Do you keep any stock yourself?—Yes.

21,612. What stock have you?—3 cows, 2 stirks, 1 horse.

21,613. Any sheep?—Two.

21,614. And where do you get grazing for these?—Just poor grazing.

21,615. But it is grazing; is it attached to the township?—A small bit was left of black heather and the common ground of the township pasture, 2½ acres.

21,616. Is there enough of feeding for the stock which the Clyth tenants possess?—No, nor half feeding.

21,617. They would be much the better of an extension of grazing?—Yes.

21,618. Are there a considerable number of tenants in Clyth who have either no stock or very little?—Well, I am not aware of all the tenants; there are some of them with very little stock, I believe.

21,619. Are there some cottars in Clyth?—Yes.

21,620. How many?—I am not aware how many.

21,621. A good number?—Yes.

21,622. And they pay no rent?—Oh, yes; they pay some rent.

21,623. To the crofters?—No, to the proprietor.

21,624. Can you tell us what extent of land capable of being reduced to cultivation is in Camster on the grazing?—There is a great deal of grazing in it, but I think it would suit for twelve good tenants.

21,625. New holdings?—New holdings.

21,626. With good arable land?—Good arable land. It was good land when I was there, but the years may have altered since that.

21,627. You have lived there all your life?—I was there in the year 1840; removed from it.

21,628. Your recollection goes back many years. Now, when you say twelve new holdings, what size of holdings have you in view?—A man would need from 20 to 30 acres.

21,629. Of arable?—Of arable, and plenty of pasture along with that.

21,630. Pasture in proportion?—Yes, and good pasture.

21,631. Do you remember of removals from Camster?—Yes, I do.

21,632. Do you remember the names of any who were removed?—Yes.

21,633. Give us the names?—Angus Macdonald, Donald Gunn, Robert Mackay, William Sutherland, William Steven, Sandy Sutherland, Hugh Mackay, Hugh Gunn, Roderick Macbeath, Widow Mackay (two widows), William Mackay, John Macaulay, George Mackay, and another widow, Donald Mackay, Angus Mackay.

21,634. Is that all you remember?—Yes.

21,635. That is either the whole of them or a large number of them?—That were in it in my day.

21,636. And you remember all these people being removed from Camster?—Certainly they were.

21,637. And is the land of which you have been speaking on Camster as suitable for cultivation now—land which was in the occupation of these crofters?—It was splendid land.

21,638. In their occupation?—At that time.

21,639. Were these persons removed of their own free will or otherwise?—They were evicted away; they would not get leave to stop.

21,640. Do you mean it was against their will?—Certainly it was. There are none that would go away of his own will.

21,641. Now, besides this grazing of which you spoke, taken in 1840 and the grazing taken in 1859, is there any other land thereabout which you wish to speak about?—No, not that I am aware of.

21,642. Would the Clyth tenants be satisfied if it were found that an addition could be made to their grazings from that land, and additional settlements made upon the old arable?—It would be a great benefit to them if they had got some grazings along with the crofts they have.

21,643. Even if they got nothing else?—Yes, those who have it.

21,644. *Mr Sutherland.*—What is the Camster farm used for now?—For sheep.

21,645. It is a big sheep farm?—Yes.

21,646. Did you say it is in the hands of the proprietor himself at present?—No, it is tenanted.

21,647. Who is the tenant?—Mr George Waters from Tister, a man that had four or five farms, but he is dead recently.

21,648. He held it along with other farms?—Yes.

21,649. What is the size of the Camster farm?—I am not exactly sure.

21,650. Have you any idea of the stock it carries?—I heard it was 13,000 acres. Mr Machardy told me that.

21,651. Was it a farm before the part that was taken from you was added to it?—It was just in the same condition as it is now, except it was added to. The pasture that belonged to Clyth was added.

21,652. And the people that were residing at Camster were cleared for the purpose of making the addition that went to the farm?—They were cleared for sheep those that were in Camster. Wood was factor for Camster as well as the Clyth estate; it was one estate at the time; he took this from them, and gave it to Donald Horne to make a big farm for him.

21,653. Some, you said, went to America, and some to Caithness, and some to Roster?—Yes.

21,654. Were there tenants in Roster before?—Yes.

21,655. And how many of the Camster tenants went there?—Three or four. My father had a place down near the sea.

21,656. How many tenants were in Roster before you went there?—I don't mind. There are about fifteen tenants just now.

21,657. And there would be nine or ten then?—There were more then than now, because the land was made bigger in the year 1859. Some of the tenants went out to new land, and worked there.

21,658. Where was it that the arable land of the Camster tenants was; was it near the loch?—What loch?

21,659. The loch of Camster?—No, it is not near the loch.

21,660. Is it near the Grey Cairns?—Yes; a bit from the Cairns, north-west of the Cairns.

21,661. Some of their cultivated land?—Yes, that is where we were living.

21,662. And are you of opinion that the whole of the land about the loch and about the Grey Cairns there is good for settling tenants in now?—It is all hill ground about the Cairns.

21,663. It is good grazing, isn't it?—Yes.

21,664. Is it better than Roster ground?—Yes, for grazing; it is all green ground, the most of it. It is counted as good as any in Caithness.

21,665. When you went to the Roster township whose land did you get?—Another man's that left it.

21,666. And did you add anything to the arable land since you went there yourself?—Very little. It was lotted before I got it. I could add nothing to it.

21,667. How is it that you have been coming to pay £1 an acre for your land there?—Because the rent was put on the ground when they gave it. I think I was paying more than £1 an acre. I was paying £19, 10s. for only 15½ acres.

21,668. And would the people of Roster be very glad to get the opportunity of settling there, or getting that land you are talking about at Camster for grazing?—They would like to get the grazing whatever; they would not like to remove from the holdings they have built themselves.

21,669. But this land is adjacent to their present holdings?—It is a long distance from it.

Wick.

Donald Sinclair.

21,670. What land adjoins your holdings?—I am about the middle of the township.

21,671. But taking Roster as a whole, what adjoins their land?—Camster ground.

21,672. Roster?—Camster is next to Roster.

21,673. That is to say, this land you are talking about is adjoining your present place?—It is, except the moor.

21,674. So you could utilise it if you got it now as pasture without removing from where you are?—Oh, yes; certainly.

21,675. *Mr Shaw Stewart.*—Could you give us the bounds of the grazing of the Roster townships, so that we could find it on the map now?—I can't give it.

21,676. You know the boundary?—I know the ground, but I have never measured it.

21,677. But could you describe to us which way it runs; is it east or north of Roster?—It runs east and west.

21,678. Does it run up to the watershed, where the Camster Burn flows north?—The Camster Burn meets part of it,

21,679. It is both east and west of Roster, the grazing?—Yes.

21,680. And you would like it extended over the watershed?—Of course it should be as it was before; that would be fair play.

21,681. Whereabouts are the places suitable for small holdings in Camster? Where on the Camster farm is the best ground for new holdings?—Good land.

21,682. Whereabouts is the most suitable place for arable land; is it that ground up by Loch Camster?—It is not near the loch.

21,683. To the west of it?—To the west of it.

21,684. Is that to the west of the Camster Burn?—The land is not in the middle of the bound.

21,685. Is it near Ballharn Hill?—It is near the Watten district.

21,686. Could you give us the name of any place it is near, the ground that is most suitable for new holdings?—It is the whole township; any place near to it, the whole of the land that we had before is fit to be tenanted again, any of it.

21,687. Any of the land on Camster farm?—Yes.

21,688. Is it all of one quality then?—No, some is better than others.

21,689. That is what I want to know?—All lands are that way.

21,690. *Mr D. W. Georgeson*, Solicitor, Agent for the Clyth Estate.—Were all the tenants whose names you have mentioned evicted from land at Camster?—Certainly they were.

21,691. And are these lands not now in the occupation of Mr Strong's trustees of Camster?—Yes.

21,692. They form no part of the estate of Clyth?—It was part of the estate of Clyth once.

21,693. But they form no part of the estate of Clyth now in the possession of Mr Sharp?—I don't understand you.

21,694. Are these lands from which these tenants were evicted, now in the possession of Mr Sharp or not?—It does not belong to Mr Sharp.

21,695. And the grazings to which you refer are situated on the Camster property?—Mr Sharp never paid a penny for that. It was sold before Mr Sharp got it. Mr Sharp only bought the estate in 1863 and you was sold before that; Mr Sinclair kept the land in his own hands after Mr Sharp bought the estate.

21,696. So that the grazings to which you now refer are situated on the Camster estate, and not on Mr Sharp's?—Not on Mr Sharp's.

21,697. *Mr Donald Macrae.*—Do you know any other lands in your neighbourhood that, in your opinion, are suitable for new holdings besides the land that you referred to?—I don't know indeed.

21,698. Do you know Dunbeath Strath?—Yes, and I should know it; I was born there.

21,699. Is it a large farm now?—It is in one man's hands altogether.

21,700. What is the name of the man?—Mr Brown.

Wick.

Donald Sinclair.

21,701. Is that the only farm of which he is tenant?—He is tenant of another farm.

21,702. What is the name of it?—It was called in my day the Mains farm.

21,703. Which Mains?—At the Castle of Dunbeath.

21,704. Now going back to the Strath of Dunbeath, are there old townships in that farm?—Yes, plenty.

21,705. Begin at the first of them, name it?—Achorn was one township.

21,706. How many tenants were in Achorn?—Three.

21,707. The next township?—It is a small place, Balcraggich.

21,708. How many tenants were there?—Two.

21,709. The third?—Clashravin, where I was born.

21,710. Which gives it a position in history. How many tenants were there?—One, my father.

21,711. What rent did he pay?—I can't tell; he had good stock.

21,712. What stock had he?—Ninety-eight sheep when he was put away.

21,713. How many head of cattle would he have?—Four or five highland cows.

21,714. Was there a horse besides?—Yes, three horses.

21,715. How many sheep have you?—I have two.

21,716. Have you any goats?—No.

21,717. Now come to the fourth, taking them in their order?—Eodibest.

21,718. How many tenants?—Fifteen.

21,719. The next township?—There was another place with one tenant, Rhicriach.

21,720. What is the next place now?—Another place they call Garrawalt.

21,721. The next place?—Almin.

21,722. How many tenants?—One, one Gunn.

21,723. The next place?—Culvad.

21,724. How many tenants were there?—One or two; one at one time and two at another.

21,725. What is the next place?—Builtuach.

21,726. How many tenants were there?—Five, I think.

21,727. The next place?—Fleuchary.

21,728. How many tenants were there?—One.

21,729. Next place?—Uich.

21,730. How many were there?—One or two.

21,731. What rent were they paying?—It was a big rent, £40.

21,732. £40 each or £40 between them?—The whole.

21,733. What is the next place?—Flunac.

21,734. *The Chairman.*—Is there a place called Uig More?—Yes, there are two Uigs.

21,735. *Mr Donald Macrae.*—Do you yourself remember tenants?—Achnaclyth.

21,736. How many were there?—I don't know because it was under sheep; there was at one time a big farm.

21,737. In the whole of that land that you refer to, how many tenants are there to-day?—None at all.

21,738. Is there a great deal of old arable land in every one of the places that you mention?—I think there are six or seven miles of a strath.

21,739. *The Chairman.*—Of old arable?—Yes.

21,740. That is Dunbeath Strath, is it?—Yes.

21,741. *Mr Donald Macrae.*—Is there any cultivation there to-day?—No, all sheep.

21,742. For how long back has there been no cultivation there?—Since 1834, and some of them were removed before I was born.

21,743. Now since the passing of the Crofters Act (I pass from this strath) have not some crofts fallen into the hands of the proprietor, in Clyth?—Oh, yes.

21,744. What use has been made of these crofts that fell into the hands of the proprietor?—Mr Sharp has them himself.

21,745. *The Chairman.*—How many have fallen back into the hands of the proprietor?—Torryvaich, one Cormack, where the brother of Mr Cormack who went to America was.

21,746. *Mr Sutherland.*—Has he in any case added it to the neighbouring crofts?—No, I don't think so.

21,747. *The Chairman.*—How many crofts have passed into the hands of the proprietor?—I am not exactly sure.

21,748. You only mentioned two, and you said one of them was occupied by a crofter?—Yes.

21,749. Then is there only one that has gone back to the proprietor?—Two are in the hands of the proprietor just now.

21,750. *Mr Donald Macrae.*—To your own knowledge?—Yes.

21,751. Now is there another place in Clyth where small holdings could be made besides the places that you have mentioned already in your evidence. Do you know the Leans of Clyth?—Yes, it belongs to the farm of Clyth.

21,752. Is that the Mains?—Yes, the Mains farm.

21,753. *The Chairman.*—Who occupies the Mains of Clyth?—Mrs Gill.

21,754. What rent does she pay?—Over £300.

21,755. Is the land on the Leans suitable for cultivation?—There had been crops on it.

21,756. Did you see crops there yourself?—I did.

21,757. What kind of crops?—Oats.

21,758. Good or bad?—Pretty fair when I saw it.

21,759. Do you know any land on the Braes of Occumster?—There is a piece of ground that was given for net ground.

21,760. How many years back was it given for ground for nets?—Over thirty years ago.

21,761. What use is being made of it now?—It is in the hands of Mr Sharp again; he has it for grazing since the fishing was done.

21,762. And is that land suitable for cultivation?—I believe it is; on the face of the brae the imitation of rigs is in it from ages, but I never saw crop on it.

21,763. But you are perfectly satisfied, from what you have seen, that it was under crop at one time?—Yes, it was under crop undoubtedly, as it will show itself.

21,764. *Mr Shaw Stewart.*—You have been asked a good many questions about the past. I want to ask you one about the future, which is what we are chiefly concerned with. Could these places that you have mentioned be occupied in the future by crofters without any assistance?—Some could and some could not without assistance, and no wonder, they were reduced some years so much; if they had been left as they ought to be, and as they were in former times, they could occupy crofts.

21,765. It is not former times we are concerned with now, it is the future we have to look at. Could most of those holdings be occupied by crofters without any help at all in building or stock?—I think when the proprietors put down the buildings that were put up before, they ought to put up new buildings for us.

21,766. It is not a question of whether they ought to be put up or not, I am only asking you a simple question which I would like you to answer me according to your opinion. Are there crofters in your neighbourhood who could occupy new holdings without any assistance from proprietors or anybody else in building and stocking?—They will not be willing to leave where they are, because they had to put up their own buildings as they stand, and they will not be willing to leave it; but if they would get any addition where they are, they would be willing to take that; it is not easy to put up new buildings; we paid for that before.

21,767. Is it your opinion that they could stock the land and build the houses themselves, and occupy these lands with profit?—Yes, provided that they got it reasonably, according to years.

21,768. You mean it would all depend on the rent?—Yes, according to the years; these two or three years are not so good as the former years.

21,769. We must look out in the future for bad years as well as good, the same as in the past. We can't expect the future to be all good years any more than they have been in the past, and taking that into consideration, could they face these bad years as well as good without any help from the Government?—Some could and some could not.

21,770. Could most of them face it?—About half.

21,771. That is to say they have enough capital to start building and stocking without getting into debt?—Yes, on conditions.

21,772. What conditions?—Not to put up houses and give it away to proprietors in a few years again.

21,773. Fixity of tenure?—Ay.

21,774. But would you also have a condition that if they failed to pay their rent they should be removed?—Certainly.

21,775. And do you think that would often happen?—But they could pay the rent if the rent was reasonable.

21,776. I am supposing what you would consider a reasonable rent, and I want your real opinion as to whether most of these crofters could start on the business without fear of running into debt?—According to the quality of the land, and according to the grazing they would get along with it.

21,777. Assuming a fair holding?—About 10s. per acre is plenty for the land at this present day, and I believe the big farmers sit fully cheaper than that. Our crofters are dearer than that as yet; 14s. 6d. we have to pay per acre in some places.

21,778. I want your opinion clear. Say at 10s. an acre, you would give that?—Some land, but not for all.

21,779. I am speaking of the land you have been telling us about that was occupied formerly, you understand; I am only asking you about land that you have told us of as having been occupied in old days?—About that land?

21,780. About that very land?—Some of that land is not worth 10s. and some of it is better.

21,781. Then some of it is pretty poor land, I take it?—Certainly, there is poor land and good land on every place, and the climate has as much to do with the crops as the land.

21,782. Quite so; well, with your knowledge of the climate and your knowledge of the land that you speak of, would crofters be able to occupy these lands without any help at all?—To maintain themselves, they will by very little help.

21,783. I am supposing they would do more than maintain themselves?—It would be as well to give help to them here as to send it off to Manitoba.

21,784. I am not disputing the advisability of it; I am not alluding to that at all, I am only asking whether they would be requiring this help?—As to the condition of every one, I don't know, I only know my own.

21,785. Well, what is yours? Supposing you were offered a piece of this land, a good sized croft, could you undertake to stock it, and set up the buildings and pay what you consider to be a fair rent without any help at all?—Yes.

21,786. Well, are there many, do you think, in your position able to do the same?—I don't know; I don't ask their position.

21,787. Therefore you would not like to say that all these holdings could be occupied without help?—I have built a house already on the ground, and I got nothing for it.

21,788. But still you are prepared to go and live on another place elsewhere?—And my father built a house and was only four years when he was removed, and got never a sixpence for it.

21,789. Do you think now that all these holdings you have pointed out to us could be taken up by crofters so as to occupy them advantageously without any help?—Most of the crofters in the places I mentioned were well-to-do when they were put away, but plenty of them cannot do much perhaps now.

21,790. *Mr Georgeson.*—You mentioned that Mr Sharp has now in his possession two crofts?—Yes.

21,791. Which were held by tenants at the passing of the Crofters Act. Were the tenants who occupied these crofts under the Crofters Act?—No.

21,792. They had not the benefit of the Crofters Act?—No, the rent was above it.

Wick.

Donald Sinclair.

21,793. Are you aware that Mr Sharp has endeavoured to get tenants for these places but has failed?—Certainly, if he would give it at a reasonable rent.

21,794. But are you aware that he has endeavoured to get tenants; are you aware of any parties who made an offer for these places?—I don't know.

21,795. You never heard of any?—No. I heard of some that put in for getting part of it for grazing.

21,796. *The Chairman.*—What were their rents?—I think Torryvaich was £30 of rent.

21,797. And what was the other?—£40.

21,798. The rent of £30 would be under the Act. Were they leasehold? [*Mr G. M. Sutherland.*—They will be above £30, both of them.]

21,799. If they are beyond the Act, Mr Sharp is entitled to deal with them as with any other farm.

21,800. *Mr Georgeson.*—Have the Leans of Clyth been attached to any farm within your memory?—Always.

21,801. What is the extent of these Leans?—I cannot say.

21,802. You might give us an idea?—No, I cannot.

21,803. Would there be 20 acres in it?—Twenty and twenty.

21,804. About 40?—Yes.

21,805. More than 40?—Far more than that.

21,806. You spoke of Occumster, what extent of ground would there be there available for net ground?—I am not exactly sure.

21,807. How many acres?—There would be 30 drifts spread on the ground.

21,808. Six acres?—Yes, 6 and 6.

21,809. Would there be 10?—Ten and more.

21,810. Do you know if the tenants in Occumster are wishing to have an extension of their crofts?—How would they get it? they can't get it. There is nothing besides them.

21,811. *The Chairman.*—Do you represent the tenants of Occumster; are you here on their behalf?—No.

21,812. *Mr Georgeson.*—He refers to certain net ground at Occumster which he said would be available for the tenants, and it is with reference to that piece of ground that I now ask?—I am only saying it was cropped by them before, but it was taken from the tenants.

21,813. *The Chairman.*—We had better get evidence from Occumster tenants themselves.

Donald Macleod.

DONALD MACLEOD, Crofter, Mid Clyth (71)—*examined.*

21,814. *The Chairman.*—Are you a crofter in Mid Clyth?—Yes.

21,815. Was your rent dealt with by the Crofters Commission?—It was.

21,816. Area, 11 acres 0 roods 21 poles arable; 17 acres 2 roods 22 poles outrun; present rent, £12; fair rent, £5, 10s. You heard the evidence, I think, of Donald Sinclair. Are you here to represent the Clyth tenants?—Yes.

21,817. You come along with Donald Sinclair?—Yes.

21,818. Did you hear his evidence?—Yes.

21,819. And do you agree with his evidence?—I do, so far as he went.

21,820. Do you wish to go farther?—I do.

21,821. We will be glad to hear you?—Occumster, on the estate of Clyth, was ground occupied by the crofters about forty years ago.

21,822. Do you remember evictions there forty years ago?—I can't call it evictions at all.

21,823. What do you call it?—He removed them from this bit good ground and sent them up the hills and gave them small houses there; they were not evicted off the estate.

21,824. They were only removed from one part of the estate to another?—Yes.

21,825. Can you give us the names of these?—Yes; John Graham and George Sinclair.

21,826. Were these all?—The whole. They are dead, and the houses are down that were built for them.

Wick.

Donald Macleod.

21,827. And is that land, occupied formerly by Graham and Sinclair, suitable for occupation now?—Yes, the land is good, the mark of the plough is to be seen yet.

21,828. What extent of land would be occupied by Graham and Sinclair where they were put to?—No land at all but barren hills.

21,829. But the land that they were put away from?—I could not exactly say, because I did not chain measure it; but I took a guess of it.

21,830. What is your guess?—From 15 acres under the plough at one time. This is the land that was cut off Occumster Braes. Donald Sinclair told of it, but he did not tell that it was cut away from the tenants and made a pasture for Mr Sharp where he keeps his stock to-day.

21,831. Any other land you wish to speak of?—Clyth Mains.

21,832. What about it?—The remains of houses are to be seen lying on the ground from which crofters were put away at Clyth Mains, but I need not speak about that because it is in arable at present. I only speak of what is under sheep.

21,833. You do not speak of land presently under cultivation?—Not at all, only what is lying under sheep.

21,834. Well, any other land?—I can't give a particular account, but there is close upon 100 acres upon these Clyth Mains that are lying under sheep.

21,835. That land is capable of cultivation?—The marks of the plough are still in it.

21,836. Any other land?—Torryvaich, where Stewart Bain once occupied before he was put out, or went out.

21,837. And that is now occupied by Mr Sharp as grazing?—Yes.

21,838. What was the extent of arable there?—It is said that there were 50 acres, but I hold it only to be 40.

21,839. Any other lands?—Newlands, two parks that he has there that he has cattle on grazing of his own and other people's. That was at one time in my younger days, except one crop, in the pasture of the people. I take them to be about 20 acres.

21,840. Do you know who occupied there?—There was only one house on it, but it is not Mr Sharp that removed them; it was Sir Tollemache Sinclair.

21,841. What was the name of the man that lived there?—Sandie Laing.

21,842. Any other land?—Well, there are three or four small crofts that were lying for seven years. He let it to a man last year, and he ran away and left it. I would say 10 acres in it. The fellow ran away and left it.

21,843. What was his name?—Mackay Macleod.

21,844. What is the name of the place?—Newlands of Clyth.

21,845. And you think there are about 10 acres?—Yes.

21,846. It is lying vacant at present?—Yes, it is. Mr Sharp had cattle on it, and grazing, but there was none ploughed in it the last year.

21,847. How long has it been lying vacant?—For seven years. The last two crops that the man put in he ran away, and did not put a third in; because it was over-rented he could not pay his way.

21,848. Any other land?—East Clyth.

21,849. What about it?—Bogs, where Donald Sutherland was.

21,850. Is it vacant now?—It has been vacant seven years back. There are about 12 acres, in my judgment. Mr Sharp has cattle on it, and sheep. He has it fenced in now for himself.

21,851. Any other land?—There is just alongside of that the hill pasture which was taken away from us, the last piece we had, and was given to one Sandy Macaulay. He got three crofts from Mr Sharp, and he occupies one and he leaves two of them under sheep. I will be thinking there are 9 acres under the plough

Wick.

Donald Macleod.

in the two that are waste, not speaking of the one he occupies.

21,852. And what extent of hill pasture has he got?—That is a great question to me, but we had a considerable quantity of hill pasture in Tollemache's time that the tenants were allowed to cut their peats in. It would be about a quarter of a mile wide and about a mile long.

21,853. What has become of it now?—Macaulay has it along with the two crofts.

21,854. Any other land?—There is where William Clyne was—East Clyth. It is fenced in under sheep with Mr Sharp.

21,855. What is the extent?—I would say there would be 9 to 10 acres.

21,856. Any other land?—Sharp's park at the Hill of Many Stones, East Clyth. He has there a park closed in for sheep or cattle, or whatever he sees fit to put on.

21,857. What is the extent of it?—I am not sure, but I would say there are 20 acres in it.

21,858. It is capable of cultivation?—It was cultivated before, a considerable quantity, and has still the mark of cultivation.

21,859. That is enclosed ground?—It was put in to make the farm Bruan Lodge for pasture for sheep or cattle.

21,860. Any other land?—There is land still adjoining Bruan Lodge which the mark of the houses is on, which can be seen, and they are almost standing in pretty good order yet. There is William and John Malcolm that built the houses, both of them, and I think they would have 10 acres between them both; they trenched out the hills.

21,861. That land is now in the occupation of Mr Sharp himself, I suppose?—Mr Sharp has it himself for grazing.

21,862. Any other land?—There are six slated crofts in Warehouse; it is lying lea that Mr Sharp fenced in for his own sheep farm.

21,863. Any other land?—Murdo Cormack, Bruan.

21,864. Is there land there?—It is lying waste since three years. The man could not pay the rent and he had to flit away to America, and it is lying in Mr Sharp's hands. He has it fenced in, and building dykes about it.

21,865. What is the extent there?—Mr Sharp says there are 50, but I think there are 20 acres.

21,866. That is the whole, I suppose?—Not yet. James Groat.

21,867. What about him?—About 5 acres. He is not alive himself, but his son is. They had a good croft in the middle of Angus Falconer's grazing farm.

21,868. What was the name of Angus Falconer's farm?—It is called Groatags Lochies.

21,869. Do these 5 acres now form a part of Angus Falconer's farm?—No, it is just in the middle of his grazings.

21,870. Standing vacant?—Yes. It is a good half mile from the house.

21,871. Have you any more land to tell us about?—None.

21,872. Now, the whole of these different portions of land to which you have called our attention are capable of cultivation?—They are, and they have been cultivated before. The marks of the plough and the old houses are to be seen.

21,873. And would the settlement of crofters in these lands be a great relief to the neighbouring crofters, who are too much crowded?—Yes, if you could get over them, but the landlords think there is no use putting crofters on it, but it would do good to the people.

21,874. *Mr Sutherland.*—Have you no grazing land at all?—I have eleven acres and a half and two poles, what I improved at the hills, myself and my sisters. It is said we have 27 acres altogether of black barren rocks. I have none, but at one time I had grazing; it was taken away.

21,875. Then you said that the Occumster people were cleared off that land, and were sent farther up the hill?—No, Clyth Mains was. The ground was taken from them in Occumster, and given to Mr Sinclair, that had it then before Mr Sharp came at all; it is not Mr Sharp's doings, it is Mr Sinclair's. It was occupied as net ground when the harbour was standing. When the harbour failed, Mr Sinclair let it to people who came with cattle.

21,876. What became of the people who were put out of there?—It was cut off their lands, and a ditch put in it.

21,877. What became of the people?—They are in their small crofts yet.

21,878. Up above?—Yes, and the bottom taken away.

21,879. When they reclaimed the land?—What is above this ditch they still work it, but what is below is Mr Sharp's, and a fence in it.

21,880. And you think in all these places where there is so much arable land, new holdings could be made?—There could be no better in Scotland. It is not 100 feet above the sea level.

21,881. And you can show us all these places?—I will indeed.

21,882. *Mr Georgeson.*—Do the tenants at Occumster wish to have their crofts extended there?—That is a question; I cannot tell what is in a man's heart, but I know very well the land was taken from them.

21,883. Do they wish to have their holdings extended; do they require that?—They never employed me for that purpose.

21,884. You can't say whether they want the ground or not?—They will not get an animal.

21,885. Do you know whether or not they require the ground?—We know their crofts are all too small.

21,886. Do you know whether they require the ground?—People never asked me.

21,887. And you don't know?—They asked him to put their cattle in, and they would not get it without excess.

21,888. Do they get their cattle occasionally?—I don't think so. It was offered this year to put them in at an enormous charge, and he would not put them off.

21,889. Isn't it the case that they get their cattle in occasionally?—If he got plenty of money for it he would do anything.

21,890. Are you aware that they did?—I have never seen any.

21,891. You say there are about 100 acres in Clyth Mains?—Yes.

21,892. Have they always been attached to the farm?—Not always, but since it was cut away.

21,893. But within your memory?—Surely it is. I am in memory before it was cut away, because I built some of the boundary walls with my own hands when it was cut off.

21,894. Then you say Angus Macaulay has three crofts. Is he a crofter?—No, he is a big sheep farmer.

21,895. Then as to Mackay Macleod's place, and also Donald Sutherland's at Bogs. Do these adjoin Brown's farm?—Not at all; Newlands was lying waste for five years.

21,896. Some portions of the land to which you referred adjoin Brown's farm?—They adjoin none of that; they are four miles from it.

21,897. And are you sure that those portions of ground are in Mr Sharp's possession?—I am quite sure of it.

21,898. Then you spoke of that small croft in the middle of Falconer's grazings?—Yes.

21,899. Does Falconer pay rent for that ground now?—To be sure he does.

21,900. And it is part of the sheep farm?—Yes, he would not get it for nothing.

21,901. Would it be any benefit to adjoining crofters to get that?—I knew the man that lived in it; it is about the best bit in the parish; the finest in Caithness, and it is a good spot of ground, and the man that lived in it lived well in it, but he was put out of it.

21,902. Unless he would get part of the grazings, as

Wick.

Donald Macleod.

well as this croft, it would not be of much of service?—We have all need of grazings.

21,903. Who were tenants of the six crofts at Warehouse to which you refer?—There was first of all David Sutherland, then Magnus Sutherland, John Miller, John Farquhar, Donald Farquhar, J. Sutherland, and where Plowman was last, James Plowman.

21,904. How long is it since they left these crofts?—The last man ran away to America, but it is twenty years since David Sutherland left.

21,905. Have all these crofts and pieces of ground become vacant in consequence of the inability of the tenants to pay their rents?—They did not leave it for that reason, but they left it for the rent was over the grazing. It is since Mr Sharp came, because the ground was not worth what was put on it.

21,906. Were you aware that each of these tenants had arrears of rent?—Indeed I would believe that; they would not be long in Clyth without being that.

21,907. Before the passing of the Crofters Act? [*Mr Sutherland.*—They were not judicial rents?—No.]

21,908. Were any of these tenants removed by process, by an action of law?—As to the tenants of Clyth removing, they will sit as long as they can, but they must go when they cannot keep the place.

21,909. All these tenants have gone of their own accord?—They could not keep it.

21,910. *Mr Sutherland.*—All these removals took place before the passing of the Crofters Act?—The whole. There were no removals except two that I know of since the Crofters Act came on.

Alexander Sutherland.

ALEXANDER SUTHERLAND, Latheronwheel (76)—*examined.*

21,911. *The Chairman.*—Are you a crofter?—No.

21,912. What rent do you pay?—£5. I am a householder. I cannot do without a house, though I am living without a croft this long time.

21,913. Who is your landlord?—Major Stocks.

21,914. Do you wish to tell us about land?—No, I don't know much about Latheronwheel, I never had land on it, but I came here by a notice from Mr George Miller Sutherland to give evidence about the estate of Forse that I was brought up upon, and on which I held a small farm or a big croft once.

21,915. Was your father a crofter on the estate of Forse?—There was no line then drawn between crofters and tenants or farmers.

21,916. Was your father a tenant?—Yes, he was on the farm that I had, and where I was brought up, a placed called Golsary, on the estate of Forse, in the parish of Latheron.

21,917. What rent did your father pay?—He paid £18. He got it at first cheaper than that. It was in the proprietor's hands. There was a good proprietor then upon the estate of Forse, although we came to have bad ones afterwards. There was Major Sutherland then, and I believe my father got it at £14. It was raised in a few years to £18, and then after my father's death I took the farm. I built a new house on it according to agreement. I had a good proprietor, unfortunately he did not live long, a son of Major Sutherland. I believe he was as good a proprietor as there was in Caithness, and on the agreement I improved the farm, and I built a new house. I got a lease of fifteen years, and I lived comfortably during that fifteen years, and then when my lease was out, the breadth of the estate was advertised by the second. John Sutherland, Esq., of Forse, died, and it came to his brother, the last laird, and when my lease was out all the tenants got notice, and were desired to sign a removal, and the places were advertised. The proprietor did not get them let that year, and then we got notice to send an offer for our places when he didn't get them let, for a year or a period of years. Well, I put an offer for a period of years, but the answer came back that I would get it for a year, and £9 of a rise. So then next year I had to remove, and then in two or three years after that there were 31 families put out. That I can show any gentleman that chooses to look at it, where these families were.

Wick.

Alexander Sutherland.

21,918. In what year did the removal of the 31 families take place?—The year that I was removed, when my lease was out, 1860, and I got leave to remain another year, and my rent was raised £9, that is 1861.

21,919. Do you wish to ask our attention to the lands from which these 31 families were removed?—Well, I was desired by Mr Miller Sutherland; I have nothing to do with land these many years. I had then a weak family, and I had to do the best I could with them; so I did.

21,920. What is it you wish to tell us?—I wish to tell you about the number that was on that part of the estate. There were 31 families in two or three years removed from the estate. Most of them, of course, are dead. Some died paupers in the parish and out of it.

21,921. And is that land now held as grazing?—No, there is a place called Rumster; there were two brothers there who paid £50 of rent, and there was as good arable land on it as in the parish of Latheron.

21,922. How is that used now?—It is used now for the sheep farmers for turnip and agriculture.

21,923. It is under rotation?—Yes, it is. Then there is another place called Badereisky, and the sides of Bencheilt, where there were small crofters. It was Highland cattle.

21,924. Is a great portion of the land which had been occupied by these 31 families now under grazing?—Yes, all except the farm of Rumster.

21,925. What acreage is under grazing that had formerly been under crofters?—I cannot answer that.

21,926. Is there a considerable tract of ground?—Yes, the breadth of the estate, which is 1½ miles broad.

21,927. Is that land, now under grazing but formerly under crofters, suitable for cultivation by crofters now?—Wherever there was a croft there was a family, and there were none of these 30 families but kept Highland cattle, two cows.

21,928. If people lived there and succeeded before, there is every reason to suppose their successors might live there and succeed again, is that your idea?—I should think so. There came better times and better prices since then than there were before, or any man in this Court can give in history. There were higher prices given for cattle then than in Napoleon's time. I did not come here to inform gentlemen of what they know best themselves.

21,929. Is there any other land about which you can tell us anything, besides that from which the thirty-one tenants were evicted?—Yes, the upper part of Forse, there was a township called Stemster.

21,930. How many tenants were in it?—Nine or ten.

21,931. Were they removed?—Yes, they were removed.

21,932. What was the date of the removal?—They were removed about the year 1850.

21,933. Is that land occupied as grazing now?—No, there are two tenants in it where there were about nine or ten.

21,934. What rents do they pay?—I understand they have been let last greatly lower than they were then. It is the second tenants in it since the old tenants were put out. It was let to the first tenants at high rents, and they did not stand it long. I think the present tenants have it pretty reasonable.

21,935. Are they paying rents of under £100?—Oh, yes, it is under £100.

21,936. Now, is there any other land on Forse that you wish to speak of?—No, but the last laird of Forse wanted to put the whole estate, as far as I see, from the rocky head, where the old castle of Forse was, to the south end of the estate, into big farms, and I think he has put away all the crofters; he thought he would be comfortable without them, and the big farmers who succeeded us tenants (the man is dead and gone, and his offspring have left this country) belonged to Morayshire,

Wick.

Alexander Sutherland.

and now there is the second class of farmers in. I don't know if they are making their fortune or not. It was said it is rented cheaper than when we had it as tenant.

21,937. *Mr Sutherland.*—How far north does the Forse estate go? What is the northern boundary?—The edge of a place called Achswiniger, and then it goes to the parks of Latheron, I think about 1½ miles. It goes to within 100 yards of a meeting-house at Halsary, in the parish of Watten.

21,938. And you say this large farm of Rumster was made up of the thirty-one holdings?—Yes.

21,939. Where did the most of the people go?—Some went to New Zealand and some to America; very few of them got holdings ever after. We had a disadvantage the time we were put out. We were well done to in the estate of Forse, and the price of cattle was very low. In every other estate that I know of in this county, it was a forehand rent; that is, if I entered at Whitsunday, I had to pay my whole rent at Martinmas. Upon the estate at Forse, if I entered at Whitsunday, I did not pay my first rent until Candlemas, and the second half at Lammas, and that left a man, on leaving the estate of Forse, to pay two rents in one year, which was not very easy.

21,940. You said you had to sign a removal. What do you mean?—That we would leave. We could not expect to live against the proprietor when he was to summons us out.

21,941. That is to say, you signed a paper yourselves that you would go?—Yes, and then it would do, we were told—of course, I am not a lawyer—it was told that if we signed a removal, if we got a summons through the Post Office, then it would be as well as if served personally.

21,942. So then you would be called "voluntary 'removals" after that?—But it was quite the contrary; it was against my will and every one of us; we would never leave there.

21,943. Do you think that would be called a voluntary removal by lawyers?—I think not; when we were forced out by the proprietor, I think it would be quite against voluntary principles. I know that none left voluntarily. They were all willing to stop.

21,944. And do you know, as a matter of fact, that such a removal as that would be called a voluntary removal? They would say that you signed a paper yourself to go?—Yes, if I was asked that by the proprietor; but if I refused that, could he not summons me and put me out?

21,945. Yes?—Very well: take my case.

21,946. You heard it stated here to-day that there were certain voluntary removals?—Yes.

21,947. And do you believe there were any voluntary removals?—Not to my knowledge on the estate of Forse.

21,948. Did it occur to you that this might be called a voluntary removal?—No, it never occurred to me that it might be a voluntary removal. And, besides, the gentleman that was factor upon the estate during my lease, that was the procurator-fiscal of this town, Mr Henderson, I have his letter in my pocket saying that I was a good improving tenant, and that I paid my rents with punctuality. I lifted off my croft what kept me living, without being troublesome to my neighbours, and I hope I never will.

21,949. *Mr Shaw Stewart.*—What was the extent of your holding under lease?—It was measured by the proprietor, and by the Royal Engineers from Her Majesty at different times, but I never measured it. I think that my land was 40 acres, and, of course, we had a common called Benachailt that every man could put cattle on.

21,950. What was the rent?—My rent was £24, 8s. 6d. during my lease, and £9 of rise for the year after the lease.

21,951. You told us of the thirty-one families who were removed from the Rumster farm; could you tell me how many lived on the land which is now cultivated, and how many lived on the land which is now under grazing?—Yes, but the most of them are dead.

21,952. But I want to know the proportion that were on what is now grazing?—I can give you, I think, for my memory still serves me well, the names of the heads of the families that were in the whole of them.

21,953. I don't want to trouble you for the names, but the Rumster farm is now divided into cultivated land and into grazing?—Yes, it is occupied in agriculture.

21,954. Could you give me an idea of the number of houses that were on the land which is now cultivated, and the number of houses on the land which is now under grazing?—Yes. On Rumster: there were two brothers on the largest farm, William and Donald Sinclair; Donald was married and had a family of his own, William had sisters, so I consider there were two families.

21,955. Would half of the families have houses on the land which is now grazing, or were they mostly on the land which is now under cultivation?—Well, there are two families, we will say; we will give them a house apiece: twelve families in Rumster.

21,956. Where their houses were is now cultivated land, is it not?—Yes, and where the largest farm was that is where the present tenants live.

21,957. Looking at the land which is now under grazing at Rumster, were there any houses on that?—I have told you all the houses, the number of houses that were in Rumster; but the other place we called it Badereisky, but the last laird of Forse, I believe, styled it after the name of his father-in-law, Mr Shepherd—he called it Shepherdstown. I don't know what you may have in your books, but we called it Badereisky.

21,958. Most of the houses were on land which is now cultivated?—Yes, but all Badereisky is under sheep; it was ditched and drained and dried. It was swampy sort of ground.

21,959. How many of the houses would have been on Badereisky?—I cannot tell you at once, you must allow me a little time. Twelve.

21,960. And that is now all grazing?—All under sheep.

Alexander Polson.

ALEXANDER POLSON, Teacher, Dunbeath (37)—*examined.*

21,961. *The Chairman.*—You are a teacher at Dunbeath?—Yes.

21,962. Were you appointed as a delegate by the Dunbeath crofters to give evidence?—Yes.

21,963. Have you a written statement?—I have.

21,964. Please read it.—'At a meeting of the 'crofters, cottars, and others, held at Dunbeath on '29th June last, I was appointed to give some evidence 'regarding the estate of Dunbeath, in the parish of 'Latheron, which is the property of W. S. Thomson 'Sinclair, Esq., of Dunbeath and Freswick.

'From the last issued Valuation Roll I find there 'are 214 crofters paying a total rent of £709, 17s., and '34 cottars, including shopkeepers, paying a rent of '£111, 5s.; altogether 248 crofters and cottars pay '£821, 2s., while one farm in the hands of a couple of 'farmers (one of whom is non-resident) is valued at '£827, 14s. Shootings on the estate, with a keeper's 'house, &c., are valued at £1000, shootings in the 'proprietor's hands at £120, the home farm and 'ground officer's house at £130, and the salmon fish-'ings at £200.

'A large part of the land which at present forms 'this large farm of Mains and Borgue was at first in 'the possession of the following twenty-one crofters, 'viz.:—Donald Mackenzie, John Mackay, Roderick 'Mackay, Walter Gunn, James Sutherland, John 'Calder, George Gunn, Angus Henderson, Widow 'James Maclachlan, Widow Robert Gunn, Widow 'Henry Sutherland, Adam Sutherland, John Suther-'land, Robert Sutherland (a), Robert Sutherland (b), 'Donald Sutherland (a), Donald Sutherland (b), Alex-'ander Sutherland, Widow David Sutherland, Alex-'ander Mackay, and Widow Ross. All these were

Wick.
Alexander Polson.

'evicted from their holdings to add to what was then 'the home farm in the immediate neighbourhood of 'the castle. This was then let as a large farm and a 'new home farm formed at Inver by the eviction of at 'least sixteen crofters, of whom we have ascertained 'the names of thirteen as follows:—William Gunn, 'Robert Gunn, John Gunn, John Dunbar, William 'Mackay, Betty Grant, Betty Sutherland, Alexander 'Sinclair, William Sinclair, Peter Cormack, Alexander 'Donn, Andrew Macgregor, and Angus Sutherland. 'Besides these evictions there was taken from those in 'the neighbouring townships of Achvroal and Torbeg 'about half their land and common pasture.

'To form the farm of Ballachly, now valued at £63, the 'following seven were evicted, viz.:—Robert Sinclair, 'John Cormack, George Mackenzie, George Gunn, 'Margaret Mackenzie, Widow John Nicol, and Thomas 'and William Nicol. From Dunbeath Strath, the 'following forty-eight were evicted:—Alexander Suther-'land, George Robertson, William Gunn, Robert Mac-'gregor, Donald Sutherland, John Couper, Adam Mac-'gregor, George Mackay, Donald Mackenzie, James 'Simpson, Donald Sutherland, John Sutherland, John 'Gunn, James Mackay, Donald Matheson, William 'Macgregor, Alexander Henderson, Angus Sutherland, 'Robert Gunn, Widow Mackintosh, George Mackay, 'William Macdonald, Donald Campbell, John Suther-'land, Donald Gunn, William Gunn, William Chisholm, 'Samuel Matheson, William Keith, Alexander Keith, 'Donald Gunn, Hugh Ross, Alexander Mackay, Adam 'Gunn, John Macaulay, George Sutherland, John 'Mackay, Widow Bruce, Angus Sutherland, Widow 'Sutherland, Robert Henderson, Angus Keith, David 'Munro, Donald Weir, William Weir, Alexander 'Murray, James Mackay, and Donald Sinclair. The 'township of Borgue consisted of thirteen crofters, six 'of whom were evicted to add to Lower Borgue farm, 'and one half of the common pasture was added to the 'Mains farm. In all, ninety-eight evictions took place 'on this estate during what Lord Napier's Commission 'spoke of as the "economic transformation" of the early 'part of the century. A large part of this land is at 'present used for sporting and grazing purposes, and is 'excellently adapted for the formation of small hold-'ings. Some of the people, on being evicted, built 'themselves houses on the more barren hillsides, and 'to make a livelihood took to fishing, and the two 'industries of fishing and crofting have been pretty 'successfully combined here, though there has always 'been a desire for more land, as the inhabitants are 'very willing to work and there are intervals in the 'fishing season when they could work if only work 'could be got. The present proprietor, a few years ago, 'in compliance with a request by sixteen fishermen, and 'probably as an experiment, gave a part of his home 'farm for the formation of four crofts. The tenants 'were chosen by lot, and three of the four have since 'built substantial houses, and all have stocked or rather 'overstocked these crofts without Government or estate 'aid, and the experiment may be looked on as success-'ful. Some time ago other crofters asked that a part 'of the Mains farm should be similarly given for the 'formation of crofts, but the proprietor replied that he 'was unable to accede to the request, as the farm was 'under lease. The farmers themselves, on being 'approached, also declined to part with any part of the 'farm. At the beginning of this month a memorial in 'the following terms, and signed by eighty-five crofters, 'fishermen, and others, was sent to the proprietor:—

'Dunbeath, *August* 1893.

'To W.S. Thomson Sinclair, Esq.

'Sir,—We the undersigned, crofters, cottars, and fishermen 'on your estate of Dunbeath, beg very respectfully to say that we 'appreciate the efforts which you have made for the amelior-'ation of our condition, especially by the making of crofts from 'the home farm, which we now recognise to be quite small 'enough for your own use, and also by the amount of aid 'promised towards harbour accommodation. We also know that 'just at present you are legally unable to extend existing 'holdings, or to form new ones, but we would now very 'respectfully ask that when the Mains and Borgue farms again 'become vacant you will afford us an opportunity of extending 'the holdings of such of us as border on it and of making 'new holdings for such of us as may be willing to have them on 'reasonable conditions.'

Wick.
Alexander Polson.

'They have also asked me to state that, if these lands 'which I have mentioned were made available for them, 'they would, without any Government aid, be prepared 'to stock them, and to build the necessary steadings, as 'they believe that by their own labour they could get 'those things done. My fellow-delegate, Mr George 'Henderson, has proved that this may be done three 'times over in the course of one lifetime.

"His Grace the Duke of Portland has given up the 'home farm at Berriedale for the purpose of enlarging six 'crofts at Newport, four at Badrinsary, two at the shore, 'and one at Borgie; and all the crofters at Berriedale 'have got a right to the grazing of the pasture, which was 'once a part of His Grace's home farm. Here, also, no 'help was given to stock the enlarged holdings, and at 'present all the crofts are very fully stocked.

'The estate of Berriedale, at present, however, exists 'chiefly for sporting purposes, and a considerable part of 'the land in its straths, at present a part of his Grace's 'deer forest, as well as much land on the uplying part 'of Dunbeath, has been cultivated, and is now capable of 'being cultivated to profit, as will, I believe, become 'evident to this Commission when they inspect these 'lands. Of course these crofters know that the conditions 'of life now are not similar to those which existed when 'all the families which I have mentioned were evicted, 'and they believe that each of those who may yet get 'crofts should have from ten acres arable and upwards, 'according to quality, with a share of common pasture, '*i.e.*, land sufficient to keep, say, 1 horse, 2 cows, 2 'stirks, and from 10 to 30 sheep, and this, with a 'diligent prosecution of the fishing, would tend to 'ameliorate the conditions under which they at present 'live. (Signed) Alexander Polson.

'Wick, 23*rd August* 1893.'

21,965. A good many of the statements made in that paper are not of your own knowledge, I suppose, but are based on inquiries?—Yes. When we knew about your Commission coming, a meeting was held, and a small committee of five appointed, to get the necessary information. They were to see the oldest inhabitants, and find out the names of all those who were evicted, and supply them to me with any other information; also the size of crofts and the stock have been furnished to me.

21,966. And that paper, with this detailed statement, is the result of these inquiries and the information furnished to you?—Yes.

21,967. Are you in favour of a croft where the man lives partly by fishing and partly by his holding?—Yes, I think it has been successful in the Dunbeath district.

21,968. You don't think there is any great danger of the man, having both the sea and the croft to attend to, falling between two stools as it were?—They have not fallen between two stools in my neighbourhood.

21,969. That mode of occupation has been successful?—Yes.

21,970. In fair years?—Yes.

21,971. Are you in favour of a fisherman holding a patch of potato ground or garden ground, and the man to depend entirely upon the sea for his livelihood?—I believe that would be successful in other circumstances than we have at Dunbeath; where the fish can be disposed of, and sent to market advantageously. But in our district, where there is difficulty in doing that, and there are long intervals between the fishing, farming can be combined with it successfully.

21,972. You don't think a man could be a fisherman pure and simple there without greater facilities for the sale of his fish?—No, I don't think it.

21,973. Then are you in favour of larger holdings where a man would live entirely by his holding?—I am.

21,974. Do you think such holdings could be cultivated to a profit?—They could, I believe.

21,975. Was that subject gone into in detail by your committee?—No, not in detail.

21,976. Did they take a sheet of paper and put down

figures, and try to work it out, allowing so much for dwelling-house, so much for steading, so much for draining and trenching and building dykes, so much for the purchase of stock, so much for repairs, so much for keep of the families, and so on, and bring out a debit and a credit side?—They did not go into it that way, but the experiment has been made; these fishermen have been taken and placed upon crofts, and they have built themselves, as I said in my statement, good substantial houses.

21,977. You appeal to the concrete cases?—Yes.

21,978. And you saw these cases on the Duke of Portland's property?—They are enlarged holdings there; they are not fishermen on his property.

21,979. Which have been successful?—Which have been successful, as far as we can ascertain.

21,980. Are there some other cases on the Dunbeath property?—No, not where crofters have been made.

21,981. I think you said there were some cases of crofters that had been made fishermen?—Fishermen also, combined.

21,982. And in all those cases you think the experiment, so far as made, has been attended with success?—Yes, I believe so.

21,983. Are the crofters on the Dunbeath property, and round there, men of a good deal of independence of character?—They are.

21,984. Who would do their very best to make an experiment of that sort a success?—Yes.

21,985. And more disposed to trust to themselves than to their neighbours?—Yes.

21,986. Is there any desire for assistance, or is the desire rather that they should, if possible, do without assistance?—Well, if it came in the form of a loan, I believe many of them would rather not have it; they would rather depend upon their own diligence, but I have no doubt there are some who would be glad of a grant or aid to help them to stock it. But I know some would rather do without it, because the repayment might be difficult.

21,987. And could these men build houses, stone and slated houses, and put stock on the ground?—Yes, I believe they could.

21,988. And pay the first rent?—I believe they could. I don't know whether any of these four are in arrear, but they can't be very much in arrear.

21,989. Did the committee consider the subject of rent for such new holdings?—They thought that for such new holdings from 5s. to 7s. an acre would be quite sufficient of rent.

21,990. For the arable?—Yes, for the arable land.

21,991. And what for the grazing?—That would depend on the quality.

21,992. Of course, but take the average quality of grazing in the neighbourhood?—I don't know that they have considered the matter of grazing.

21,993. Is there, in your judgment, a necessity for additional holdings and for additional grazing?—There is; they are slightly congested; many of these small crofts have difficulty in making anything from the smallness of the holdings.

21,994. Are the holdings as a rule to the small side rather than the large?—To the small side. There are 214 small crofters, and one large farmer has far more land than these 214 have.

21,995. And you mentioned a farm formerly in the hands of twenty-one crofters, the home farm with thirteen crofters, another place with seven crofters, Dunbeath Strath with forty-eight, and Borgue with nine, in all ninety-eight crofters?—Yes.

21,996. I think you said in the paper, and I suppose you confirm it now orally, that the whole of that land, or at least a very great part of it, would be suitable for occupation and settlement of crofters now?—It would be.

21,997. I mean self-sustaining holdings?—Self-sustaining holdings.

21,998. I gather from what you say here, there is no indisposition, no reluctance on the part of the landlord to help you if he could?—We believe the landlord is quite willing to help us if he could.

21,999. And has to some extent helped you already?—He has.

22,000. Did you receive any reply to that application that was made on the 1st of August?—Not yet.

22,001. You have not had much time?—There are a number of years yet before the lease is out.

22,002. When does the lease expire?—I am not quite sure, but I think some of the crofters said seven years hereafter.

22,003. What is the state of the arrears among the crofters for whom you speak?—I don't think they are much in arrear.

23,004. Most of these crofters had their rents adjusted by the Crofters Commission?—A few of them had; with the others the landlord settled. They appealed to the Commission, but they were withdrawn from Court.

22,005. And settled amicably between the estate and the crofters?—Yes.

22,006. And I suppose upon the same lines as the Crofters Commission had decided?—Yes.

22,007. Then since these settlements and decisions have the rents been, on the whole, well paid?—I believe they have been pretty well paid; I believe last year they have been as well paid as for any considerable time.

22,008. And there are no serious arrears?—There are no serious arrears that I know of.

22,009. *Mr Shaw-Stewart.*—Have I understood you right with regard to these extended holdings that the tenants are also fishermen?—Not on the Berriedale estate; they are fishermen on the Dunbeath estate.

22,010. But not on the Berriedale estate?—No.

22,011. How many tenants do you calculate could occupy the lands that you have indicated?—I should say from 50 to 100 profitably.

22,012. Supposing these lands were made available, would there be a great demand to occupy them?—Yes, there were 85 crofters signed that petition to the landlord lately for extended holdings.

22,013. Supposing these lands were made available, how would you apportion the land; would you let them to the highest bidder?—In the experiment made we chose the tenants by lot, and the landlord accepted these tenants.

22,014. Was that done in the recent making of holdings?—Yes, and in that case the fixing of the fair rent was left to the Crofters Commission, and they fixed the rent at what the landlord did.

22,015. *Mr Sutherland.*—With regard to the fishermen at Dunbeath, for what length of time in the year do they fish?—They fish first through the summer fishing, then they do some haddock fishing, and then the winter fishing. They also do the Barra fishing, the west coast fishing in May and June.

22,016. They come back to the east coast fishing in July?—And August to the 1st of September.

22,017. And they cultivate land besides?—And they are able to cultivate land besides by themselves or the members of their family. A number of these crofters don't go to the west coast fishing. The fishermen, pure and simple, don't have much land, those who go to all the fishings. But a number of those who have larger crofts do the summer fishing, and the summer fishing only.

22,018. Those who have the larger crofts don't go far from home; they fish at Dunbeath, or Wick, or Helmsdale?—Yes.

22,019. That keeps them only six weeks in the year, and during the remainder they cultivate the land?—Yes.

22,020. And you think there are exceptional circumstances which permit of their being both crofters and fishermen, if they are near the fishing ground?—Yes.

22,021. Who got these holdings at Inver, was it the Inver fishermen?—No, they were cottars before, I think, with one exception.

22,022. Were they fishers?—Yes, they were fishers.

22,023. And only they had a house before?—Yes.

22,024. What is the extent that they got?—I could not say; they are rented at £3,10s.

22,025. And though they hadn't an inch of land

Wick.
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Alexander Polson.

before, they had no difficulty in stocking and paying their rent?—I have heard of none.

22,026. And are you of opinion that if a man had land before, he would be in a better position to take an enlarged holding than a man who had none at all?—Certainly.

22,027. Do you think the difficulty of stocking a new holding is much over-estimated generally?—It is; I don't think it would be so difficult as it is represented to be.

22,028. Have you in your experience seen a number of people going into crofts who had none before?—Not many.

22,029. You have seen them in Sutherlandshire and Caithness?—Yes.

22,030. You have seen people going into crofts who had none before?—In a few cases.

22,031. Did you know them in any case to require loans of money to enable them to set up?—No, I have not known of that.

22,032. Did you ever hear, in your experience, of the evictions that when new holdings were given to these people, some of them got nothing but uncultivated land, and that they ever got any assistance?—They never got any assistance to my knowledge.

22,033. And in transferring the tenants to the new places you indicated in reply to the Chairman, you think there would be still less difficulty?—I think so.

22,034. They would be removed from unfavourable conditions to more favourable conditions?—Yes, in the unfavourable conditions they were able to stock and build, and I should think it would be much easier on the favourable condition.

22,035. And, as a matter of fact, they paid enhanced rents, did they not?—Yes.

22,036. You know these lands of which you spoke of your own personal knowledge?—Yes.

22,037. You know Dunbeath Strath?—Yes.

22,038. Do you know Berriedale deer forest?—I have been up to the straths.

22,039. And are you of opinion that these are better adapted places for settling people on than the places down on the shore?—There are many fertile places up these straths better adapted than some of the places by the shore.

22,040. Places where the people lived before?—Yes.

22,041. Do you remember before Berriedale was a deer forest?—No, I do not.

22,042. You don't remember people living there?—No, it was a sheep farm first.

22,043. But you have seen these lands, and you are decidedly of opinion, from your experience, that they are admirably adapted for new settlements of people now?—I am of that opinion.

22,044. And then you gave us this concrete example of the 214 people having less land than one man?—Yes.

22,045. That is the distribution of land on Dunbeath?—Yes.

22,046. And is it any better, do you think, on the estate of Berriedale?—Slightly better there; the holdings on the average are larger than on Dunbeath.

22,047. Is Borgue on the Dunbeath estate?—Yes.

22,048. *The Chairman.*—You referred to one matter of importance. You said that those fishermen who went to all the fishings, the early Barra fishing and on to the late fishing in autumn, had very small patches of land. What size of holdings had they?—I think one or two had just half an acre to an acre.

22,049. In fact just a patch, but depended on the sea?—Depended on the sea.

22,050. Now could they go to all the fishings if they had a croft of 9 or 10 acres arable and give it due attention?—They could not go to all the fishings perhaps, but I have seen those who have got their wives and family there very diligent when they are away and they work them.

22,051. But is it only those crofters who have very small patches who are able to go to all the fishings?—Yes, according to present circumstances.

22,052. Only the man with a small patch finds himself able to attend to all the fishings?—Yes.

22,053. On the other hand, those who have something like a stretch of ground, greater or less, only attend certain of the fishings?—That is so.

Wick.
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Polson.

22,054. In other words, they are obliged to forego any profit arising from the sea on a fishing which will interfere with the due cultivation of the croft?—Well, the fishing does not interfere with the due cultivation of the croft.

22,055. I mean of a larger croft; you say they don't go to all the fishing?—Yes, they forego one fishing, the early fishing, and the winter fishing in order to attend the croft.

22,056. That is unavoidable, isn't it?—I suppose it is, they can't cultivate the croft and be at all the fishings; it is impossible.

22,057. Now, you mention in your paper that there was a meeting of crofters, cottars, and others? How many cottars do you represent?—I think there are 11 cottars.

22,058. Are these cottars persons who have or who have not land?—Who have not land; I forget the exact number.

22,059. Eleven or thereby?—Yes.

22,060. Have they any land at all?—No land, just houses.

22,061. Or do they get patches of land from the crofters?—They get drills of potatoes.

22,062. Do they pay the crofters for that in money?—In money or its equivalent.

22,063. And they, as I understand your position, are just as anxious as the crofters to get holdings if they can be got?—They are.

22,064. *Mr William Mackay*, Factor for Freswick.—You state that the total number of evictions, so far as you know, was 98?—Yes.

22,065. Would you tell what time that was?—1828 to 1840.

22,066. Within a period of twelve years?—Yes.

22,067. With regard to these 98 crofters, how many of them were evicted from land that is now employed for pastoral purposes?—Most of them.

22,068. I think you divided them over different places. The first place you gave some 21 in the Ramscraigs district?—These formed what was once the home farm of Mr Thomson Sinclair, below the present highway, and a great number of them were evicted above the road to the barren land.

22,069. But that land from which the evictions were made is now in cultivation and in rotation?—It is in the Mains Farm.

22,070. It is not in pasture?—Not in pasture.

22,071. To come to another. You then gave 13 on the home farm?—There were 16 and I gave 13 names.

22,072. That also is in cultivation and not pasture?—Yes.

22,073. That is 34 that are not exactly under the scope of the inquiry?—I think the scope of the inquiry is any large farms not occupied by crofters and which could be made into smaller holdings.

22,074. Which are being used for grazing?

22,075. *The Chairman.*—'Now occupied for the 'purposes of a deer forest, grouse moor, or other 'sporting purposes, or for grazing.'—The large grazing farms would not work without the large arable part.

22,076. *Mr William Mackay.*—What I wish to know is that you should tell the Commission how many crofters were evicted from holdings that are now used for grazing purposes?—All these on the Strath, 48.

22,077. Are there any others but these?—There were these 48 at any rate.

22,078. I don't dispute that, but that practically brings the number down to 48 who were evicted from land which is now used for grazing purposes?—Yes.

22,079. Then, with regard to these small farms that the proprietor made an experiment on, the land which was given to them was it under arable, or under grazing before?—I think it was under grazing; it was under arable land, but it had been laigh land for several years.

22,080. Was it not under rotation just a year or so before, practically it was arable land?—Practically it was arable land.

22,081. It was not land that had to be reclaimed or trenched or enclosed in the same way as would have to be done in the case of land such as the Strath of Dunbeath?—Oh, no.

22,082. Then, with regard to the improvement upon these experimental crofts, are you in a position to say that all these improvements have been paid for?—I am not.

22,083. You know that they were done by the tenants, but you are not in a position to say that they have paid for them yet?—I am not in a position to say that.

22,084. Or that they have to be paid by degrees, I am not questioning that they will be?—They may be, as far as I know.

22,085. Then, with regard to the stocking of these farms, have you any idea what stock is kept upon these four farms that were thus cut up?—I was told that they were overstocked.

22,086. Have any of the four got a horse?—I don't know; I asked what stock they had, and they said they were overstocked. They said they had overstocked them themselves.

22,087. But you don't know the number?—I don't know the number.

22,088. Then, with regard to the land up the strath, I think you said that possibly from 50 to 100 farms or crofts might be made?—Not up the strath alone, but all the land to which I referred.

22,089. How many do you think could be made with profit to those who would occupy them up the strath?—Three or four dozen.

22,090. Well, that comes very near where we were, about 50. Then you stated that the size of a farm that you would recommend would be about 10 acres?—That is the amount they gave to me, from 10 acres upwards.

22,091. How much upwards?—Up to 30 acres.

22,092. That would carry, I think you said, something like 10 head of cattle and 30 sheep?—One horse, 2 cows, 2 stirks, and 10 to 30 sheep.

22,093. If there were 50 farms of that size, what do you think would be a fair rent for each of them, or what would the tenants be prepared to pay?—For the arable land, as I said, not more than 5s. an acre? [*Mr Shaw-Stewart.*—You said 5s. to 7s. an acre?—Yes, 5s. to 7s.]

22,094. Suppose we take it at 7s., and 10 acre farms, that would be about £3, 10s.; you would put something on also for the grazing, I suppose, for the sheep kept on it. What do you think the average rent would be, taking the grazing and arable land together, of such farms as you have been specifying?—Not more than £10.

22,095. Ten pounds for each farm, and do you think there would be 50 farms in the strath of Dunbeath that would give £10 of rent?—I don't think there would be 50.

22,096. You said there were three or four dozen, that is 48, or two less?—Well, with all these uplands and the moorlands I think there would be almost that.

22,097. And do you think there are as many crofters in Dunbeath in the present circumstances and in the present condition of agriculture who could grapple with such an undertaking as that and carry it out successfully?—I believe there are.

22,098. To your own knowledge you think there are so many men who would have the capital and skill to do that?—They have the skill, and I believe with diligence they would create capital.

22,099. Is it not the case that all those who have to face such a question as that now, have to face it under very different circumstances from those who built the houses on these lands one hundred years ago. You are a member of the County Council?—I am.

22,100. You take a considerable interest in the sanitary arrangements of the county?—I do.

22,101. Are you not aware that it is a question which has given rise to considerable discussion just now, that of the sanitary condition of the crofters' houses at Dunbeath?—Yes.

22,102. Is it not the case that a great many of ethes houses have been built practically by the tenants themselves?—They have.

22,103. If new houses were being built, do you think that the sanitary authorities would allow such houses to be built upon the estate again?—I don't think the crofters themselves would desire to build any such houses as these old ones. Those who got the crofts from the proprietors have built many houses, both sanitary and otherwise.

22,104. Therefore, the rebuilding of houses upon strath land would be a much more costly thing now than it was when these were built before?—Certainly, they are very much better.

22,105. You made a comparison, which I quite admit to be correct, with regard to the number of crofters' holdings, 214, and the rest of the estate occupied by one tenant. Now is it not the case that within the last thirty years the numbers of crofters' holdings upon that property have been considerably increased?—I don't know that.

22,106. It will be in your recollection that there was a discussion before the Crofters Commission regarding the disputed pasture on the Knockally hill?—Yes.

22,107. Do you remember one of the arguments then used against the estate was that the number of holdings had been largely increased at the expense of the crofters' common?—There were some crofts formed off that common, and I think there were some that were shifted from another part of the estate on there.

22,108. There were a good many altogether?—There were some.

22,109. And do not the crofters themselves object to that being continued?—They do, because the common pasture just now is small for the great number of crofters, because all these crofters have a right to that common pasture, and they cut their peats in it and it won't stand additional pressure.

22,110. That is just the point I am bringing out. Is it not the case that upon the Dunbeath estates hitherto, practically, if a man wanted a piece of land and paid a comparatively nominal rent for it he got it, in bygone years?—I don't know that.

22,111. You have no information about it?—I have not information about it myself and I have not been supplied with it.

22,112. You are not generally acquainted with the other estates of the county so as to make a comparison?—No.

22,113. Are you aware that there are a larger number of crofters on the Freswick estate, generally, than on any other estate in the county?—No, I don't know about that.

22,114. You mentioned that some of the land on the Dunbeath estate was devoted to sport?—I did.

22,115. What land did you refer to?—The shootings leased by the Duke of Portland.

22,116. But it is not kept for sport alone?—Not for sport alone.

22,117. Suppose that that land was occupied by crofters there would still be sport upon it?—I question if there would be.

22,118. Is it not the case that there is land at present under crofters on the Dunbeath estate that is shot over by sportsmen?—I believe that is so.

22,119. And is it not the case that that same land is very good shooting ground?—I did not know that that was so.

22,120. Put it this way: suppose matters were changed and that the crofters came to own the lands themselves. Do you think that in these circumstances they would do away with the revenue which the estate presently receives in this same way from sporting; would it not be in their interest to maintain it?—I don't think so.

22,121. Financially?—I don't think so.

22,122. *The Chairman.*—If they were owners of the land?—If they were landlords themselves?

22,123. *Mr William Mackay, Factor for Dunbeath.*—Would it be to their interest to receive the same rent which is being received for sporting purposes?—Certainly, if they would get people to pay it for the part they had.

Wick.

Alexander Polson.

22,124. *Mr Hector Sutherland.*—When were you last up Berriedale strath?—I was up there the year the Duke married, and I believe I have been once since.

22,125. On what grounds do you base the statements in your paper with reference to Berriedale strath?—Seeing the green land in it.

22,126. What year was it, did you say, when you were last there,—1879 was it?—I was there in that year at any rate, and I think I have been there once since.

22,127. You are not aware that Berriedale strath is at present mostly occupied by crofters? That is not within your knowledge?—That is not within my knowledge.

22,128. Did you see any of the pieces of ground in Langwell forest that you said were capable of cultivation? Did you see them yourself?—I have seen large green parts in it, and I have referred to the Commissioners that they would see it too.

22,129. But, in your statement, you referred to certain parts in Langwell forest that were capable of cultivation. Did you see these parts yourself?—I have seen parts certainly capable of cultivation.

22,130. Where?—Up Berriedale strath.

22,131. Can you locate any particular part?—I don't know the local names, but if you will come up the strath with me I will be very glad to point them out to you.

22,132. Can you tell us the altitude of these spots?—No, but if I had the contour map I would be very glad to do so.

22,133. How could you tell us the height unless you can tell us what spots you mean?—By going over it.

22,134. With reference to the crofters who got enlarged holdings at Berriedale, you said they had been successful?—So the crofters in Dunbeath regard it, and they told me so.

22,135. You have never been on these crofts yourself?—I have seen them many a time.

22,136. Can you give me any reason why that experiment has been successful?—Because they got this land, I am told, at 7s. to 8s. an acre, and were able to stock it at once, and they also got the grazings from his Grace; they have work also from his Grace.

22,137. Don't you think one of the principal reasons why that experiment has been successful is because they have been doing work on his Grace's estate there?—They do work on his Grace's estate; but I understand that the wages which his Grace paid to the gillies and others are lower than on any other sporting estate in the north.

22,138. Now I understand you said that there had been enlarged rents on the crofter's own labour?—That is on the Dunbeath estate; I don't know the Berriedale estate so well.

22,139. That reference in your paper, then, does not apply to the Duke's estates?—I don't know that it does, though it is possible that it may; it is very likely.

22,140. Can you mention any concrete case to show that it applies to the Duke's estates?—No, I cannot.

22,141. *Mr William Mackay, Factor for Dunbeath.*—Might I ask the same question with regard to Berriedale? Are there cases in which the tenants have to any appreciable extent been rented on their own improvements?—Those that were evicted, these twenty-one that formed the home farm were set up above the road, and the land to which they went was not worth 2d. an acre when they went, and I am sure the rent roll shows more than that now.

22,142. Are you speaking from your own knowledge?—I am speaking from information conveyed to me.

22,143. But has there been any raising of the rents since the first time they occupied these places?—A number of them had a shilling a-piece to pay, I think, for a few years.

22,144. Can you specify any case?—No, but I believe Mr George Henderson might.

22,145. *Mr Sutherland.*—Who improved the land on Dunbeath estate, the landlord or the tenants?—The tenants altogether.

Wick.

Alexander Polson.

22,146. You were asked a question with regard to the rental. Doubt was expressed that if the people were put back in Dunbeath strath they would be able to pay 5s. or 6s. an acre of rent?—Yes, there was a doubt as to that.

22,147. You heard it stated here to-day by Mr Macleod and Mr Sinclair from Clyth?—Yes.

22,148. You remember the statement of the acreage and the rent that they paid?—The large rents they paid.

22,149. What is your recollection of it? Was it that it was much higher?—23s. or 24s.

22,150. That is rather different from 6s. or 7s. an acre?—It is.

22,151. And if they pay 23s. they would surely be able to pay 5s. to 7s.?—That is what I think.

22,152. Then with regard to the land in Berriedale, do you know Wag [Uamhag] in Berriedale?—Not very well.

22,153. Do you know Altbea?—Yes.

22,154. Do you know Brae-na-h-eaglais?—Not very well.

22,155. Have they all been occupied by crofters?—I have been told so.

22,156. A great many more?—Yes.

22,157. Are you aware that crofters are there now?—I am aware they are not.

22,158. You rather think they are not there now?—I believe not.

22,159. Did you ever see crofters in a deer forest?—No.

22,160. *Mr G. M. Sutherland.*—How long have you resided in that district?—Over thirteen years.

22,161. And you have often visited the localities in the district covered by your paper there?—I have.

22,162. And you are quite able to point out the ground to the Commissioners?—I am.

George Henderson.

George Henderson, Dunbeath (63)—*examined.*

22,163. *The Chairman.*—Did you come along with Mr Polson to give evidence on behalf of the Dunbeath crofters?—Yes.

22,164. And you heard the statement read by him?—Yes.

22,165. Do you concur in that statement?—I can testify to all the statements he made.

22,166. Do you wish to make any additions to it?—No, I think to the historical part of it there cannot be an addition, because I think it is all correct, and that there cannot be anything added to it.

22,167. Then, apart from the historical part, is there anything you wish to add?—No, not that is worth occupying time to-day, but that I have been personally acquainted with the most of them evicted,—those that were kept upon the ground, that got leave to build on the hills to form new houses. Some of them were obliged to go to other parts; some went to foreign parts; some left the strath and went to the bottom of the sea.

22,168. I don't wish at this time of the day to detain you, but we will take you as concurring with Mr Polson.

Alexander Gunn.

Alexander Gunn, Killimster, Wick (79)—*examined.*

22,169. *The Chairman.*—Do you live in Wick?—I live at Killimster near Wick.

22,170. Do you wish to give evidence with regard to some part of the county?—Yes.

22,171. What part of it?—The heights of the parish of Halkirk.

22,172. Have you got a written statement?—Yes.

22,173. Just read it.—Rumsdale.

22,174. Where is that?—Parish of Halkirk.

22,175. What about Rumsdale? (Reads list of forty-eight families. See list at end of evidence.)

22,176. Was that done within your recollection?—Yes, I remember them all except the tenants of Glutt and Rumsdale.

22,177. What is that land used for now from which they have been cleared?—All sheep farms and deer.

22,178. Grazing?—Sheep farms, except Glutt, which is under deer.

22,179. Is that the Duke of Portland's?—No, Sir Tollemache Sinclair.

22,180. Is there any of that land suitable for cultivation now?—The whole strath could be put under cultivation from Glutt down to Dalmore, being a distance of upwards of 16 miles.

22,181. The strath of the river Thurso. Anything more you wish to read?—Nothing particular, but I have a list of all the farm stock they kept.

22,182. Just hand that in. Where did you get that information about the stock?—I was personally acquainted with it, and I have been at the summer sheilings which were bordering and marching with my father's farm of Braehour.

22,183. You have noted down the stock from your own memory?—Certainly.

22,184. Let me know this, where did they go for sheilings?—To the Sleach water.

22,185. Where did they go for their sheilings?—About a couple of miles north of Strathmore, which river runs down from the county march and falls into Lochmore as well at Strathmore water.

22,186. Were the sheilings up the Strathmore water?—No, but on the other water.

22,187. What was the name of the other water?—Sleach water.

22,188. Is it the stock you have down in your paper?—Yes.

22,189. *Mr Sutherland.*—What age were you when you saw these things?—I had been at the sheilings when I was ten years of age.

22,190. Were you born in that district?—I was born in the Highlands. My father's farm extended up to nearly the top of these grounds.

22,191. Where was his house?—Braehour.

22,192. And all these things in your paper are all of your own knowledge?—Of my own knowledge.

22,193. How many years is it since these people were cleared out of Strathmore?—Mr Horne was the proprietor of Rumsdale, and I think he cleared them out in the year 1822, and Dalnawillan and Dalglaton belonged to Hempriggs property. They were cleared out in the year 1830 or 1832 or thereabouts. That was before Sir Tollemache Sinclair bought that property.

22,194. Where did the people go to generally?—Some to Australia and some to America.

22,195. And did some of them get holdings in the low country and Caithness?—Just a few of them. Not many.

22,196. Is there more than one sheep farm there now?—Oh yes, different sheep farms.

22,197. Are those places accessible; is there a good road to them?—There is a road going up all the way to the very top.

22,198. Up to Glutt?—Yes.

22,199. Is it possible to drive up Braemore to them?—No.

22,200. *Mr G. M. Sutherland.*—Do you know about the estate of Braemore?—Yes, I know a little about it.

22,201. Tell the Commissioners what you know about the evictions?—There were fifteen tenants evicted from Braemore; it is under deer now.

22,202. *The Chairman.*—Is that the Duke of Portland's?—Yes.

22,203. Have you got their names?—They were evicted before the Duke of Portland bought that land.

22,204. He had nothing to do with it?—No, I think the lands held by the evicted tenants, together with other parts that were capable of being under cultivation, amount to about 300 to 400 acres.

22,205. In Braemore?—Yes.

22,205*a*. *Mr G. M. Sutherland.*—Have you the names of the tenants there?—Not here.

22,206. Have you them?—Yes.

22,207. Is there any other district near Braemore, Corriehoich and Braeval?—That is what I referred to.

22,208. Do you recollect the tenants being removed from these places yourself?—Oh yes

22,209. From Braemore and that district?—Yes, I mind the tenant being there.

22,210. *Mr Angus Sutherland.*—Do you remember the tenants being in Berriedale strath?—No.

22,211. When was the Berriedale strath cleared?—The clearances began there in 1793.

22,212. And when was Berriedale made into a deer forest, do you know?—I don't recollect.

22,213. Was it thirty years ago, do you know?—I think so.

22,214. *Mr Hector Sutherland.*—When were you last up Berriedale strath?—Perhaps two or three years ago.

22,215. Did you notice who occupied the strath then?—I could not know who occupied it then.

22,216. You don't know who occupied it then?—They were cleared out before I was born, I believe.

22,217. *Mr G. M. Sutherland.*—It was occupied by nobody?—Not a single soul, but rabbits in thousands.

List of Evictions from Strathmore, Halkirk.

Farm.	Particulars.	Names of evicted Tenants.	Number of Cattle kept.
Rumsdale,	William Maciver, tenant. In 1699 there were 60 cows (steelbow) of which the proprietor was to winter 30. Rent 300 merks, including interest on the steelbow stock. 1700. The steelbow was withdrawn, and the rent became £60 Scots = £5 Sterling. In 1822 Mr Donald Horne, the proprietor, evicted the six tenants.	Hugh Campbell,	15
		John Campbell,	15
		Widow Campbell	6
		Robert Machuston,	6
		John Gunn,	6
		Widow Matheson	4
			52
Glut,	1704. Angus Gunn, 20 cows steelbow, rent £97 Scots = £8 Sterling.	Alexander Macdonald,	12
		John Macdonald,	6
			18
Dalganachan	1710. William Sinclair of Hoy, rent £20 Scots. 1730. Alexander Gunn, 20 cows steelbow.	Widow William Gunn,	14
		Angus Gunn,	6
			20
Township of Dalvullin and Dalnaglaton,	1715. Seven tenants, rent 200 merks, to winter for the landlord 12 cows each year. 1831. The 13 tenants of Dalvillin and Dalnaglaton were evicted by Sir George Dunbar, the proprietor. 1820. Rent £150, 4s. Sterling Right to keep six cows for every £10 of rent = 90 cows, and 14 young cattle for £10 = 210 cattle.		6, & 400 sheep
		John Gordon,	
		John Macleod,	4
		John Gunn,	6
		Patrick Macpherson,	4
		Adam Gunn,	6
		John Gunn,	6
		Peter Matheson,	6
		Donald Sutherland,	4
		Alexander Mackay,	3
		William Mackay,	3
		John Reid,	3
		William Mackay,	4
		James Grant,	4
			59
Dalnaha,	Twenty cows steelbow.	Alexander Macleod,	20
Bonalskie,	In 1841 added by Mr Horne to his sheep farm of Rumsdale.	Neil Gunn,	8
Ishnamult,		Robert Gunn,	4
Backlass,	1703. Angus Gunn, rent £133, 6s. 8d. Scots = £11 Sterling. Forty cows steelbow and one bull.	Donald Macleod,	20
		Donald Macewen,	4
			24
Bualmore,		John Macleod,	6

Wick.

Alexander Gunn.

Name.	Particulars.	Names of Evicted Tenants.	Number of Cattle kept.	
Achorclate,	1769. Six tenants, rent £77, 4s. Scots.	Widow Macleod,	12	
		M. Sutherland,	7	
		William Gunn,	7	
				26
Carnamuck,		George Miller,		4
Ocklone,		William Sutherland,		4
Croik,		Widow Hugh Mackay,		4
Achneurach,		Angus Sutherland,		4
Achavenie,		James Macleod,		6
Dirlot and Cottag,	1800. Twenty cows steelbow. John Gunn, afterwards in Dale, took a tack of Dircots, &c., with power to intake and output the sub-tenants at pleasure. In 1830 the last of nine tenants were cleared out.	John Gunn,	20	
		James Bruce,	6	
		Alexander Gunn,	6	
		Marcus Gunn,	5	
		Hugh Campbell,	4	
		John Elder,	6	
		Alexander Sutherland,	6	
		William Macleod,	3	
		William Sutherland,	3	
				59
Knockdow,	1861. Let as sheep farm.	J. S. Elder,		15
Dolnacher,	1861. Let as sheep farm.	Alexander Henderson,		7
				340

There were thus 48 tenants evicted, with a cattle stock of 340 cows and 600 one and two year olds, or 940 in all; also 2 horses for each tenant, or 96 in all; and as each tenant was supposed to keep on the average 20 sheep, that gives a total of 960 sheep, to which add the 400 sheep of John Gordon, making a total of 1360 sheep.

The probable extent of Strathmore may be about 54,000 acres presently under sheep. This would give an average of 1125 acres to each of the 48 tenants who once occupied these lands.

In 1880 the rental of Strathmore was £1838, in 1893 it is £1251, being a reduction of £587 or nearly one third.

The 54,000 acres devoted to 41 holdings would give to each holder 1317 acres; at £30 of rent say 5½d. per acre, would amount to the present rent of £1251.

In the year 1793 Alex. Gunn was evicted from Turnal near Langwell Gardens. He was the first evicted.

Braemore deer forest carried 3000 sheep, and 15 tenants were evicted. It has 18,000 acres, of which about 400 acres is old arable land or land capable of cultivation.

Braemore since a hundred years ago was producing "colleged" men such as ministers and doctors.

(Signed) Alex. Gunn.

Joseph Harling Turner.

JOSEPH HARLING TURNER, Factor to the Duke of Portland (34)—*examined.*

22,218. *The Chairman.*—I understand you have prepared a statement which you wish to submit to us?—Yes.

22,219. Kindly read it.

STATEMENT by J. H. Turner, Factor for his Grace, the Duke of Portland, with reference to the Duke's estate in Caithness.

In making this general statement, with reference to the Duke of Portland's properties in Caithness for the information of the Royal Commission, I am instructed by his Grace to say that his officials will give you all the information and assistance in their power, in order that you may discharge your duties under the Royal Warrant; and that as the figures which I shall hereafter submit to you are taken from the estate books, these books are open to the inspection of any members of the Commission, so that they may verify the figures if they deem it necessary to do so. I am further directed by the Duke to say that his Grace hopes that if any of his tenants or employees wish to give evidence before the Commission, that they will freely do so, and their doing so will in no way disturb the friendly relations which have hitherto existed between the Duke and his tenantry, and which his Grace, I need hardly say, hopes will always continue.

Wick.

Joseph Harling Turner.

The present Duke of Portland succeeded to the estates on the death of the fifth Duke of Portland, 6th December 1879. At that time the estates of Sandside and Keiss formed part of the Portland properties, but they have since been sold to Mr Pilkington and Mr Barry respectively. In 1881 the Duke acquired by purchase the estate of Braemore from the late Sir Robert Anstruther, Bart.

The Portland estates in Caithness consist of:—

1. Langwell, extending to 40,000 acres or thereby. Rent for crop 1892, £513, 13s. 9d. Purchased 1857 from the late Donald Horne, Esq., for	£90,000
2. Braemore, extending to 19,280 acres or thereby. Rent for crop 1892, £199, 17s. 1d. Purchased 1881 from the late Sir Robert Anstruther, Bart., for	41,000
3. Lybster, extending to 2547 acres or thereby. Rent for crop 1892, £985, 3s. 5d. Purchased 1869 from the trustees of T. Sinclair, Esq., for	24,000
4. Swiney and Munsary, extending to 9466 acres or thereby. Rent for crop 1892, £1357, 6s. 8d. Purchased 1877 from the trustees of Geo. M. Gordon, Esq., for	40,000
5. Watten, extending to 9579 acres or thereby. Rent for crop 1892, £1856, 6s. 1d. Purchased 1861 and 1869 from the trustees of David Davidson, Esq., and Sir Tollemache Sinclair, Bart., and others for	49,876
Total,	£244,876

The total extent of the estates is 80,872 acres, the purchase money of which amounted to £244,876. The total rental of the estates, therefore, is £4914, 7s. 0d., and to this falls to be added the rental of the land occupied by the proprietor, £3112, making a total rateable rental of £8026, 7s. 0d. The shooting and fishing rents let by the proprietor, included in the above total rental, are for

	£	s.	d.
Watten and Munsary shootings,	530	0	0
Lybster and Swiney shootings,	100	0	0
Fishings (salmon),	20	0	0
Total,	650	0	0

Langwell and Braemore.

The estates of Langwell and Braemore are now principally occupied by the proprietor for sporting purposes. The forest extends to 40,000 acres, with an average altitude of about 8000 feet, the highest offshoot of which is Morven, 2313 feet, and the lowest point of the forest close to the gardener's house about 250 feet. The average rainfall as taken from the Meteorological Society, Edinburgh, for the two nearest points to Langwell, is at Helmsdale 35·93 inches, Watten 29·27 inches.

About 20,000 acres of Langwell and Braemore estates are let to tenants and crofters.

On Langwell estate there are twenty-seven crofters and one farmer. On Braemore estate five crofters and one farmer. The rents paid by the crofters vary from £2 to £28—an average, however, may be taken at £7. The total amount of the stock carried by the crofters, as nearly as can be ascertained, on both estates, is on Langwell 20 horses, 62 cattle, and 187 sheep; Braemore, 8 horses, 58 cattle, and 550 sheep. Mr Mackay, who is tenant of the farm on both Langwell and Braemore, has the following stock:—1,400 sheep, 50 cattle, 6 horses; and the land in the proprietor's own occu-

Wick. Joseph Harling Turner.

pation carries 350 sheep, 12 to 15 cows, and about 15 to 20 horses and ponies.

When Langwell was purchased in 1857, it had a sheep stock of about 3200 breeding ewes, and the rent was £800 a year. I am led to believe that the death-rate was a very heavy one, a great portion of the land being quite unfit for carrying sheep. The western portion of the sheep run was put under deer in 1861, and the remainder in 1864.

No removals of crofters have taken place since the property was owned by the Dukes of Portland, without the consent of the tenants, nor, so far as I can discover, have any evictions taken place within the last sixty years. Certain changes did take place at Achnacraig and Badbea. At the former place there were formerly four tenants, and the land occupied by them now forms part of the farm of Ausdale. This was done by the late Mr Donald Horne. At Badbea there certainly were more tenants, but they left principally of their own accord, their crofts being added to those who remained. No part of the lands which had been occupied by small tenants has been added to the farm of Ausdale or afforested, with this exception, which I think proper to mention. In or about the year 1875, the tenant of one of the crofts at Badbea, named Joseph Grant, who paid a rent of £4, 10s., was drowned, and his widow at the expiry of a year or so thereafter gave up the croft, which extended to 5 acres of arable land and 5 acres of heather and rocks. This holding then became part of the farm of Ausdale. So far as I can find out there was no application for the croft.

At Borgue, which is close to Berriedale, in or about the year 1865, a tenant named John Mackay, who was a very old man, died. Prior to his death he was considerably in arrears. The arrears were written off by the late Duke. At Mackay's death his family, which consisted of a son and a daughter, removed on account of ill health to a house at Badbea, which they occupied rent free till their death. This croft, which extends to about 5 acres, then became part of an adjoining croft. One of the other crofters at Badbea, named Robert Gordon, gave up his croft to take up some reclaimed land at Newport, near to Borgue. His croft at Badbea was added to one of the adjoining crofts now occupied by Alexander Mackay. This was in 1889 and 1890. The land now occupied by Robert Gordon at Newport extends to about 18 acres or thereby, and was reclaimed, viz., fenced, limed, and drained at considerable cost by the Duke for the purpose of giving employment to the tenants. The rental is £6, 6s. The rent of the croft at Badbea, given up by Robert Gordon, was £3, 5s.

On the Langwell Strath, there appear to have been crofts at Waggmore (altitude, 1000 feet); Wagg (altitude, 700 feet); Aultibea (altitude, 480 feet); Braenaheileish (altitude, 350 feet); and on the Berriedale Strath a croft at Millery (altitude, 350 feet). The arable land in connection with these old crofts cannot have exceeded in the most favourable case more than 10 acres, that of Waggmore certainly not more than 3 acres. But I am certain that on account of the want of access and of the change of the seasons, none of these lands could now be cultivated to profit. So far as I can learn, these crofts have not been cultivated for at least the last eighty or one hundred years. At Badrinsary, in the late Mr Horne's time, there were six small tenants. These were transferred to ground much more suitable nearer the shore, and the land which was then occupied by these six small tenants is now held in part by the Duke and in part by the Newport small tenants. This enlargement of the Newport holdings was made by the present Duke, with a small addition to the rent.

Taken as a whole the crofters on the Langwell estate have much more land to-day than they had forty-five years ago. Berriedale Strath is nearly entirely occupied by their sheep, though they have not the right to graze there, little or nothing being said to them, if they do not allow their stock to stray too far into the forest.

The Chairman.—Then do you say that the crofters have access on tolerance to the Berriedale forest?—I do.

No application for fixing fair rents was made to the Crofters Commission from Langwell and Braemore estates.

Braemore.

Wick. Joseph Harling Turner.

No removals have taken place on Braemore estate since it was acquired by the Duke of Portland in 1881. In the year 1849, I believe the then proprietor made arrangements with the tenants of three small holdings, viz., Braeval 596 feet, Brecklett about 600 feet, and Corriehoich 693 feet, to give up their crofts, and these then became part of the farm of Braemore. Corriehoich and Braeval are now occupied by two of the Duke's gamekeepers.

In 1860 the western part of Braemore was afforested, but it only remained a forest for a few years, when it was again let as a sheep run at a rent of £400, and carrying a sheep stock of 2000. When purchased in 1881 the ground other than that occupied by Mr Mackay and the crofters was put under deer. The area of the crofts has been considerably enlarged without any extra rent, and the buildings have with one exception been rebuilt.

I am informed by some of the tenants that within the last few years the climate of Braemore has very much changed. Potatoes were usually a safe crop, but for the last four years it is doubtful if a boll of potatoes were eaten at Braemore which grew there; and in 1892 about 40 acres of corn were sown, which, I am informed, did not yield two bolls of meal.

When Langwell and Braemore were occupied wholly as sheep farms, there were fifteen shepherds and two gamekeepers employed. Now in the game department alone there are from eighteen to twenty men employed all the year round, while in the shooting season there will be over forty extra hands employed on the estate as gillies, &c. These men are preferentially drawn from the Duke's Caithness estates. Over and above these men one shepherd is employed by the Duke all the year round, and he has extra assistance for three months in the autumn. Mr Mackay constantly employs six men, besides occasional labour.

For the information of the Commissioners I beg to state that in 1880 the rental of the Duke's Caithness properties (exclusive of Sandside and Keiss, but with the rental of Braemore added) was £5951, 5s. 8d., and since that time a sum of not less than £41,149, 0s. 11½d. has been expended on improvements alone, exclusive of money spent on Langwell and Braemore Lodges, as follows:—

	£	s.	d.
On new buildings, . . .	15,042	13	1
Repairs of buildings, fences and roads, ...	22,316	18	0
Drainage of farms and crofts, .	3789	9	10
Total, . . .	41,149	0	11

Over and above these sums, the Duke has paid in subscriptions and donations, principally for Caithness objects, £2485, 16s. 10d., and for pensions, £1647, 16s. Besides, he has expended for miscellaneous purposes in connection with the estates for the same period, £8828, 15s. 5½d.

The abatements allowed to the tenants since 1880 amount to £4382, 11s. 4½d.

The gross rental of the Duke of Portland's property in Caithness in 1880, allowing the same valuation as is now entered in the County Valuation Roll for the land presently occupied by the proprietor for shootings, &c., was £9063, 5s. 8d., and the rental for crop 1892, with the same allowance for land occupied by the proprietor for shootings, &c., is £8026, 7s.

The Duke of Portland's instructions have always been to employ as far as possible the crofters on his estates to do any carting, &c.; and during the last three years they have received at Langwell and Braemore for carting and peat-cutting, £584, 5s. 5d. For the shooting season alone one crofter last year drew £51 for two horses' work, and this year he will draw about the same. Anything the crofters may have to sell in the way of farm produce is, as a rule, purchased from them. At Langwell the Duke has paid for hay

Wick.
Joseph Harling Turner.

£149, 14s. 2d., and at Braemore, £96, 18s. 5d. within the last three years.

This last summer certain additions and alterations have been made at Langwell House, and the contractors paid the crofters in the district for carting, £130; and over £280 have been paid for local labour by the contractors. At all times the Duke has been only too pleased to help the crofters to improve their position.

In August 1891 a few of the people started to make tweed, his Grace undertaking to purchase all they could make, and there has already been paid £115, 18s. 7d. for spinning, dyeing, and weaving.

For the three years ending 31st August 1892, the expenditure in connection with Langwell and Braemore establishments has been £12,393, 10s. 4d., and every penny of this sum which could reasonably be expended in the north of Scotland has been so expended, Caithness receiving £4867, 8s. 11d. of that amount.

In connection with the game department I find that the cost incurred is a little over £2000 a year. All meal and other feeding stuffs required for the dogs are purchased in the county. No game, except in an uncommonly good season, is ever sold, and this is only done to prevent waste. The greater part of the deer killed, and the rabbits shot, are given away to the people in the district.

In my humble opinion the people of Caithness, and especially those on the Duke's estates, are very much better off with Langwell and Braemore under deer than they would be were it under sheep or otherwise. A much larger number of people are employed on the estates than there would be if it were not a sporting property.

On Langwell and Braemore alone we employ regularly, over and above gamekeepers, four gardeners, twenty-three labourers, four joiners, three masons, six farm labourers, one shepherd, two grooms, and one cowman, and their average wages can be taken at 3s. a day. I do not hesitate to say that it would make a difference to the county of over £10,000 a year if the sporting interests of Langwell and Braemore were seriously interfered with. The rateable value would very much decrease, crofters would get little or no employment, and, if the place were let, I venture to state that no one would ever dream of spending the amount of money the Duke of Portland does in the district and on his properties generally—money expended not on sport alone, but money expended in such a manner that it finds its way into the pockets of all classes.

Swiney and Lybster.

These estates are almost entirely devoted to crofters. They extend to 8968 acres. The number of crofters is 162, and they have 1405 acres arable, and nearly 400 acres of pasture, not to mention the common ground, which extends to over 3000 acres. There are four farms on this property, the rentals of which are £40, £80, £87 and £100, and having from 60 acres to 150 acres of arable land. The crofters' holdings may be taken as having on an average 9 acres of arable, and the average rents will be about £5, 10s.

The Crofters Commission recently fixed the fair rents of crofts on these properties, but even then the utmost difficulty is experienced in getting partial payments of a considerable number of the judicial rents.

To help to promote the fishing industry at Lybster, the Duke of Portland has expended on the harbour over £16,000, and the gross return obtained from the harbour is on an average £280 per annum, while it costs about £140 a year to keep it up.

Watten and Munsary.

We have here to deal with properties of quite a different character from the other parts of his Grace's estates. There is a large tract of arable and pasture land in, and independent of the hill ground, which is occupied by six crofters and nine farmers. The crofters occupy about 100 acres, and the remainder is divided into nine farms, varying in size from 50 acres arable to 1140 acres arable, with hill and pasture land attached, the rental of the farms being £1549, 12s. 8d. for 1800 acres arable and 7715 acres hill; the crofters paying £66, 16s. 3d. for 51 acres arable, 53 acres hill pasture and some moorland. This, however, includes the rents of joiner's shop, meal-mill and smithy. The number of heads of families employed on the farms is thirty-five to forty, so I am informed by one of the tenants, viz., Mr John Davidson, Old Hall, Watten.

Wick.
Joseph Harling Turner.

(Signed) J. Harling Turner.

22,220. *Mr Sutherland.*—Are we to have an opportunity of seeing you at a future time?—Certainly, if you so desire, I shall be very pleased.

22,221. It would take me half an hour to go over the whole of that long statement?—I should be delighted to give you any chance of cross-examination that you may deem necessary; we wish to give you the very fullest information.

22,222. I would like to say, in regard to the information, that in my opinion you have given us already very complete information; you have given us information that no other agent has done as yet; you have given us a rental of the property, and given it in a way that we have never had before in similar cases. But your statement took 25 minutes to read, and I cannot keep all that in my memory.

22,223. *The Chairman.*—We will consider your statement carefully, and, of course, we will not invite you to come back from Kilmarnock to be examined upon it unless it is necessary.

22,224. *Mr Sutherland.*—In view of the contingency of your not being called again, as suggested by the Chairman, there are some things which I should certainly like to ask you at the present time, and I will not detain you long. For instance, you raised the general question as to the value to the community of deer forests *versus* occupation by the people, which is a question of wide policy, and one which opens up a great deal of debatable matter?—I quite understand that, but I am quite prepared to stand cross-examination upon that at any time.

22,225. *The Chairman.*—Of course, you quite understand that if any of our number think it advisable to put questions to you, you are to attend when called upon?—I shall attend, no matter whether I may have to come from Kilmarnock.

22,226. *Mr Sutherland.*—I will not put you to that trouble. You stated some historical matter which, of course, could not be of your own personal knowledge?—No.

22,227. You said there was a sheep stock of 3200 on Langwell before it was made into a deer forest, and you said the death-rate was very high?—Very high indeed.

22,228. I suppose you are aware, as a matter of history, that Langwell was selected out of the whole of the north of Scotland for the first experiment of rearing Cheviot sheep, in Sir John Sinclair's time?—I am not aware of that.

22,229. And it was supposed, at the time the experiment was made, that it was made in the most favourable place; it was a question at the time whether the experiment should be tried in the Highlands at all, and it astonished me to hear you state that the death-rate there was high. What is your authority for saying that the death-rate was abnormally high?—My authority is the old keeper, Donald Ross, who has been there for forty-five years, since the year 1848.

22,230. Do you know what the percentage of the death-rate was?—I believe Mr Ross considered, from the observations he made at the time and from his personal knowledge, that the mortality was from 15 to 22 per cent.

22,231. And you consider that a high mortality in a ewe stock?—Yes, I consider it a very high death-rate in a farm like Langwell.

22,232. You know the dangers to which a ewe stock is exposed which other stock has not to contend against,—there is lamb bearing, and the diseases of udders, as well as those connected with lactation?—Still, I think any sheep farmer would consider that a very high death-rate.

22,233. And was that one of the reasons why the sheep were cleared off and Langwell was turned into a deer forest?—No, I would admit at once that the Duke of Portland, when he purchased the property, did so with the object of turning it into a sporting estate.

22,234. Then you are probably aware that the Langwell sheep had the reputation of being the best in all Scotland?—I am not aware of that.

22,235. That they fetched the highest price, and had the best pedigree; is that not within your knowledge?—I rather think the Sandside sheep excelled them.

22,236. Well, they were as good at all events as any in Scotland. But you say it was not in consequence of the failure of sheep farming that the deer forest was created?—Donald Ross tells me that he lost 1000 sheep the first year out of his 3200.

22,237. There might have been an exceptional snowstorm that year. But you admit that it was not because it was a failure as a sheep farm that it was converted into a deer forest; the Duke of Portland bought it, you say, with that express purpose?—Most decidedly.

22,238. I can only take up a few points at random in your paper at the present time. You made certain statistical statements with regard to improvements on the estate. What did you say was the annual rental of the estate?—I think I said £5000 odds.

22,239. I mean of the whole of the Portland estates here,—£18,000, was it?—Adding the valued rental for the ground which the Duke occupies, I think it is about £9000.

22,240. Then you said there were certain sums expended on buildings. What buildings, might I ask, were these? Can you differentiate between any of the classes?—Every croft on Braemore, with one exception, has been entirely rebuilt at the Duke's expense.

22,241. How many crofts are there in Braemore?—Five.

22,242. Was the sum spent on Langwell House included in your total expenditure?—No, it is not.

22,243. You said £15,000 was spent on buildings. Would you refresh my memory as to the time during which that was spent?—Since 1880.

22,244. That includes the expenditure on Langwell House?—No, it does not, it is exclusive of that.

22,245. Do you refer to the present Duke of Portland?—I refer to the present Duke of Portland.

22,246. What were the other buildings?—The buildings on the whole estate have been overhauled.

22,247. What proportion of the £15,000, do you say, has been spent on holdings under £30 of rent?—I prefer not to answer that question just now, because, seeing I have only lately had charge of the Duke of Portland's property, I don't think it would be fair to myself or to you that I should answer it. I should think that in all probability the crofters got a larger proportion spent upon their holdings than the large farmers.

22,248. Larger absolutely, or in proportion to their holdings?—Larger in proportion to their rental, I mean; they got a very much larger proportion.

22,249. Their rental being small, and the rent of the others very large?—That is the case. I know of cases where we spent over £100 on a croft yielding a £2 rent.

22,250. Is that a representative case?—I know several cases,—I daresay I could get several cases where that has been done.

22,251. £100 spent on a crofter's house?—Yes, I know cases of that sort; on Braemore we spent £300, in some cases where we were not getting above £7 of rent. If I had an opportunity of going over the books I could give several similar cases.

22,252. But these are exceptional cases?—I am sorry to say that it is representative on the Duke of Portland's estate in one way.

22,253. Then that would mean that you would have an expenditure on crofters corresponding to the number of crofters on the estate multiplied by £100?—Oh no, I beg your pardon. The crofters on the estate have got a very large proportion of that £15,000 spent on their buildings.

22,254. Did they get half of it?—I should think in all probability they would get a half. Wick.

22255. You stated that there had been abatements amounting to over £3000, I think, given in the last thirteen years. Did I understand you to say that was for crofters only, or for all the farmers as well?—All the farmers too; but there also the crofters rank far more largely than the farmers, in proportion to their rentals. The large farm rents have been very well paid, but the crofters rents have not. Joseph Harling Turner.

22,256. Have you not had occasion to reduce the rents of the large farms?—Yes.

22,257. Or grant them abatements?—Yes.

22,258. And were the other reductions given to the crofters in consequence of the Crofters Act of 1886?—The Duke anticipated in many cases the Crofters Act.

22,259. By how many years?—I should say two or three years. In the case where crofters got their abatements from the Duke, they fared very much better than where they got them from the Crofters Commission.

22,260. Were the reductions given because of the Crofters Commission being appointed?—No, I am certainly of opinion that the Duke would have given them the abatements independently of the Crofters Act.

22,261. And the agreement in time was a mere coincidence?—They were getting abatements before the Crofters Act came into force. I think they got abatements from the time the Duke entered into possession of the property.

22,262. You also referred to the subscriptions and pensions, and to the encouragement of tweed-making, and you widened the scope of your statement when you said you thought the people of Caithness would be very much better with the land as a deer forest than otherwise?—I think so, most decidedly.

22,263. Is the hill of Morven in the property?—Yes, it is the highest point in the Duke's property.

22,264. You did not give us the expenses of the lawsuit regarding Morven in any of your figures?—No.

22,265. Have the people of Caithness access to Morven?—No.

22,266. Had they before?—No, they had not. They have access to Morven now on asking liberty to go, when it is not the stalking season.

22,267. Had they not access before?—They believed they had, but they found they had not.

22,268. But we had; I am speaking from personal experience?—Unfortunately the Court of Session thought differently.

22,269. The people did not go to the Court of Session?—Yes, the case went to the Court of Session.

22,270. But it was not the people of Caithness who took it to the Court of Session?—I am sorry to say that it was some of the people of Caithness who took it there.

22,271. Is that one instance of how they are better off with the land as a deer forest?—I leave that for you to judge.

22,272. You said that the assessable value would be decreased by this land being devoted to any other purpose than a deer forest?—Yes.

22,273. And that thereby, I suppose, local taxation would be increased?—Yes.

22,274. How long is it since the Berriedale deer forest came to pay any local taxation?—If you refer to the Valuation Roll, or to the Assessor, he will tell you at once.

22,275. You are, no doubt, aware that it is only quite recently that such land as the Berriedale deer forest has been assessed at all?—Of course I am talking about the future; I say it would affect taxation in the future.

22,276. That is to say, if land were made productive by its being brought into a state of agriculture, its value would be decreased?—Of course I deny the fact that Langwell could be brought into a state of agriculture.

22,277. And one of the reasons you assign is because

Wick. Joseph Harling Turner.

of its great elevation?—The principal part of the forest is at a great elevation.

22,278. You stated something about Brae-na-h-eaglais and Altbea and Wag [Uamhag]?—Yes.

22,279. You said something about the altitude of Brae-na-h-eaglais?—Yes.

22,280. Is it higher than Langwell House?—Oh, considerably. However, I have got the plan.

22,281. So have I; would you be astonished that, according to the plan, it is not so high?—I will take it at once off the plan; of course, the situations are entirely different. The one is on the strath, and the other is on the top of the hill.

22,282. And you are aware that very successful agriculture is carried on in the county of Caithness at a considerably higher altitude than Altbea?—I believe it is, but under different circumstances.

22,283. What are the circumstances?—For example, if there is a very heavy snowstorm at Brae-na-h-eaglais, the whole place is snowed up, and there is no means of access.

22,284. Is there not a road?—There is, but it is the private property of the Duke. It was made by the Duke for sporting purposes.

22,285. When was it made?—In 1863.

22,286. Would not that road serve as a means of communication, if we are talking of the future?—It might, but I should not say it would without a process of law something like the Morven case.

22,287. The policies of Langwell House are 400 feet above the sea; Altbea is about the same?—Excuse me, I think you are wrong; I think it is nearer 250 for Langwell House.

22,288. But the grounds are at 400 feet?—Of course, it was Langwell House that you were comparing.

22,289. An altitude of 400 feet so near the sea as Altbea would not be any obstacle to successful cultivation? Then you were kind enough to give us a great deal of statistical information, but you gave us no information concerning what we are here for?—I say we have 40,000 acres under deer.

22,290. But can you help us in any way by showing us the land that in your opinion is fit for the purposes contained in the terms of the remit which the Chairman read out?—I think that would be rather presumption on my part. I have given you all the information I could; I shall show you the land itself, and allow you to judge for yourselves whether it comes within the terms of the remit.

22,291. At present you are not in a position to tell us of any such land?—I certainly think there is none on this property.

22,292. And you are doubtless here (and I am not by any means blaming you for it) for the purpose of convincing us that there is none?—I hope to be able to show you that there is not; I hope you will find it so.

22,293. But without casting any reflections at all, you are here with the object of making an *ex parte* statement, and you have made an *ex parte* statement?—No, I do not agree with you. Mine is not a statement entirely from the landlord's point of view; it is a simple statement of facts. I say there are the books at your disposal, and there are the facts and statements which I have made, and you must judge for yourselves.

22,294. It is just an *ex parte* statement, however, in the same way as those on the other side are?—Of course, you may look upon it in that light.

22,295. *The Chairman.*—Has there been a large expenditure by the Duke of Portland upon crofters' houses since he came into the estate?—Most decidedly.

22,296. May we take it that a large number of crofters' houses have been repaired or reconstructed?—Yes.

22,297. And has that been done at the exclusive cost of the Duke?—In most cases it has, but I believe in some cases the Duke made an arrangement whereby he gave so much towards the repair, and the crofters paid the remainder. If you would allow me I would ask the ground officer at Swiney to put me right on that point. [*Mr George Gunn.*—His Grace has given from £5 to £7, £10, £13, and even £25 to tenants to help them to build on a croft, without charging a penny of interest.]

22,298. Is that money to be repaid?—I believe that, should the crofters leave their holdings, this money will be withheld from any melioration.

22,299. As a question of melioration?—Yes.

22,300. But were the improvements made on crofters' buildings by the Duke done in many cases without any raising of the rent? [*Witness*]. Most decidedly they were.

22,301. In every case?—I won't say in every case; but, generally speaking, the rent of the improved croft is to-day lower than it was at the time when the improvements were carried out.

22,302. And when the improvements were made, no addition was made to the rent?—In most cases it was not. [*Mr Gunn.*—None whatever.]

22,303. The reductions made by the Crofters Commission were trifling in comparison to the reductions made on other estates in the county?—That is so.

22,304. Comparing, for example, the Portland estates with the estate of Clyth?—I believe that is the case.

22,305. You say that £1647, 17s. is expended per annum by the Duke on pensions. What classes of people get these pensions?—There is a man here, for example, an old servant, who has £100 a year of a pension. They are given to all the old workmen who have been constantly employed on the estates.

22,306. Pensioners are those who had some employment on the estate?—Yes. There are plenty of old men on the estate just now getting 3s. a day, who anywhere else would not get 6d.

22,307. I am very much in the position in which Mr Sutherland feels himself, that your statement requires farther consideration at our hands; and we take your assurance that you will attend again if called upon?—Most decidedly.

22,308. *Mr Hector Sutherland.*—Would you kindly explain to the Commission the facts concerning the alleged "evictions" of Braemore?—In the year 1818, according to a Report I have here, there were fourteen tenants on Braemore. They occupied the following places:—Braeval, now occupied by one of the keepers; Corriehoich was under the same tenant as Braeval; there was Achnahavish, which is still occupied as a croft; Achinellet, still occupied as a croft; Oldinellet, still occupied as a croft; Brecklett, now part of the farm of Braemore; and Cairnfin, also part of the same farm,—there were two tenants in Cairnfin. Then there was Abbey,—I don't know about that; there was West Cairnfin, and Cairnfin again, and Clashbuy, these are in Corriehoich. There were fourteen tenants in Braemore in the year 1818, and now there are five tenants and the Duke's two keepers and Mr Mackay.

22,309. *Mr Maccallum.*—I think you stated that there were some arrears of crofters' rents on this estate. May I ask you whether any portion of these arrears arises upon the fair rent that was fixed?—A very large proportion of the arrears due to the Duke of Portland at Lybster and Swiney is from those who went before the Crofters Commission.

22,310. *The Chairman.*—I understand that that was the meaning of your statement?—That is so.

22,311. *Mr Sutherland.*—Was that owing to the fact that the Crofters Commission reduced the rents in less proportion than the Duke of Portland?—It is owing to the fact that they think they are still too dear.

22,312. You said something in your paper about Achnacraig and Badbea, and the holding of Joseph Grant; you said there were evictions there, I think?—Not evictions.

22,313. Well, a restriction of the holding. I think you said it was added to a farm?—It was added to Ausdale.

22,314. Does that not rather look like giving unto him that hath?—You will see the ground yourself; I daresay you know it well, it is but a small portion altogether.

22,315. Would not that rather suggest that it should

Wick.
Joseph Harling Turner.

be added to the neighbouring croft?—I think you know the situation of Badbea.

22,316. Yes, and I think no person should ever have been on Badbea?—I think the same reasoning would apply at Achnacraig.

22,317. I don't think it is the most desirable way of improving the condition of the people to take away from them what they have?—That was done before 1845—eighteen years before 1845—and one can hardly tell what the reason was.

22,318. You said another holding at Badbea, that was left vacant, was never applied for?—That is true.

22,319. I would be astonished if any person did apply for it.—So would I.

22,320. But I think there was a suggestion that it ought to be given to new crofters?—I am very sure we would be only too pleased if we could do anything to help the condition of the crofters at Badbea.

[Adjourned.]

TWENTY-SECOND SITTING.

Thurso.

THURSO, September 4, 1893.

Present:—

David Brand, Esq., Advocate, Sheriff of Ayr, and Chairman of the Crofters Commission, *Chairman.*
Michael Hugh Shaw Stewart, Esq., M.P.
Angus Sutherland, Esq., M.P.
James Noel Muller Forsyth, Esq.
George Gordon, Esq.
William Mackenzie, Esq., *Secretary.*

Hugh Campbell, Blacksmith, Reay (60)—*examined.*

Hugh Campbell.

22,321. *The Chairman.*—Are you a crofter?—Crofter and blacksmith.

22,322. Your croft is on the estate of Murkle?—On the estate of Sandside.

22,323. Was your case dealt with by the Crofters Commission?—No.

22,324. You have a written document?—Yes.

22,325. Kindly read it.—'I have been appointed 'at a public meeting of the inhabitants of Sandside to give evidence before the Deer Forest Commission for 'that district of the parish of Reay, in the county of 'Caithness, from the Burn of Isauld on the east to the 'county march on the west, a distance of about four 'miles, and from the Atlantic Ocean on the north for 'about four miles southwards. About the beginning 'of this century this district contained upwards of 'thirty small holdings, with right of pasture over the 'area I have described. In 1804 two were evicted 'from Braekside; in 1808 eight were evicted from 'D'achow; in 1809 eight were evicted from Sartigal, 'Summeran and Achraskar; in 1815 ten were evicted 'from Fresgoe, and in 1820 one from Borlum, all for 'the purpose of the holdings being put under sheep. 'For fourteen of these provision was made by settling 'them in what is called the village of Reay. For eight 'provision was made on other parts of the estate of 'Sandside. The rest were accommodated on other 'neighbouring estates or emigrated to America or 'Australia. The great bulk of this district now forms 'part of the farm of Sandside, but there are still 'twenty-three crofters with holdings of half an acre 'upwards, their gross rent amounting to £112 odds. 'The grazing grounds extend to from 150 to 200 acres 'of links, with a croft added thereto by the present 'proprietor. The grazings are only available in summer 'and harvest.'

22,326. You mention some dates towards the commencement of this century and beyond your own recollection. May I ask how you obtained the information?—I obtained the information from a trustworthy old man who herded the crofters' cattle at that time; a man of the name of Alexander Sutherland.

Thurso.
Hugh Campbell.

22,327. He was a shepherd?—He herded their cattle, and he lived to within a few years ago.

22,328. He is dead now?—Yes, he is dead now.

22,329. Then, in your opinion, is there land within the limits you have mentioned suitable for crofter settlements?—Oh yes, there is plenty of ground outside the farm available for crofter settlements.

22,330. Which farm?—Outside the arable farm of Sandside.

22,331. Is all the land you have been referring us to grazing land?—Yes, it is all sheep grazing land except the crofts.

22,332. And that land, as I understand, was occupied, or parts of it, by these crofters?—Yes.

22,333. You were appointed, I think you mentioned in your paper, at a public meeting?—Yes.

22,334. Now was there a desire evinced at that meeting to have additional land?—Their desires are to have additional land, but still to keep possession of their present holdings.

22,335. Is the desire in the form of getting additional grazing land or getting land for new settlements?—Land for cultivation and with a right to a pasture.

22,336. Do you mean in addition to their present holdings, or as new holdings?—Present holdings; and outrun for their cattle in the winter time, as they are not privileged to have any grazings in the winter time.

22,337. They have no winter grazings?—No, they have no winter grazings in the district I represent.

22,338. How do they manage their stock in the winter?—They just tie them to the chain.

22,339. Has each of them got cattle?—Some have got one, and others have got two cows, and some have three or four.

22,340. Have they any sheep?—Some keep a few on their crofts.

22,341. And have you any horses?—Generally one pony, some have two.

22,342. Have you any stock yourself?—Yes, I have two cows and two horses.

22,343. Do you manage them in winter in the way you have described?—Yes.

22,344. You buy feeding for them?—Buy feeding for them. But one of the ponies is out with the gamekeeper in the shooting lodge, so we just winter one pony and two cows and a calf.

22,345. Which is your nearest village?—Reay.

22,346. And how far is your croft, for instance, from the village of Reay?—It is not a quarter of a mile.

22,347. All the land I think you have mentioned is low-lying, none at a great elevation?—No.

22,348. Is it easily accessible by road?—Yes.

22,349. There are roads throughout?—There is access by roads to all the crofts; there are various roads in the district.

22,350. How long have you been settled there?—I was born there.

22,351. You belong to that locality?—Yes.

22,352. Was your father a crofter there?—My father was a crofter and blacksmith in the village.

22,353. You have succeeded him in that?—Yes.

22,354. May I ask what number of crofters do you represent at present?—Twenty-three.

22,355. Are the holdings, which these tenants occupy, all small?—All small, except one who has from 80 or 90 acres.

22,356. Altogether?—Altogether, pasture and arable.

22,357. How much of that is arable?—As an approximation I would say about 30 or 40 acres arable.

22,358. But I suppose some of them are much smaller?—They are all smaller than that.

22,359. He has the largest?—He has the largest.

22,360. Are some of them very small?—Half an acre.

22,361. There are some as small as that?—Yes.

Thurso. — Hugh Campbell.

22,362. Did these tenants apply under the Crofters Act?—No, they made an amicable settlement with the proprietor.

22,363. The whole of them?—The whole of them.

22,364. And were their rents materially reduced?—They were reduced 3s. on the land and fifty per cent. on the grazings of the links.

22,365. *Mr Forsyth.*—I wish to put a few questions, first as to the crofters at Reay on the Sandside estate. Can you tell me what size of holdings these people aim at; is it a self-sustained holding that would occupy the whole time and be self-supporting, or a smaller class of holding?—Their wishes are to have self-sustaining crofts, but the condition in which they live in that part of the district is that they are generally employed by the proprietor, most of them say they would be content probably with 30 acre crofts; but they would suppose, to be independent and to work entirely on the croft, that 50 acres would be necessary for the existence of the crofter to live and move and have his being.

22,366. By 60 acres do you mean 60 acres including arable and pasture, the two together?—They said they would wish for pasture,—hill pasture for their cattle in the winter time.

22,367. But do you mean 60 acres arable?—Fifty acres arable, and what would be arranged by a judicial tribunal or by a valuator of hill pasture in connection with their crofts.

22,368. And what rent would you propose for such a farm as that probably,—of course, it can only be approximately,—say 60 acres arable, which is a comparatively large holding, with proportionate pasture?—Their wishes are that that rent should be fixed by a valuator.

22,369. You are not able to state any rent?—No, I am not able to state it; my knowledge of land, being a tradesman, is not so very advanced.

22,370. Then you are of opinion that a holding of that kind naturally would be self-supporting; it would be in fact a small farm?—Yes.

22,371. Then these 60 acres of arable, with proportionate grazing, would probably, as far as one can judge, be quite a considerable farm?—Yes, it would.

22,372. And it would take some capital, would it not, to commence?—It would.

22,373. Have you any ideas as to how the capital for such a holding could be provided?—Some of them are in circumstances to stock, others are not.

22,374. Then, you think some of these people at Reay, on the Sandside property, would be able to start a holding of such a kind?—With very few exceptions.

22,375. There are, I believe, a good many small farms here and there in Caithness?—Yes.

22,376. Do you know many farms of that size?—No, I know them in the west end of the county, but not in the east.

22,377. But about the Reay district?—Yes, I know about it.

22,378. But you don't know this class of farm in the Reay district?—I know them in the Reay district, in the west end of the county, but I have no knowledge as to the east end. The one croft I mentioned is the only approximation.

22,379. You can give no idea of the amount of capital required for such a holding? It appears to me to be considerable.—No, I can give no idea of the amount of capital required.

22,380. You don't propose that all the holdings should be extended to that size, do you?—No.

22,381. Then what size of holding would you propose for men who would work otherwise and make use of the holding as a home and for a cow and so on?—Twenty acres would be quite sufficient, with their employment.

22,382. Twenty acres of arable?—Yes, with an outrun.

22,383. Then, even with 20 acres of arable and grazing, you think that the tenant of such a holding would require to work elsewhere in order to live comfortably?—Yes.

22,384. I am particular on this point, because these ideas are larger in the amount of acreage than have generally come before us. You don't think that a small holding of four or five acres of arable, with some pasture for one or two cows, would be a suitable kind of holding at all, do you?—No, it would not.

Thurso. — Hugh Campbell.

22,385. The holding should be of considerable size, enough for horses' labour, for working the arable land by horses?—Yes.

22,386. Then your 60 acre arable farm would be what I should call a pair horse farm?—Yes, 50 acres would require a pair of horses.

22,387. You aim at simply a pair horse farm?—A pair horse farm; a pair of horses doing nothing else but working on the farm.

22,388. Have you any ideas as to the stock that would be on such a farm in this country, how would it be worked? I am assuming outrun for sheep and cattle in addition to the 60 acres.—Well, as to my knowledge, I would be rather indefinite in giving an idea on that question.

22,389. You could not tell us as to the number of say cross or half-bred lambs or young cattle that could be turned off?—No, I am unable to speak on that point.

22,390. But your conclusion finally is this, that a crofting holding in this county should not have less than 20 acres of arable?—Twenty acres of arable.

22,391. *Mr Sutherland.*—What district particularly do you speak to; do you speak for the whole parish of Reay?—No, for the district I represent.

22,392. But that is the district of Reay?—The district of Reay, four miles from the sea upwards and four miles from the Isauld Burn to the county march with Sutherland.

22,393. Now, with regard to that definite area you have just now stated, could you give us an idea of how it is occupied at the present time from Isauld Burn westward to the Sutherland boundary?—Mostly by crofters and the links for grazings, and as you go to Drumholistan as part of the sheep farm, and the peat moss.

22,394. Give us an idea how it is distributed among the inhabitants at present?—Sandside farm forms the greater part of the arable land.

22,395. What is the area of Sandside farm?—I am sorry to say I cannot tell you the acreage. I had no access to the estate book.

22,396. Can you give me any idea of the number of families that live in that district you have referred to; are there a hundred families?—No.

22,397. Are there fifty families? (Consults list).—Somewhere about thirty or forty families.

22,398. Where do the bulk of them live?—The bulk of them live in the village of Reay.

22,399. How many families are outside of the village of Reay, have you any idea?—Four in Fresgoe, six in Milton; there will be about fifteen families outside the village.

22,400. How many of these fifteen families that are outside the village of Reay have got land?—The fishermen have got no land, and there are a good many cottars and workers about the village that have got no land,—not a great many—about ten.

22,401. To what figure does that take down your fifteen, taking these off?—There are some cottars that have just small pieces of land. One I know that has not got a quarter of an acre; the fishermen have got no land, but all the rest have got land. I have got twenty-five in my district, and they all have land but three fishermen that live in Fresgoe.

22,402. Now, coming to the village of Reay itself, how many families are there?—That have got no land?

22,403. Altogether?—Twelve.

22,404. How much land have they got between them?—I could not tell you that.

22,405. Have they got 200 acres?—Oh no.

22,406. These twelve families have not 200 acres, you think?—No, the largest crofter in it has nine acres.

22,407. And how is the remainder of the land outside the 200 acres held?—As a sheep farm.

22,408. In the occupation of how many people?—One.

22,409. Do you mean to say then that the whole of that district, with the exception of 200 acres of land, is in one holding? Is that the state of the matter?—Yes.

Thurso. Hugh Campbell.

22,410. Out of the whole district between the county boundary and the Isauld Burn, with the exception of 200 acres, the remainder is one holding, is that the case?—Yes.

22,411. Have you any idea of the acreage of that district you have referred to?—Approximately, I might give an idea.

22,412. Yes, I ask for no more?—As to the arable ground I cannot say, but—

22,413. The whole area?—The whole area is supposed to be about 30,000 acres.

22,414. And of that the twenty-four families have got 200 acres and the remainder is one holding, is that the case?—Yes.

22,415. That is the distribution of land in the district of Reay?—Yes.

22,416. Then you stated, with reference to how that state of matters was brought about, that some of the people who were dispossessed of the land when it was made into a sheep farm were provided for on that same estate and in the same neighbourhood, and that others went abroad. Have you any idea of the proportion of them that went abroad?—The smaller proportion went abroad.

22,417. Was there half, do you think?—One or two, some of them settled upon the neighbouring estates and others went to Shurrery.

22,418. And were there any holdings in Shurrery before then, can you inform us?—I rather think so.

22,419. They were put upon new holdings there, and how did they get on there?—They got on just as people get on generally after evictions, in a rather miserable condition.

22,420. Had they to make new homes?—They had, and to reclaim the bog.

22,421. And did they get any advance of capital to do that?—I am not sure of that.

22,422. Have you ever heard they did?—No, and I never heard they did not.

22,423. And they built houses and reclaimed land from a state of nature, did they?—Yes.

22,424. Then you stated that you got this information,—what you consider reliable information on this point,—from the man who herded their cattle?—In the Reay district.

22,425. How is that land used at present,—I am dealing with the same land, namely, the land the people were dispossesesd of, and which is now in one large holding,—is the rearing of cattle any part of the use to which that land is put at the present time; are cattle grazed upon that land now?—No, the crofters have no cattle there now.

22,426. But the present holder, does he rear cattle?—It is held as a sheep farm.

22,427. Cattle are not on it at all?—No, no crofters have cattle there at all.

22,428. So that land that was formerly devoted to the rearing of cattle is now devoted solely to the rearing of sheep?—Yes.

22,429. That is one of the changes that have taken place through this consolidation into large farms, is it?—Yes.

22,430. And there was some land that was under cultivation before on this large holding?—Yes.

22,431. Is it being cultivated now?—No, it is not cultivated now.

22,432. It is let out of cultivation?—It is let out of cultivation.

22,433. In your opinion, has the arable area on those holdings been largely decreased by the change?—Yes, the arable farms have been decreased by the change; the land is not in rotation now.

22,434. Then, not only was the change from cattle to sheep by the consolidation, but also from arable to waste land?—Arable to waste land.

22,435. That is one of the ways of 'improving' it. Then you state with regard to these holdings that one crofter had from 80 to 90 acres?—Yes, one crofter.

22,436. Is he a crofter?—He is a crofter, his rent does not extend to £30.

22,437. And others, you say, go down to half an acre?—To half an acre.

Thurso. Hugh Campbell

22,438. Then, with regard to the desire that exists in the district of Reay for more land, you said, I think, that those whom you represent here to-day are more anxious to have an extension of their present holdings than to migrate to new places?—Yes.

22,439. Was that desire in your opinion actuated by the fear that they would have to leave behind them the homes they have now?—No, not at all. Some who have good houses wish to retain them, and get land added.

22,440. The half-acre holdings?—No, not half-acre holdings, they have good houses in the village.

22,441. How much land have they there?—The largest crofter will have from nine acres down to half an acre, but there are tradesmen in the village.

22,442. How many of the eighteen families are tradesmen?—Five or six I would suppose in the village of Reay, but there is another township of Milton where farming occupies their time.

22,443. And you think that these people would like rather to get an extension of their present holdings?—Yes.

22,444. Well, is it for pasture, for increasing their pasture land?—Hill pasture for their cattle in the winter time.

22,445. And, in your opinion, there is plenty land adjacent to their holdings for that purpose?—Plenty.

22,446. Where?—There is a park attached to the crofters at a place they call Brackside, and there is plenty of green pasture outside of that.

22,447. Was it formerly under cultivation?—Yes; there is one place, Borlum, has been cultivated in the middle of last century as an arable farm.

22,448. It existed as an arable farm?—In the middle of last century.

22,449. And is it put to that purpose now?—No, it is a grazing farm.

22,450. A separate grazing farm?—Yes.

22,451. Who holds it now?—Mr Innes.

22,452. Is that the tenant of Sandside?—Yes.

22,453. It is in the one large holding?—Yes.

22,454. Which was formerly an arable farm?—Yes, in the middle of last century.

22,455. And that land is contiguous, or not very far away from the people of Milton?—Yes.

22,456. And would it, in your opinion, form a very convenient enlargement of their present holdings?—I think it should, in my opinion.

22,457. And it could be occupied by them to profit, you think?—It could.

22,458. And advantage?—And advantage.

22,459. That is your opinion?—Yes.

22,460. Now the fact that these people of Reay would not require to leave their present holdings would enable them to get an enlargement of holdings with less capital than if they were building new houses altogether?—Yes.

22,461. Did you ever know a crofter becoming a large farmer? Of course, I know perfectly well you don't attach any definite meaning to the word "crofter," but did you ever know a small tenant becoming a large tenant?—No, not a small tenant. Of course, Mr Innes was an innkeeper.

22,462. That is the present tenant of Sandside?—Yes.

22,463. But are there none of the large farmers of Caithness who were very much smaller farmers at one time?—Oh yes.

22,464. Do you know if ever there was any advance of money made to them from public sources to enable them to become larger farmers?—I am not aware of it.

22,465. And it is, in your opinion, somewhat common or not altogether uncommon that small tenants should become large tenants; you have known cases of that, haven't you?—Oh yes, it is quite natural, that, in the scale of life.

22,466. And you think that if one small tenant was enabled to become a large tenant without public advances of capital it should become more general, provided the land were there?—Yes, that is my opinion.

22,467. Now I wish to ask you a question with regard to the state of the large agricultural farms in

Thurso. — Hugh Campbell.

Caithness. Is it your opinion that, on these agricultural farms, the tendency is increasing to allow arable land to run out of cultivation?—That is the tendency.

22,468. Is it very marked of late years? — Very marked of late years.

22,469. What is your opinion of the cause of that? —My opinion of the cause of that is that capital is allowed too much to run in the soil of our country, and my opinion is that the only capital that a poor man possesses is his labour, and he is not allowed to place his labour, as his capital, on the soil of the country; that is my impression.

22,470. Do you think, then, that for the proper use of that land what we now require is to allow human labour to have access to it?—To be more general on God's heritage.

22,471. And is it your opinion that that labour is being excluded more and more every year? — Every year.

22,472. And that that is the reason why the land is allowed to run into a state of nature?—Yes, even the vegetative power is lacking, and the land itself is going back to its natural state.

22,473. And you are of opinion that the best use that could be made of that land is to allow the people access to that land?—Evidently.

22,474. And you are of opinion that they could cultivate it to advantage?—That is my impression.

22,475. *Mr Gordon.*—You mentioned that you spoke to the portion of the parish of Reay to the west of the Isauld Burn?—Yes.

22,476. Do you confine yourself to that portion of the parish?—Yes.

22,477. I want to put you right as to the extent, you know. You said that the ground you referred to extended back four miles from the south?—Four miles southward from the sea, from the Atlantic Ocean.

22,478. And four miles eastward from the county march. Well, four times four are 16, and 16 square miles are only 10,000 acres, not 30,000?—I beg your pardon.

22,479. You referred to the whole Shurrery farm, I think?—Yes, I did.

22,480. I merely wanted to put you right on that point. Now, how many of the Reay crofters do you think would like to have 50 acres?—Only two, in that part of the Reay village, but in the Milton district there are other two.

22,481. Well, four times 50 is 200. Can you tell me where they would get 200 acres arable land in that quarter?—It could be got about Borlum, but that would affect materially the farm.

22,482. That is to say the 200 acres would have to be taken out of Borlum before you could get that extent?—Yes.

22,483. Would not taking the 200 acres leave other 16 crofters without land?—Yes.

22,484. Now how are we to get that? We must try and reduce these statements to practice?—That problem could not be solved.

22,485. There is the farm of Sandside and the farm of Borlum, but as far as I am aware we are not supposed to take these arable lands. [*Mr Sutherland.* —Borlum is not arable.]

22,486. Borlum is arable certainly. The difficulty is to get the extent of land within reasonable distance of the crofts, do you see?—Yes.

22,487. Now can you tell us how many of the people get employment from the proprietor there; how many of the 8 crofters? How many crofters are there in Milton, 6 or 8?—Six or 8.

22,488. And there are 14 in Reay, that will be 22; there are 6 tradesmen, that leaves 16 crofters. Now, how many of the 16 crofters get employment from the proprietor?—They are mostly all employed, more or less. There are 3 crofters who get no employment.

22,489. You see that evidently there is a difficulty of getting the land which you suggest should be got; now what would be your opinion of the advisability of giving these 16 crofters additional grazing lands which could be got and which all could participate in? How would that benefit them?—That would benefit them very much; that is their general desire.

Thurso. — Hugh Campbell.

22,490. They have 2 cows just now, most of them? —Their general desire is to get winter grazing for their cattle.

22,491. Now, suppose that the Commission was to recommend all the ground which is available for the grazings, would that not benefit them nearly as much as the arable would which we cannot get for them?—Yes, that would be a benefit to them materially in the present circumstances.

22,492. So that each man, instead of having a great extent of arable land, should have 4 cows instead of 2, assuming that that could be done. Now I want to get your opinion, because although you are not a practical man you know very well what the people want. Now could you tell me what use the people would make of the remainder of the hill ground; what use could be made of that?—The desire of the crofters that I represent at Reay is for additional acreage to their holdings, and an outrun for their cattle, and that would seem to satisfy them at present.

22,493. You don't think they would like to go into a club stock of sheep?—No, I would not.

22,494. *Mr Sutherland.*—I wish to ask you as to Borlum farm. When do you say it was last cultivated? —The farmer cultivated some ground about two years ago.

22,495. How much of it?—Approximately, I would say about 30 acres.

22,496. Have you any idea of the extent of land that was formerly in cultivation on Borlum farm?— —No.

22,497. What part of it is the acreage you have first mentioned of the whole; is it a third of it?— About a third of it.

22,498. Do you know anything as to the intention of keeping it in rotation?—My impression would be that it was for the purpose of making better grass.

22,499. But before last year, how long was it without cultivation?—It was never cultivated by any farmer that was there, at least since the first of the century; it has not been in cultivation till Mr Innes cultivated it.

22,500. And is it the same crop that he has put in the whole?—Grass is the last crop, corn and turnip.

22,501. A regular rotation?—A regular rotation.

22,502. Last year?—Two years ago he put it in regular rotation.

22,503. But from the beginning of the present century down to last year it was out of cultivation?— Not last year, some four or five years ago. The last park was let out two years ago.

22,504. In this area you have referred to, how many holdings were there before the people were cleared out? —Borlum proper was one arable farm.

22,505. But you said that within this whole area there were thirty small holdings?—Yes, but I am referring to up the Isauld Burn.

22,506. I am referring to the same area all included now in the grazing farm?—Yes.

22,507. You said that before they were cleared out there was provision for thirty holdings?—Yes.

22,508. Are you not of opinion that, where people had thirty holdings before, you could find room for sixteen now?—Those sixteen are not generally upon the crofters' holdings; the crofters' holdings then composed the land up the Burn.

22,509. They are all upon the area of the large farmer now?—Yes, mostly.

22,510. And are you of opinion that arable land of 60 acres could not be found for sixteen families on all that area?—No, I think it could not.

22,511. What do you mean by arable land; is it land at present under cultivation?—Land that could be cultivated.

22,512. Well, what is your standard of arable land? —The number of acres?

22,513. If you were put on Shurrery, for instance, would you call the land under cultivation there arable

Thurso. Hugh Campbell.

land, at present under cultivation by the crofters; is it not arable?—Yes.

22,514. Is it not the fact that before they went there it was heather?—Yes, it had been reclaimed from the bog.

22,515. And could they not make arable land there just as well as in Shurrery?—Oh yes, there is a fine clay deposit on some parts of it.

22,516. It is a very fit subject, is it not, for making land of?—I should not like to give my opinion; my knowledge is not very extensive.

22,517. But have you seen land before it was cultivated and after it was cultivated?—Yes.

22,518. And was there a great difference?—A great difference.

22,519. Then with regard to the land that you could get adjacent to the people of Milton, how much stock do you think they would be anxious to get grazing for?—Well, I could not say, as I only spoke personally to them, not at a public meeting.

22,520. But at the present time, how many sheep have they got?—They have no sheep at all.

22,521. And how many cattle have they got?—There is one crofter has three cows, two horses, and some small stock, that is the largest.

22,522. How do they winter these?—There is another crofter that has three or four horses and a corresponding number of cattle.

22,523. How do they graze these cattle?—On the farm.

22,524. On the land?—Yes

22,525. So that practically they have little or no pasture, have they?—The rough bog pasture.

22,526. Bounding with the grazing farm?—Yes.

22,527. *Mr Gordon.*—Is there a regular farm steading at Borlum?—Yes.*

22,528. So that the farm could be cultivated as it was formerly?—It was cultivated by the late factor, Mr John Patterson, in his time, in the commencement of the century.

22,529. Have the people of Milton any grazing except this rough bog pasture?—They have the grazing of the links.

22,530. Of the green hill?—Yes.

22,531. *The Chairman.*—Suppose it were found that additional grazing were available, are you of opinion that there is old arable in the neighbourhood of that grazing also available and which could be dealt with as affording arable proportionally to the additional grazing?—No, it could not be dealt with in proportion to the grazing, because there is not enough of ground available for arable cultivation.

22,532. I am speaking of old arable?—No, there is not.

22,533. Then supposing suitable additional grazing could be got, you are of opinion that there is not old arable sufficient to form a proportional extension of the arable holdings?—Borlum is the only arable farm that could be cultivated extensively. The adjoining crofts where the people were settled in the first of the century are not so extensive as to correspond with the hill grazing.

22,534. Well, is there such an amount of old arable as would afford a proportional addition to a certain number of the crofters?—Yes.

22,535. How many crofters might be reasonably satisfied with the available old arable proportional to the extension of grazings which they might receive?—I have not got the mind of the district I represent; what they wanted was a small addition to their present crofts.

22,536. They are desirous not so much of new settlements as additions to their present settlements, either by arable and grazing or by one or other?—Yes.

22,537. You mentioned cottars?—Yes.

22,538. How many cottars are on that property?—Five.

22,539. They have no land?—Estate employment.

22,540. Are they all in estate employment?—Yes.

22,541. Regular?—Regular.

22,542. They live by that?—On the farm and on the estate.

22,543. And they depend on that for their livelihood, do they?—Yes. Thurso. Hugh Campbell.

22,544. Now you mentioned labourers, are there any labourers besides the cottars?—There are one or two labourers.

22,545. You said there were three fishermen at Fresgoe?—Three families.

22,546. Have these fishermen no land at all?—No.

22,547. They live by the sea?—Live by the sea.

22,548. Now have these fishermen living by the sea during the last few years been on the whole as well off or not so well off as their neighbours, the crofters?—They fished somewhat profitably since three years, but not so profitably the last year.

22,549. But during the last say five years upon the whole they have been getting on as well as the crofters or better?—Better.

22,550. And they depend for their livelihood on the sea?—They depend on the sea for their livelihood.

22,551. Are there any other families besides those at Fresgoe depending on the sea for their livelihood in that neighbourhood?—None.

22,552. You mentioned that a number of those you represented live in the village of Reay and in the village of Milton?—Yes.

22,553. Then are their houses separate from the land?—In Milton they adjoin their crofts; in Reay there are several patches of land which the crofters hold that are not joined one to another.

22,554. They don't live upon their holdings, but they live in the village?—Yes.

22,555. And how far is the land they cultivate from their village homes?—It surrounds the village; I would say the farthest away is not a quarter of a mile.

DONALD CAMPBELL, Reayside (81)—*examined.* Donald Campbell.

22,556. *The Chairman.*—The next name is Donald Campbell, Reayside, but I have a letter from him in these terms:—'I regret exceedingly that I am 'unable to be present to-day at the sitting of the 'Royal Commission. I have been very unwell for the 'last few days and quite unfit to appear. I herewith 'send my statement in writing.' Now the statement is in these terms:—*Evictions* from *Shurrery* in 1838.—Of thirty-one families resident in this township, a few got small holdings in a moss hag, considered unfit for carrying sheep; one or two had temporary arrangements made for them for a year or so; but five-sixths of them at least had to quit the estate, and a considerable number left the country. This township, with its arable land and pasture, was about seven miles in length, and four in breadth. *Brubster* evictions from 1837.—There were twenty-seven families evicted from this township. Dwellings to accommodate about one half of the evicted were erected in a quagmire which, by way of courtesy, I suppose has since been dubbed a village. Small lots of ground reclaimed from the inhospitable soil around these dismal dwellings by the exertions, and at the expense of the occupants, by-and-bye were added. Not a few of the twenty-seven families had, like their Shurrery neighbours, to seek an asylum in distant countries. *Shebster* 1839–40.—There were forty-two families evicted from here, and for four no provision at all was made by the estate. They had to exist as they best could elsewhere. From *Skaill* twenty-eight families were evicted, and I know of no provision made for any of them. From *Upper Dounreay* twenty-three; from *Lower Dounreay* seven; and from *Lybster* nine families were sent adrift without any special provision for them, that I know.

(Signed) Donald Campbell.

DONALD MACKAY, Buldoo, Reay (56)—*examined.* Donald Mackay.

22,557. *The Chairman.*—Are you appearing as a delegate?—Yes.

* The delegate has since written explaining that there was a steading at Borlum, but that there is not one now.

Thurso. — Donald Mackay.

22,558. For crofters on the estate of Murkle?—I have a small statement.

22,559. You are appearing as a delegate for crofters on the estate of Murkle?—Yes.

22,560. Are you under the Crofters Act?—No.

22,561. What is your rent?—£15.

22,562. But are you a crofter?—Yes.

22,563. You settled privately with the estate?—I am a leaseholder.

22,564. What is the duration of your lease?—Partly by my own desire and partly offered by the factor, nineteen years.

22,565. And these years are running?—Nearly come to an end.

22,566. When does your lease terminate?—In 1895.

22,567. Can you tell us the size of your holding?—About 15 acres, with some outrun.

22,568. How much of that is arable?—Fifteen acres.

22,569. And what is the extent of the outrun?—I have got the extent from Mr Tait about seventeen years ago, and I was told that it was taken from the Ordnance Survey, but at the time the Ordnance Survey was going on I had some improvements going on, and part of it was not at that time reclaimed that has since been. I am not sure whether that has come into the outrun or whether it is included in the arable.

22,570. Can you give us a general idea of the extent of your outrun according to your own idea?—I should say it is not four acres.

22,571. Now kindly read your statement—'At 'a meeting of crofters held in Reay Public School, 'on the 11th of August, I have been, with four 'others, appointed to give evidence before the Royal 'Commission as to pasture land within the parish of 'Reay. With one exception each have undertaken to 'bring before the notice of the Commission pasture land 'in their respective districts which may be suitable for 'small holdings. That which I wish to bring before 'your attention is the grazings that have been joined 'to the farm of Lower Dounreay on the east side, lying 'between the crofters' land in Buldoo and the seashore, 'bounded on the east by the farm of Wester Borrowston. The extent at present is about 200 acres. 'Before it became part of the farm of Lower Dounreay, 'thirty-four years ago, it was held as common pasture by 'seven tenants of the township of Buldoo, namely, George 'Sutherland, Angus Campbell, John Angus, Wm. 'Henderson, Alex. Cormack, Neil Henderson, and Alex. 'Mackay. There was another small croft in connection 'with a school taught by Mr Donald Macpherson, but 'he did not participate in the common grazing with 'the others, he having his cow grazed—probably by 'paying for it—on the neighbouring sheep pasture. 'With the exception of what formed this small croft, 'and the one occupied by Neil Henderson, the common 'pasture then extended to the Parliamentary road and 'included about 50 acres more than it now does. This 'was cut off when the farm of Lower Dounreay was let 'to the present tenant in 1859 by a ditch and fence 'being put in along the whole length of the pasture 'parallel with the road, at a distance of about 12 'chains. On this two new crofts were formed, occupied 'by tradesmen, and the rest was divided to the two 'tenants already on that side, and to one whose croft—'having since had two other crofts joined to it—was on 'the other side of the road. The same number of 'holdings have thus been kept up. Excluding the last 'holding referred to and the other two possessed by 'tradesmen, the one a farm about 60 acres, arable and 'pasture, and the others between 9 and 10 acres each, 'the extent of the other five is from 7 acres arable, with '5 of outrun, to about 20 acres. Two had their cases 'dealt with by the Crofters Commission upwards of 'three years ago. The one got his rent reduced from '£12 to £8, 5s. and the other from £7 to £5. Two are 'leaseholders, myself and another.'

(Signed) Donald Mackay.

22,572. What is the name of the other leaseholder?—Henry Henderson.

22,573. He holds for a term of years?—The same term of years as I do. Thurso. — Donald Mackay.

22,574. Is that in your own handwriting?—Yes.

22,575. Kindly sign it.

22,576. Some of my colleagues have seen this land, having gone personally over it.

22,577. *Mr Sutherland.*—You say you are speaking for a public meeting that was held in the schoolhouse?—No, I am speaking for those who occupy the district I represent.

22,578. The district of Buldoo?—Yes.

22,579. How many people are there?—Eight tenants.

22,580. Then you have had adequate means of knowing their opinions on this subject?—Yes.

22,581. You are a County Councillor?—I have been.

22,582. Are you a County Councillor now?—No.

22,583. But, apart from other opportunities, the fact of your having been a County Councillor enables you to know exactly what the opinions of the people are?—I do. I know generally the views of the people.

22,584. So that you speak with authority when you give the opinions of the people you represent here?—Yes.

22,585. You mentioned that you yourself had experience of reclaiming land in Caithness?—Yes, on my own croft.

22,586. How much of it have you yourself made into arable land?—About the half, nearly half.

22,587. Nearly half of the 15 acres?—Yes.

22,588. Over how long did your operations in reclaiming land extend?—It extended perhaps over a period of fifteen years, but at the same time I was a labourer on the neighbouring large farm, and in my spare hours and days I improved the croft.

22,589. Then it would be a croft of 7 acres when you went there first?—It might be above 7 acres.

22,590. A little over 7 acres, and you have made it into one of 15 acres of arable land?—Fifteen, if not more.

22,591. Did you do that without assistance from any person beyond your own labours?—No assistance whatever, except a few hundred tiles I got.

22,592. And this operation of reclaiming land—is it quite common round about you?—Quite common, so far as the extension of their holdings allows them to go.

22,593. Have you ever made any estimate of the amount of land they brought into cultivation in that way in your neighbourhood?—Well, I can't say as to that.

22,594. Have you any reason to suppose that the bulk of the arable land of Caithness was brought into cultivation in the same way as you are doing now?—I believe it has.

22,595. And the operation of reclaiming land is still going on?—Well, not so much in my locality, because they have no land to reclaim.

22,596. The outrun out of which they made the arable is now almost all used up?—Yes.

22,597. And is the amount of land available for reclamation limited now in another way, that is in respect of reclaiming it?—Well, with the exception of the land that I have described, the other portions came in as outrun to the large farms.

22,598. So that it is not you who have got the outrun, it is the large farmers, is it?—It is all in possession of large farmers.

22,599. I think the 200 acres that you referred to, and that you showed us, were before in the occupation of small holders?—As grazing land.

22,600. And now it is where?—Joined to the farm of Lower Dounreay.

22,601. And is there any desire or any indication on the part of the farmer of Lower Dounreay to reclaim that land?—Well, it has all been under the plough about thirty years ago, but it has been laid out as permanent pasture, and remains so.

22,602. Would such land as that require great improvement to make it arable?—Subsoil drains would do it.

22,603. But is that all the improvement it would require?—Yes, that is all, except buildings.

22,604. Do you know why it was taken from the

Thurso. Donald Mackay.

small holders and given to the large holder?—I don't know the reason.

22,605. But as a matter of fact it was?—It was.

22,606. And the result is that you, who are an improving tenant, have now got no land to improve, is that so?—Yes.

22,607. Is there any other place except this 200 acres that you would like to call our attention to as suitable for the purpose we have in view?—Well, there is another delegate here that represents another township in my neighbourhood; he has seen the pasture he is to describe occupied by the tenants at the time it was under cultivation.

22,608. But this part of the pasture you have called our attention to was at one time occupied as a common grazing by several small holders?—By the tenants of Buldoo.

22,609. And in your opinion could it be advantageously given to small holders again?—I see no difficulty whatever; it is adjoining their holdings.

22,610. And there is a desire on the part of the people to get access to it?—There is a general desire on the part of the people in my locality to have it.

22,611. *Mr Gordon.*—Do you think that these 200 acres could be reclaimed?—About one half, I should say, could be profitably cultivated.

21,612. Which half do you think?—The east part, on the low side next the shore.

22,613. You don't think the top of the hill would be suitable for arable land?—It would come in very suitable as pasture.

22,614. I quite agree with you, but I don't think it would be arable, the rocks are rather near the surface for that I am afraid. Did you build your own houses?—Partly.

22,615. *Mr Forsyth.*—What class of holding do you propose to put upon this land? Is it simply as an addition to the present holding that you look to these 200 acres or to new holdings?—In my opinion that would be preferable to an extension, because it would not be suitable for the holdings as they are at present divided.

22,616. You think the existing tenants at Buldoo could take up the whole of these 200 acres, Dounreay parks?—As common pasture.

22,617. Would you not extend your arable in that case?—There is no way to extend it, unless new holdings were formed on this pasture.

22,618. Then it is mainly a pasture addition that you want, a certain portion of these 200 acres?—That is the desire of the people whom I represent.

22,619. Could you handle so much pasture with the amount of arable you have got? Would you not have too much? Your holdings are not very large and the extent of pasture is large. Could you see your way to work that profitably along with your present holdings without going farther into arable cultivation?—To work it as arable, do you mean?

22,620. No, to work it as pasture?—Oh yes, most suitably.

22,621. Have you not in contemplation the addition to your arable holdings by taking in some portion, the best portion of it?—Of my present holding, do you mean?

22,622. Yes?—There is nothing to take in.

22,623. You consider the whole of this as pasture land solely?—Yes.

22,624. I am referring to the 200 acres of the Dounreay park. It is for pasture that you are looking to that or a portion of that?—Well, it could be made into holdings, but the desire of the people at the present is for pasture.

22,625. Have you any ideas as to how you would work this land; would you commence sheep on it?—No, I would not. There has never been sheep put on it by the tenants.

22,626. It would be cattle grazing?—Cattle and horses.

22,627. *The Chairman.*—That land (which I have not seen) is, I understand, at present part of the farm of Lower Dounreay?—Yes.

22,628. Is the land fenced?—Yes.

22,629. And it is all under grass?—All under grass.

22,630. Do you and those whom you represent feel a want of extension of grazing?—Greatly.

22,631. What is the extent of your present grazing?—We have no grazing whatever, except on the crofts.

22,632. None at all?—None at all.

22,633. Now have you some stock?—I have.

22,634. What stock have you?—Two cows, two calves, and two ponies. I don't always keep two ponies.

22,635. You have that at present?—Yes.

22,636. Have each of the crofters you represent some stock?—They have all stock except one of the tradesmen; he has cattle stock, but no horses.

22,637. Do each of these keep their stock entirely upon their own holdings?—They do.

22,638. And buy fodder in winter?—Usually, they do, both summer and winter. I have to do it myself very often, that is feeding stuff; in summer time when the grass fails.

22,639. And you express the opinion that the addition of this land, if it is available,—I don't know at present whether it is or not,—but the addition of this land, if available, would be a very great boon to those whom you represent?—It would.

22,640. You mentioned, I think, in answer to a previous question, that you had reclaimed the arable of your holding?—Yes.

22,641. Did you get assistance from the landlord?—I got about 300, or a few hundred, tiles for subsoil drains.

22,642. Was that the whole?—That was all.

22,643. How does that land you reclaimed compare in quality with the 200 acres we have been speaking of?—It compares pretty well, because the pasture I refer to is part of it good land and so is my holding, and some of it very bad, not worth cultivating.

22,644. Speaking generally, would you say that your land is better than the 200 acres, or of the same quality, or not so good?—I would say it was equal.

22,645. The same kind of land?—Generally.

22,646. Now, would a part of these 200 acres, a section of it, be easily reduced to rotation?—Quite easily.

22,647. And could grow the crops of the district?—Yes.

22,648. Corn, potatoes, barley, and turnips?—Yes.

22,649. Suppose that land available, would the desire of the tenants be to make a section of it arable and the rest grazing, or would it be all dealt with as grazing?—The desire would be to occupy it as grazing.

22,650. The whole of it?—The whole of it under present circumstances, because they could not occupy it otherwise.

22,651. They would not plough up a portion of it?—No, it would not suit.

22,652. Would it not suit you to plough up a bit of it?—No.

22,653. That block of land, as I understood you to say in answer to a question from Mr Sutherland, is the only block of land to which you are now referring?—Yes.

22,654. And another delegate is to tell us about another portion?—Yes.

22,655. Is it your opinion that there is no room with the 200 acres for new settlements?—Well, two holdings could be formed very well.

22,656. Would you be in favour of the formation of such holdings?—I would.

22,657. Or would you be in favour of the whole of that land, if it could be got, being devoted to the crofters who are at present there?—Well, in present circumstances I would be in favour of having it, as we are at present situated, as common pasture.

22,658. An extension of holdings, and no new settlements. You think that would be the better way?—Yes, in present circumstances, but it is not my opinion that it is the best.

22,659. You don't think that is the best?—I don't think it.

Thurso. —— Donald Mackay.

22,660. But you are presently expressing the opinion of those whom you represent?—Yes.

22,661. Was that subject discussed?—Yes, privately talked.

22,662. You had talked about it, and you are telling us the result of your conference?—Yes.

22,663. *Mr Peter Keith* (representing the Murkle estate).—When the parties of whom you have spoken occupied this part of Lower Dounreay, was it as subtenants under the then tenant Mr Paterson?—It was.

22,664. Then when Mr Paterson left that place in 1859, and when it was given to Mr Miller of Scrabster, was provision made for the then occupants of the pasture of which you have spoken?—None whatever.

22,665. Did they get the farm what is now Wester Borrowston?—They had it for a time by paying rent for it, but not as common pasture.

22,666. When they were removed from Lower Dounreay they were provided with pasture on Wester Borrowston at a fair rent, I suppose?—I could not say as to the rent.

22,667. In any case they were provided with pasture?—Yes. The pasture here referred to extended to about 300 acres, was let from year to year to the crofters in Buldoo and Achreamie, about 30 in number, at a rent of £80. In the course of a few years, the one half of it was joined to the farm of Borrowston, and the other, being utterly insufficient for the requirement of the people as pasture, was then offered to them in allotments, without dwellings—a few chains broad and about a mile long. This offer could not be accepted by anyone, the intention being evidently to bring it into cultivation for the purpose of being let as one farm, which afterwards proved to be the case.

22,668. Then you know the farm of Dounreay very well; there is a very good steading on the farm adapted for its present size, is there not?—I am not sure if there is.

22,669. Don't you know Mr Miller's farm very well, and isn't there a steading?—Yes.

22,670. Isn't there a steading suitable?—The houses are good, but having been built separately at separate times, they are somewhat more complicated than usual. [*The Chairman.*—Frequent additions you mean?—Yes.]

22,671. It is the style of architecture you are objecting to?—Convenience.

22,672. But is it a sufficiently commodious steading?—The accommodation is supposed to be sufficient.

22,673. Then you speak of the 200 acres having been at one time under cultivation by Mr Miller of Scrabster?—It has not been in cultivation further than being once under the plough, except three fields.

22,674. And you are aware, of course, that Mr Miller is a practical farmer?—I believe he is.

22,675. And if he had found that he could have cultivated that farm to profit, a considerable time ago, he would have done so?—I am not sure. We have to cultivate land very much better than what he has thrown out of cultivation.

22,676. And if it would not pay to cultivate in former times, during the time Mr Miller broke it up, it would be impossible in present times to make it pay as cultivated land, I presume?—Not by crofters.

22,677. *The Chairman.*—How long is it since this land we are talking of was under the plough?—About thirty years.

22,678. You are able to say, speaking on your responsibility, that there has not been a plough through it for thirty years, is that so?—It is.

22,679. *Mr Sutherland.*—Was the farm steading, in your opinion, erected for an agricultural farm or for a grazing farm?—It has been erected for an arable farm; Lower Dounreay is a very old farm.

22,680. And this field you complain of is allowed to go out of cultivation?—Yes.

22,681. Then I think you mentioned,—I thought it was a slip of yours at the time,—that Mr Miller let out of cultivation worse land than you occupied; did you mean worse or better?—Better, I meant; it was a slip of mine.

22,682. You are decidedly of opinion that you are cultivating worse land that what has been let out of cultivation here?—Yes, I am. It is in my immediate neighbourhood, I may say adjoining to what I cultivate. Thurso. —— Donald Mackay.

22,683. *The Chairman.*—I forgot to ask you; you gave evidence before Lord Napier's Commission, I think, in 1883?—Yes.

22,684. And your evidence is reported in vol. iii. at p. 2394. You are the Donald Mackay, crofter, Bulldoo, age 46—it is ten years ago—who gave evidence before Lord Napier?—Yes.

22,685. And you may refer us, I suppose, to the evidence you then gave with regard to this place, at all events as to the matters you deal with in this statement?—So far as my memory will aid me.

22,686. *Mr Peter Keith.*—He spoke to the reclamations by the crofters. I was going to ask if a very considerable proportion, the great proportion of the arable land on Sir Robert's estate in Reay, has been reclaimed since 1859, and if any of that or almost any has been done by crofters?—Except on one large farm, Upper Dounreay.

22,687. Do you know the extent of that farm?—The extent, I think, is about 1080 acres arable and pasture.

22,688. That 1000 odd acres has been improved, and has any portion of that been done by crofters?—It had been in cultivation by crofters formerly.

22,689. *The Chairman.*—In old days?—In old days. I may say that I have had a list of 164 evicted crofters, all holding land, supplied to me by Alexander Sutherland, Reay Village, and William Henderson, Achreamie, both old men at the time, above eighty years of age, now dead, and also by Donald Henderson, Achreamie, partly supplied to him by his sister Isabella, also dead. The evictions were begun in the west end of the parish in about 1806, and were carried on till it reached the other end in 1846. Of that there have been on the farm of Lower Dounreay,—which at the time (1837) was a large farm—seven smaller holdings outside its then boundary. The farm now known as Upper Dounreay was wholly occupied by twenty-three separate tenants, and on what is within the bounds of the farm of Skaill at present, including Hallum, there were twenty-seven tenants, and seven in Lybster.

22,690. *The Chairman.*—And I may say that the evidence here agrees with the evidence I read from Donald Campbell, the old man of eighty-one, who says there were twenty-eight families evicted; you say twenty-seven?—Twenty-seven as far as I could make out. These farms were held at the time by John Paterson, who came into possession in 1837, and they began a system of eviction which was terminated in 1846, when the last one of the sixty-four was cleared off, and four shepherds with their flocks were put on the place. Then in 1859 the farm of Upper Dounreay was let,—what these twenty-three tenants occupied formerly was let to Mr Brown as one holding, and Mr Brown had reclaimed the rest, all that is now arable. That is, I think, what Mr Keith has referred to. That is the only large farm where the tenant has done most of the reclamation.

ROBERT MANSON, Achreamie, Reay (60) —*examined.* Robert Manson.

22,691. *The Chairman.*—Are you a crofter?—Yes.

22,692. What rent do you pay?—£14.

22,693. Was your case dealt with by the Crofters Commission?—No, I am under lease.

22,694. For a term of years?—Nineteen years.

22,695. And the lease is now current?—Yes.

22,696. What portion of land do you wish to invite our attention to?—Some additional grazing on Skaill and Ballie; I have no outrun.

22,697. There is a place on the map called Achreamie Moss, and there is the village or township of Achreamie. You live in the township, I suppose?—Yes.

22,698. How many crofters are there?—Seventeen or eighteen perhaps, or nineteen, I can't exactly say.

22,699. Under twenty?—Yes.

22,700. And are you appearing as a delegate on their behalf?—Yes.

22,701. Appointed at a meeting?—Yes.

22,702. What claim do they make?—For more pasture, more land.

22,703. Do they also make any claim with regard to arable land?—We are confined very sore, only three and four and five chains in breadth on our lots, and it is very narrow.

22,704. And you have no grazing?—No.

22,705. Have you any hill pasture?—None but what I get from other farmers.

22,706. And you pay them a grazing rent, I suppose?—No, I don't.

22,707. You just get it as a privilege?—Yes.

22,708. Is there land to which you can point us available for the object in view?—Yes.

22,709. Where is it?—There is plenty land on Skaill, where there were twenty-seven tenants now under one farm.

22,710. What is the name of the farm?—The farm of Skaill; I remember twenty-seven holdings there myself, twenty-four, and four on Hallum.

22,711. These are neighbouring farms, are they?—They lived wholly upon their crofts.

22,712. Does the land you refer to march with the Achreamie township?—Yes.

22,713. And is it grazing land?—Yes, we had 400 or 500 acres of grazing land, the hill pasture, in common. That was before the common was divided, before the Government took their claim off. Mr Sinclair of Forss, and Sir Robert Sinclair of Murkle, and the whole of the commons went together at that time in my young days and we had all that for grazing pasture.

22,714. Waste land for grazing?—Yes.

22,715. And after the commons were enclosed and the lands taken up, you had no longer access?—Evictions took place then in Mr John Paterson's day, and we were sent to a by-corner at Achreamie, so the land and pasture and all was taken from us at that time.

22,716. Do you ask our attention to any particular portion of the farm of Skaill?—No, just the grazing.

22,717. You wish us to look at the whole of it. Is it an arable farm or a grazing farm?—It is both grazing and arable.

22,718. What is the extent of the arable?—I could not be sure; it is some hundreds of acres.

22,719. And is Hallum also an arable farm?—Yes.

22,720. I have not seen so much of these neighbouring grounds as my colleagues here, and I would like if you could suggest to us any particular portion of either of these lands which you would like us either to look at or to look at again?—Oh no, if we get some more pasture.

22,721. But you said just now you were a delegate representing a number of the Achreamie crofters?—Yes.

22,722. Did you not converse among yourselves as to particular portions of land which you wished us to consider?—Oh yes, to get some pasture that is following the arable farm of Skaill for pasture for some of our cattle.

22,723. But you didn't fix your attention upon any particular portion?—Well, no.

22,724. Do you each keep stock?—Yes, I keep a few, but I am more obliged to other farmers than I am to my own croft.

22,725. *Mr Forsyth.*—Is there any grazing land not under rotation near your croft?—Oh yes, hundreds of acres.

22,726. What kind of land?—Good pasture ground; it is under sheep now.

22,727. Is that on Skaill?—Yes.

22,728. Do they ever crop this land you mention?—Oh yes.

22,729. Is there any land then that they don't crop that may be called waste land?—Oh, well, perhaps, there may be some of that amongst pasture land.

22,730. But there is not much land of that kind there, is there?—No.

22,731. *Mr Gordon.*—I don't think the witness understands. [*The Chairman.*—Mr Forsyth will put the question again.] Thurso.

22,732. *Mr Forsyth.*—Is all the land on Skaill farm cultivated?—No. Robert Manson.

22,733. Is there waste land there?—Yes.

22,734. What kind; is there much?—Sheep pasture, about 500 acres.

22,735. Is it fenced?—No. The boundaries of Skaill farm are fenced.

22,736. But this is not land that they crop?—Well, there were four crofters in the sheep pasture.*

22,737. I am not asking about crofters, I am asking whether the farmer of Skaill puts crop into this land which you are talking of, or does he ever plough it?—I am dull of hearing, sir, for one thing.

22,738. Do they plough this land, the farm of Skaill, this land you are speaking of? Has it been ploughed or wrought?—Yes, partly only, the four crofters cultivated it at one time.

22,739. Is it hill pasture?—Yes, and old arable.

22,740. They don't crop it?—No.

22,741. *Mr Sutherland.*—You stated that you had a right of common grazing before?—Yes.

22,742. And that that common was taken away from you?—Yes.

22,743. Is that the land you are speaking about?—Yes.

22,744. After it was taken away and divided in the way you mentioned, was it made into arable land; was it improved?—No.

22,745. It is now in the same state that it was then?—Yes.

22,746. And has it been so ever since?—Yes.

22,747. And is that the land you wish us to see?—Yes.

22,748. And that is the land that you think would be suitable for pasture for you now?—Yes.

22,749. Whom did you mean by the Government when you said that they got their share?—The Government that is coming in on Stempster ground.

22,750. Crown lands?—Crown lands.

22,751. And what did the Crown do with their share of the common?—They have it in the farm now.

22,752. What is the name of the farm?—Stempster.

22,753. Is the Crown the proprietor of that?—Yes.

22,754. Who is the tenant?—Mr Sinclair, merchant, Thurso.

22,755. Is it a large farm?—There are three or four pair of horses on.

22,756. Did the Crown get its share of the common when the common was divided?—Yes.

22,757. And did you pay rent to the Crown, to the Woods and Forests Department, or whoever managed it before for the grazing?—No.

22,758. They gave you no compensation for taking that away?—No.

22,759. *Mr Gordon.*—Is that ground that you say was divided what is called the Yellow Moss?—No.

22,760. It is farther to the north east?—Farther to the south east—Bailie ground and Stempster ground.

22,761. Stempster Hill?—Yes, the three grounds, before the marches were put in, were common.

22,762. Is there any hill pasture attached to the farm of Hallum?—Yes.

22,763. Where about?—Achagalla, down by the riverside.

22,764. That is not hill pasture, that is riverside pasture?—Well, that is all the pasture for Hallum.

22,765. The only pasture for Hallum is between the arable lands and the river?—Yes.

22,766. And the hill ground that you referred to, in answer to Mr Forsyth, is the ground upon the Stempster hill that was divided between the Crown and Skaill?—Yes.

22,767. Does any part of that Skaill pasture come down to the township of Achreamie?—The Achreamie and Skaill march.

22,768. It divides your ground from that part?—Yes.

22,769. *The Chairman.*—When was the common on which Stempster hill stands divided between the Crown

* Manson has since written 'that no part of it was cultivated since the crofters were removed about fifty years ago.'

Thurso.

Robert Manson.

and Hallum?—I think it was in the year 1843 or 1844.

22,770. Was that by a process in the Court of Session?—I am not sure.

22,771. Well, since then has the Crown remained owner of the farm of Stempster hill?—Yes.

22,772. Letting it to a tenant?—Yes.

22,773. Now how far is that from Achreamie?—It will be 1½ miles or 2 miles.

22,774. Is there a road to it?—No road, but in Skaill when we were evicted from it, we had this pasture.

22,775. Now Stempster hill is at present in the possession of Mr Sinclair?—Yes.

22,776. Is that the gentleman who is also or was tenant of the farm of Skelpick in Sutherlandshire?—Yes.

22,777. Now is that entirely a grazing farm?—No.

22,778. Partly arable?—Yes.

22,779. Is there a dwelling-house upon it?—Oh yes.

22,780. Does anybody live in it? Mr Sinclair lives in Thurso, I suppose?—His son lives there, as tenant on the farm.

22,781. Does he live upon the farm?—Yes.

22,782. Then there is a dwelling-house and a steading?—Yes.

22,783. Now do you know the extent of the farm?—No.

22,784. Is there land upon the farm of Stempster that would be available for an extension of grazings to the Achreamie crofters?—Oh yes, or for labouring, good ground.

22,785. Or for cultivation?—Yes.

22,786. Both?—Both. Better than some of the arable that is on the farm.

22,787. You mean there is old arable on Stempster hill or Stempster farm better suited for cultivation than land which is now under crop?—Yes, because there was a good deal that is now a hill and heather that was laboured once.

22,788. And could they labour it, in your opinion, again?—Yes.

22,789. *Mr Donald Macrae.*—How much arable land is in your present holding?—I am not sure exactly; about 33 or 34 acres that is now arable, but there were only 2½ acres on it.

22,790. That is what I was coming to. You have about 33 acres of arable land in your holding to-day?—Yes.

22,791. How many years have you been occupying this holding?—Well, my father occupied it in the year 1846.

22,792. That is forty-seven years your father and yourself have occupied it?—Yes.

22,793. How many acres of arable land were there when your father began to crop it?—2½ acres.

22,794. So between your father and yourself you reclaimed over 30 acres?—Yes.

22,795. How many of these do you think you reclaimed yourself?—I reclaimed the whole.

22,796. How many years did you take to reclaim these 30 acres?—It took me about nineteen years.

22,797. What was the first rent you paid?—£2.

22,798. And what is the rent under the present lease?—£14.

22,799. You took in 30 acres of old land that was never under crop before; did the landlord give you any help to take in those 30 acres?—No.

22,800. And do you know in this county, land that is waste to-day, that is, land that is used as grazing land to-day, and that is quite as good as the 30 acres that you have taken under crop?—Oh yes, and better. I have 17 acres that there is not 4 inches of soil on but rock.

22,801. And do you know much land in this county that is waste, or pasture land much better and much more suitable for taking under the plough than the land that you have taken under the plough?—I suppose the whole of it, for worse it cannot be, because I was sent to the worst that all the crofters were evicted to the useless land.

22,802. *Mr Peter Keith.*—Is it the case that the farm of Skaill, in so far as it adjoins your croft, is all under cultivation?—Yes, it is under cultivation now at the point where it adjoins my croft, but there is a road through the township leading to the pasture I have referred to.

Thurso.

Robert Manson.

22,803. And will you point out or explain exactly what pasture land on the farm of Skaill you consider available for holdings?—There is plenty of land.

22,804. Just specify where it is situated, and the extent of it?—Achains, Braeskiall, where the crofters were.*

22,805. That is on Yellow Moss?—Yes, fornent the Yellow Moss to the west.

22,806. How far is that from your present holding at Achreamie?—Perhaps a mile.

22,807. So that it is not suitable for holdings?—Oh no, I don't say for mine.

22,808. Can you give the extent of it?—No.

William Farquhar, Broubster, Reay (45) —*examined.*

William Farquhar.

22,809. *The Chairman.*—Are you a crofter or a leaseholder?—I am a leaseholder.

22,810. When does your lease expire?—In 1899.

22,811. Is it a nineteen years' lease?—Nineteen years' lease.

22,812. What rent do you pay?—£7, 10s.

22,813. Tell us, as nearly as you can, the extent of your arable and of your grazing?—The extent of my arable is about 7 acres, but the extent of the grazing I cannot exactly mention.

22,814. Is it less than that?—It is more than that. It may be about 70 or 80 acres, I suppose.

22,815. Are you the sole tenant of the 70 or 80 acres?—Well, yes, but there is a fence to be put up, but it is not up yet.

22,816. Meantime you are the sole tenant?—Yes. There were two tenants with about 140 acres of pasture, one of whom has died, and I have made an arrangement with Mr Tait, the factor, for a part of that pasture, where there is a fence to be put up now.

22,817. You are to get the half, and the other half is to go to somebody else?—It is let to another farmer.

22,818. Do you invite our attention to land in the neighbourhood which you think available?—There is plenty on the grazing farm of Broubster.

22,819. What is the name of the farmer?—It is in the hands of Sir Robert Sinclair.

22,820. And is there no one living upon it?—There are only shepherds living upon it.

22,821. But there is no farm tenant upon it?—No.

22,822. And is it an arable, or a grazing farm, or partly both?—It is a grazing farm.

22,823. Has it a stock upon it?—Yes.

22,824. What is the extent of the farm?—I think it will be about 6000 acres.

22,825. Marching with Broubster village, or near it?—Near to Broubster village.

22,826. Do you say that there is land there available for the extension of your grazing?—Not for the extension of my grazing, but there is plenty land there that is quite available for being occupied as holdings.

22,827. For settlements?—For settlements.

22,828. Are you here as a delegate?—I am here as a delegate.

22,829. From Broubster?—From Broubster.

22,830. And are the tenants, or some of the tenants, of Broubster, desirous of obtaining new settlements?—There is a desire amongst tenants in general for that.

22,831. But confine your attention just now to the Broubster tenants?—Well, there are only two or three in Broubster.

22,832. And do these two or three wish to leave their holdings and get new holdings?—Certainly they do.

22,833. Are their present holdings too small?—They are.

22,834. What is the average size of these tenants' holdings?—There are two joint-tenants, my brother and

* Manson, in correcting the proof of his evidence, states the lands he referred to thus:—'Achins and Braeskiall, having the arable farm of Skaill on the east; Baillie Pasture and Yellow Moss on the south; Shebster and Upper Dounereay from south-west to north-west; and the township of Achremie on the north.'

myself; we live upon the croft which is only 7 acres arable, that we got, that we reclaimed ourselves.

22,835. Is there anybody else that you speak of?—I have heard different people speak about it for enlargement of holdings.

22,836. In Broubster?—Yes, there are other two in Broubster.

22,837. Who are they?—Alexander Swanson and John Mackay.

22,838. And are you representing them?—I am not here specially sent by them to represent them, but I have been appointed to represent that district.

22,839. And in the district is there a strong desire felt to get additional land?—There are not very many, there are only eight or nine crofters in the district.

22,840. And do these crofters all wish new settlements?—No, they do not altogether wish new settlements.

22,841. What is it they wish?—Well, I could not say exactly.

22,842. I think you can if you just attend to my question. Do some of them wish to be transferred to new settlements, and some of them wish extension of grazing?—Well, there are some of them whose opinions I cannot represent, because there are some old people there who live there and wish to live there.

22,843. Who do not wish to be disturbed. How many do you represent?—Well, about three or four, I suppose.

22,844. Well, as to these three or four, are they anxious to flit or anxious to enlarge?—They speak in that form.

22,845. In what form?—That they would like to get holdings larger than those they have got.

22,846. Just tell me the names of those who are anxious to get new holdings larger than the old ones?—There are only two that I can say. There are two or three that I have been speaking to about it. There are two, that is myself and my brother.

22,847. But, except yourself and your brother, you are not able to say definitely that anyone wishes a new holding?—I cannot say definitely.

22,848. But you think, with regard to these others, that they desire to get extended grazing?—To my idea they do. They have spoken about that at different times.

22,849. Confining our attention for a moment to yourself and your brother, you and he, as I understand, want two new holdings?—Two new holdings.

22,850. And you think there is land available in the neighbourhood?—There is plenty of land available in the neighbourhood.

22,851. What extent of arable have you in view?—I have about 20 acres or 25 acres in view.

22,852. And what extent of grazing?—I could not say exactly, that would be as the case might be.

22,853. Suppose you had 25 acres arable, what extent of grazing would you like to apportion to that?—I should say about 200 acres of pasture.

22,854. And what stock would you desire to be able to keep on such a holding?—I would be desirous of keeping Highland stock on it.

22,855. Yes, but what amount of stock; in the first place take cows; how many cows?—I suppose seven or eight cows.

22,856. And their followers?—And their followers.

22,857. Any sheep?—Yes, about forty or fifty sheep.

22,858. Do you mean ewes?—Ewes or hoggs, according to the pasture that would be available.

22,859. And a pair of horses, I suppose?—A pair of horses.

22,860. I must ask you, would you and your brother be prepared to venture upon an undertaking of that kind, a croft of that size and having such a stock in view, without assistance?—With very little assistance.

22,861. Is the assistance so small that you would have no difficulty in obtaining it for yourself?—I cannot say that altogether.

22,862. But, however it might come, the assistance you require would be very little?—It would not be very much.

22,863. Well, I don't ask you particularly about it. But having got such assistance as you require, you would be quite ready to venture upon a holding of that kind, put up the buildings, fence the land, and proceed to its cultivation and to the stocking?—Yes.

22,864. And I suppose you would be able to begin with the stock you have?—So far.

22,865. And the implements?—Yes.

22,866. Your present rent is how much?—£7, 10s.

22,867. And what rent have you in view? I am not asking you to assess the rent of the new holding, but what I would ask you to do is,—you are paying at present a rent of £7, 10s.,—what rent do you think you could undertake to meet, assuming always that you have got value for your money?—My idea of that affair is, I would like the soil to be valued according to its quality by an impartial tribunal of practical agriculturists.

22,868. And such a rent you would be ready to pay?—Such a rent I would be ready to pay.

22,869. Can you point us to any particular portion of the farm you are speaking of which would be suitable for such a holding?—I could point to different parts.

22,870. Well, just mention them?—There is a croft in the landlord's own hands in the meantime.

22,871. What is the name of it?—The common name for it is Tut-Michidh.

22,872. Would that croft meet what you have in view?—About it.

22,873. It is now a part of the farm?—It is along with the farm.

22,874. And forms a part?—It is a part by itself.

22,875. It is worked along with the farm?—Yes.

22,876. Now do you invite attention to any other land except Broubster Farm?—There are different other lands of the same sort round about where I am that I could draw your attention to.

22,877. What lands are these?—[Witness reads statement.] 'The grazings of Broubster and Achvarasdale, 'the property of Sir R. C. Sinclair, and occupied by 'him as a grazing farm, from which carries a Cheviot 'ewe stock of about 1000. There are nine crofters 'and one cottar in Broubster, occupying between 50 to '55 acres of arable land and about 450 acres pasture. 'Shurrery—a portion of the Sandside Estate—the pro-'perty of Mr Pilkington, occupied by Mr Innes as a 'grazing, carries a hirsel of 600 ewes and 800 eild 'sheep. There are five crofters in Shurrery occupying 'about 30 acres arable land and about 240 acres 'pasture. Achater, Carriside, Achie, and Lamsdale, on 'the estate of Forss, in the parish of Reay, was once 'occupied by resident tenants, but has since a number 'of years been let to farmers as sheep runs. All the 'above grazings have been at one time occupied by 'crofters, and I think they could be occupied to advan-'tage in the future, if let out in holdings of say from '20 to 50 acres of arable land, with from 100 to 500 'acres of pasture, as the case might be, the rent to be 'adjusted according to the quality of the soil by an 'impartial tribunal of practical agriculturists. If the 'tenant is in possession of money to stock holdings still 'the better; but if not Government to advance a loan 'of money at as small an interest as possible, the stock 'and buildings to be security.'

(Signed) Wm. Farquhar.

22,878. *Mr Sutherland.*—I want to fully understand the position of Broubster. Broubster is partly on two estates, is it not,—the village of Broubster?—Not the village of Broubster.

22,879. The crofters' holdings there?—They are upon one side of the river, but the grazing farm is upon the other side of the river.

22,880. They are distinct and separate?—Yes.

22,881. How did so many people come to be in Broubster and so few round about?—The evictions.

22,882. Where did they come from?—From these lands held now as grazings.

22,883. What sort of land was it before these people where put upon it?—Where the village of Broubster is was a swamp.

22,884. Was there any of it reclaimed at all?—Some has been reclaimed.

Thurso. — William Farquhar.

22,885. When they were put there first was there any land under rotation of crops or fit for bearing crops?—Yes, there was.

22,886. Was there much?—I could not say exactly how much.

22,887. Has that area been increased within your memory then?—Yes, it has been increased.

22,888. What was the quality of the land that the people were given to improve there?—It was very poor quality, it was land about their holdings.

22,889. And it is still there?—It is still there.

22,890. You see the peat and the corn growing in the same field?—You see the peat and the corn growing in the same field.

22,891. Was that the nature of all the land they got there?—Not all the land they got; some of it had been formed into arable land before they got it.

22,892. How many families do you say there are there?—There are eight families of crofters.

22,893. How much land have they got?—About 50 acres, I suppose, or perhaps more; that is only an approximation.

22,894. Fifty acres of arable land among how many?—Among eight crofters.

22,895. And how much pasture have they?—I should say 400 to 500 acres, perhaps more or perhaps less.

22,896. Certain of them applied to the Crofters Commission, did they not?—There were some applied to the Crofters Commission.

22,897. Have you any recollection of how many?—The rents of three.

22,898. Do you know John Gunn, junior?—Yes, and John Gunn, senior, and John Mackay, those are the three that I refer to.

22,899. Well, they are credited in the Crofters Commission Report with 159 acres, with the fifth share of 159 acres, which, being divided, comes to 31 acres each. What 159 acres is that?—That is the 159 acres of pasture.

22,900. Yes, among five?—Yes.

22,901. Is that distinct from the others, or is five the number of holdings?—Five is the number of holdings; there are five participating in that 159 acres.

22,902. And is that all the pasture land that these five have got?—That is all the pasture land, I understand, that they have got.

22,903. Then I find that with the exception of one of them there is no one that has got outrun at all; neither John Gunn, junior, nor John Gunn, senior, have got any outrun, and the other, John Mackay, has got 1 rood 17 poles. Is that then the amount of land that the Broubster people have got?—Yes, I believe it is.

22,904. And what do you say was the extent of the holding by which they are surrounded?—The grazing farm?

22,905. Yes?—In what forms the grazing farm of Broubster, I suppose there are about 9000 acres.

22,906. And those lands that you referred to in answer to the Chairman's questions, are lands that you think would be very advantageously and profitably given to those miserable people there?—Certainly; they have been occupied before, and Mr Campbell's statement there will tell you the number of tenants that have been evicted from Broubster and Shurrery and Shebster.

22,907. Have you any opinion regarding the nature of the object that could be gained by shutting these people in there; why was it done, do you think?—The people were evicted for forming large sheep farms there.

22,908. And you think there would be no difficulty if the opportunity was given under reasonable conditions to get people to take holdings on this large farm?—I think there would not.

22,909. Then about the difficulties that would stand between, or that do in the estimation of some people, stand between the people and the land in the present time, do you think these could be easily overcome?—I think so.

22,910. You are aware, I suppose, that when the people were put off the good land on to the bad land?—They had to make a living.

22,911. They had to make a living; under worse circumstances than they were in before?—Certainly. Thurso. — William Farquhar.

22,912. And is it your opinion that, if they were put back from the bad land on to the good land, there would be less difficulty than before?—Certainly there would, that is my opinion.

22,913. And do you think it is a reasonable opinion?—I think it is that too; it is quite reasonable, I think,

22,914. And you think, then, that these people could with advantage to themselves and to the country?—And to the country.

22,915. Occupy a great deal of that land which is now waste?—Certainly.

22,916. And which you have indicated?—Yes.

22,917. *The Chairman.*—I see you are quite correct. Donald Campbell says there were twenty-seven families in Broubster, and thirty-one families in Shurrery, and these are two places that you ask our attention to, I think?—Yes.

22,918. You did not mention Shebster?—No, I don't mention Shebster. Donald Campbell was the delegate that was appointed, because he remembers the evictions and he was one of the evicted.

22,919. I rather take it so from his statement and from his age, eighty-one.

22,920. *To Mr Peter Keith.*—I was going to ask you this Mr Keith,—I cannot find these names on the map, I find Lambsdale. Do you admit that there were the old places mentioned at one time?—[*Mr Keith*] Lambsdale is on the estate of Forss.

22,921. I beg your pardon.

22,922. *Mr Peter Keith.*—What is your present farm stock. Have you a pair of horses?—Two ponies.

22,923. And how many cattle?—Two cows and some young cattle.

22,924. And how many sheep?—About twenty sheep.

22,925. What would be about the approximate cost, at present prices, of the stock which you would require for the holding that you have mentioned; seven cows, that is five more than you presently possess; what would be about the cost of these just now?—It would take me some time to make that out.

22,926. And you cannot tell just now the value of one of your cows right off?—Perhaps I could.

22,927. *The Chairman.*—That is not what he says; he is not going to give you the value of his cow?—It is not to give you the value of my stock I came here to-day.

22,928. *Mr Peter Keith.*—Is it with stock similar to what you have on your present place that you would stock your new holding if you got one?—Partly.

22,929. Have you formed no idea as to the cost of stocking the holding which you have spoken to just now?—I have an idea of that too.

22,930. What would be the approximate cost in addition to your present stock?—It would be about £150.

22,931. What houses would you require on a croft of this size, 25 acres arable and about 200 pasture?—I would just require the housing that would be suitable for such a holding.

22,932. You are a practical man, and you know what would be suitable. Tell me what you think would be suitable for such a croft?—That is quite difficult to describe just now.

22,933. You would require a dwelling-house?—Yes.

22,934. A stable?—A stable.

22,935. A byre?—Yes.

22,936. A barn?—Yes.

22,937. A cart shed?—Yes.

22,938. And a turnip shed. Now what would be the cost approximately of such a steading as that, have you any idea?—That is a different thing altogether.

22,939. No, it is not, if you are going to get a new holding?—It is not very likely I am going to make an estimate of that standing here.

22,940. Then you have formed no idea of that?—That altogether depends very much upon the locality and upon the means of access to the place.

22,941. But you speak of a particular place,

Thurso. William Farquhar.

Broubster, and talking into account that this croft of which you have spoken is to be given to you out of the farm of Broubster, what would be the cost there of erecting a house and steading suitable for the holding?—Well, I could not exactly say in the meantime.

22,942. But you mentioned, you know, that with very little assistance you could do the whole thing, yourself and your brother?—Yes.

22,943. Then you must have formed an idea of the total cost?—I have an idea of the total cost.

22,944. Give me that idea?—There are some places that there are houses upon already, and others where there are none.

22,945. But in the farm of Broubster, where there are no houses at all, where you would have to erect the whole steading from the foundation, I suppose £400 would be wanted to make that steading?—Less than that.

22,946. How much less?—I think £300 would do it whatever.

22,947. Of course you keep in view that any house and steading that you would erect there would have to be to the satisfaction of the sanitary authorities?—Certainly, it must be that now.

22,948. And, therefore, very much more expensive than was formerly occupied by crofters?—Yes, it would, but it is more permanent at the same time.

22,949. You are aware that in former times, when crofters occupied holdings, in many cases their stock and themselves entered at the same door?—Certainly, they did.

22,950. That would not be allowed now?—I am aware of all that, Mr Keith.

22,951. Then you would want to fence the place; what would fencing come to?—That is a different thing altogether.

22,952. It is part of the holding. What would you estimate the fencing?—We would need to see the ground first.

22,953. *The Chairman.*—I think his answer to that naturally is that he would require to see the precise *locus* before he could tell. One case might require very little fencing and another a great deal?—That is so.

22,954. *Mr Peter Keith.*—But he is speaking of the farm of Broubster, and he knows that very well.

22,955. *Mr Gordon.*—He spoke to this particular part of Broubster. [*Witness*].—I am not very particular about special parts, but I have mentioned one part.

22,956. *The Chairman.*—You mentioned this vacant croft, Tut-michidh.

22,957. *Mr Peter Keith.*—Is that croft that you spoke of presently in cultivation?—Part of it is, but the most of it is let out in grass.

22,958. Is there a steading on it?—There is a steading on it in the meantime.

22,959. Who occupied it last?—David Sutherland.

22,960. What is the name of it?—The old name it got was Tut-michidh.

22,961. *The Chairman.*—Has it a modern name?—I think it is modern enough for a Highland place.

22,962. *Mr Peter Keith.*—Was it ever occupied by Mr Miller as part of this farm of Broubster?—No, it was never occupied by Mr Miller.

22,963. It is no part of this farm of Broubster just now?—It is no part of the grazing farm.

22,964. Probably the proprietor would be perfectly willing to offer it to anyone who would give him a reasonable rent for it now. I understand the proprietor is perfectly prepared. It is no part of the farm of Broubster; it is a separate holding which he is quite willing to let to anyone who gives a fair rent. But you cannot give us any idea of the cost of fencing a new place on the farm of Broubster?—I cannot give a fair idea just now.

22,965. Then can you give any idea how much it would cost to drain it?—I can't do that either; it is not likely I could do that standing here. I would need to have some idea of what draining is required; some would require far less than others.

22,966. But on the average, how much would you put an acre for draining it?—I don't know; there is some land that require no drains, while others require drains as thick as—

Thurso. William Farquhar.

22,967. Then you have not given me any idea what the rent would be, keeping in view the farm of Broubster as an average.

22,968. *The Chairman.*—He answered that, that it would need to be settled by practical men?—Certainly. We know what it is to settle with factors and landlords already; the country at large knows that.

22,969. *Mr Sutherland.*—I wish to ask you a question with regard to this erecting of steadings. What was the size of the holdings that you recommended should be made?—In my statement it was from 20 to 50 acres arable.

22,970. Now, do you know, as a matter of fact, holdings of that size that have been made anywhere?—There are different cases.

22,971. Did you know of difficulties arising in these cases with regard to building steadings?—There might have been difficulties, but all these difficulties were overcome.

22,972. Did you know the tenants to put them up in any case?—For the most part the tenants had to put them up.

22,973. Did you ever know of their being valued for the tenant afterwards when he was leaving?—No.

22,974. Would you be surprised if they were valued at £400?—No, I would not.

22,975. They are worth that, I think?—I think that a good many of them are.

22,976. And did you ever know of any tenants leaving behind, without compensation, steadings upon holdings of that kind?—That has been a general thing.

22,977. You think that £400 on a 40 acre farm would be a very good thing for the tenant if he got compensation when he went out?—It would be a very great help.

22,978. Then, with regard to the holdings that people have in Broubster and other places, did they get anything like £400 when they were put into new places?—Never a penny that I know of, I never heard of them getting compensation.

22,979. Then when you came practically to put up a steading, wouldn't you do a great deal of the labour yourself?—A great deal.

22,980. You wouldn't employ engineers and lawyers to do it?—I never would; I never employed engineers and lawyers when I could.

22,981. You would save lawyers' fees?—Certainly.

22,982. That would make a considerable item in reducing the cost?—It would indeed.

22,983. You can also suggest other ways, no doubt, in which you would take away from the estimate made by Mr Keith, £400?—Oh, different ways.

22,984. I suppose he would be putting a money value upon things for which he has paid himself that you would not have to pay at all?—Certainly.

22,985. There is a great deal of labour that the tenant would do for himself if he got an opportunity?—A great deal. There are plenty tenants that have been known to build steadings and houses altogether.

22,986. *The Chairman.*—May I ask you this question, do you cultivate your present holding to a profit?—No, we don't cultivate it to a profit, because it is very poor soil; it is not worth cultivating. I have reclaimed it altogether from the swamp march.

22,987. Do you mean by that that it is not capable of cultivation to profit or that you are not able to cultivate it to profit owing to bad times?—Well, if I got good land I think I could cultivate it to profit with a reasonable rent.

22,988. But I am speaking of your present holding. Is the absence of profit due to the bad quality of the holding?—To the bad quality of the holding.

WILLIAM REID TAIT, Factor for Sir Robert C. Sinclair of Murkle (60)—*examined.*

William Reid Tait.

22,989. *The Chairman.*—You are factor on the estate of Murkle?—Yes.

Thurso. — William Reid Tait.

22,990. How many years?—Since 1859.

22,991. You have a written statement to submit to us?—Yes.

22,992. Kindly read it.—The estates of Sir Robert C. Sinclair of Murkle, Bart., in Caithness, lie in the parishes of Thurso, Olrig, Halkirk, and Reay.

Murkle Estate.—Nothing need be said about this estate, as it is wholly arable.

Dounreay and Brubster estates, in the parish of Reay.—The leases of these estates, which expired at Whitsunday 1859, were held by two principal tacksmen. Captain Macdonald, late of Sandside, held the farms of Isauld and Brubster, and the late Mr John Paterson held the whole of the Dounreay estate. Both tacksmen had a number of sub-tenants. The tacksmen quitted their holdings at the expiry of their leases, but all their sub-tenants remained upon their holdings. The tacksmen were succeeded by a fresh number of tenants under improving leases. The peculiarity of the removals here was that the rich tacksmen removed and the poor sub-tenants (characterised by some of themselves as slaves) were retained. In a statement lodged with Lord Napier's Commission in 1884 it is stated that £51,979 were expended upon reclamations and improvements under the new leases, and under my personal supervision. The principal reclamations were made upon the estate of Dounreay.

In carrying out these extensive reclamations and improvements, embracing the reclamation of upwards of 2000 acres of waste and green lands, there were no evictions made in clearing the way for improvements, The tacksmen simply disappeared from the scene, and the new tenants, along with the old sub-tenants, were my co-operators in reclaiming and improving.

It is worthy of note that in reclaiming so large an extent of waste and green land as 2000 acres, there was not an acre of it that required trenching, and the drainage was comparatively easy work.

Brubster Estate.—This is the only sheep farm properly so called upon Sir Robert's estates, and extends to about 5570 acres, carrying a Cheviot ewe stock of about 1000 ewes in two hirsels.

Some time before Whitsunday 1859, Mr Mitchell, late Provost of Dingwall, a man of large agricultural experience, was asked by the proprietor to report upon the practicability of improving his estates in Caithness. Mr Mitchell reported favourably. At a subsequent period, I was asked to visit the estates professionally; with Mr Mitchell's report in my hands, I made a careful survey of the estates, and agreed generally with Mr Mitchell's report as to the practicability of the proposed improvements. Brubster sheep farm was examined with more than ordinary care, as it was the desire on the part of the proprietor to make the most of all the estates, by way of reclamation and improvement, and of dividing them into suitably-sized farms. Mr Mitchell and myself were at one as to the impracticability of reclaiming and cultivating any portion of the waste and green lands of Brubster, with the exception of a few acres near the shepherd's house which might be cultivated if found necessary.

The land of Brubster is totally different from the land of Dounreay. The land of Brubster could not be reclaimed without trenching. To trench, drain and fence such land would have cost not less than £25 per acre, including the cost of houses, but not the cost of roads; and this for a 50-acre farm, would amount to £1250, representing a pure rent charge of £62, 10s. at 5 per cent. This was a moderate estimate considering what the Sutherlandshire reclamations cost.

It was, therefore, resolved to keep Brubster as a grazing farm, and it was then let to Mr Miller, now of Scrabster, along with the arable farm of Lower Dounreay. Mr Miller gave up Brubster at Whitsunday 1884, and it was taken over by the proprietor, and is now worked by him in conjunction with the two arable farms of Upper Dounreay and Skaill, embracing an arable acreage of about 1200 acres.

From all the experience I have had in connection with these reclamations, and in the close management of the farms now in Sir Robert's hands, I am still clearly of opinion that the waste and green lands of Brubster cannot be profitably reclaimed and cultivated by large or small tenants. The cost of necessary buildings alone, under sanitary inspection, settles the question, I think, beyond dispute. My estimate in 1859 was £25 per acre for reclamation, &c., and buildings, and the works cannot now be done for a much larger sum.

Thurso. — William Reid Tait.

Indeed, I may venture to say that every acre of Sir Robert's estates in Caithness, capable of profitable reclamation and cultivation, has been reclaimed, and is now cultivated more or less perfectly.

Within recent years, shepherd's houses have been erected on Brubster and Dounreay, each costing, exclusive of carriages, about £120. Houses of less accommodation than shepherd's houses would not be sanctioned by the sanitary inspector for crofters. This fact adds confirmation to my opinion as to the impracticability of extending the crofter or the small farm system, where the land has to be reclaimed and is destitute of buildings, and where a return for money expended by the proprietor is an absolute necessity in addition to the rent the land yields in its natural state.

(Signed) W. Reid Tait.

22,993. Have you signed that?—I have.

22,994. You say the estate of Murkle is wholly arable?—Yes, practically. Of course there are patches of land in pasture, but it is practically an arable estate.

22,995. Is the whole of that, except these patches, under cultivation?—All more or less; it is all under cultivation.

22,996. Is it all under rotation?—Yes, it is all under rotation so far as I know. Of course, the whole estate is an arable estate. For some time some of the fields may be longer out of cultivation than others.

22,997. Take the fields that have been the longest out of cultivation, how long have they so been?—I cannot say exactly, as I am not minutely acquainted with the different farms—may be from five to ten years.

22,998. How many farms are on the estate?—There are a considerable number; there are two large farms and a number of small ones,—forty-five in all. Of course there is a good deal of the land there that should not be in cultivation now.

22,999. There are forty-five farms altogether on the Murkle estate?—Yes. There are two portions of the Murkle estate; there is one portion in the parishes of Thurso and Olrig between here and Castletown, and the other is in the parish of Reay.

23,000. You are confining your attention to the Murkle estate between here and Castletown?—Yes.

23,001. What is the number of farms on the Murkle estate between here and Castletown?—Forty-five.

23,002. How many farms are on the other portion of the estate?—Fifty-seven.

23,003. Now, dealing first of all with the Murkle estate between here and Castletown, you say there are two large farms on that estate?—Yes.

23,004. What are the rents of these farms?—£590 for Murkle Mains, and the other, Broynach, £310.

23,005. What is the average rent of the smaller farms, or give me the highest and the lowest?—£87 the highest, and £1 the lowest.

23,006. That is including the crofter rents?—Yes.

23,007. But what are the highest and lowest rents of those tenants who are above the crofter limit of £30?—From £87 to £32.

23,008. Now, taking the farms on the other portion of the Murkle estate in the parish of Reay, you say there are fifty-seven. What are the rents of the two largest there?—The rent of the largest farm on the Dounreay portion of the estate, in the parish of Reay, is £552, 16s. 8d. and the next one is £540.

23,009. Now, to finish it, Mr Tait, what is the highest and lowest rent of the smaller farms of £30 and upwards?—From £86 to £34.

23,010. Dealing first of all with the estate towards Castletown, have there been considerable portions of arable land on these farms not under rotation for many years?—No, there are not.

23,011. It is all under either a long or a short rotation?—Yes.

23,012. What is the longest rotation?—I should think we might perhaps leave some of it out, four or five or ten years.

23,013. You are aware that there has been a considerable increase of late years in the extent of grazings upon farms formerly cultivated?—Yes.

23,014. Has that increase of grazing and decrease of land under rotation extended to the Murkle estate?—I don't know about the farmers, but I can speak now practically as to the farms in Sir Robert's own hands. I am quite satisfied that upon the farms of Dounreay and Skaill much of the land that was reclaimed from 1859 downwards must be practically let out for a time into pasture.

23,015. And that land has not been under rotation for a good many years?—It has been under rotation up till now; I now confirm the idea that much of the land in Caithness must necessarily at present prices go out of cultivation. It won't pay expenses and must get a rest.

23,016. And you apply that remark to the farms, specially, which have fallen into Sir Robert's own hands?—I do.

23,017. Now, how many farms has Sir Robert on his own hands on the estate towards Castletown?—None whatever.

23,018. Has he any in his own hands on the other portion of the estate?—Yes.

23,019. How many?—He has got three large farms and two small ones in his own hands in the parish of Reay.

23,020. And has arable land there been running into permanent pasture?—I intend running a considerable portion of the present arable land on the farms of Skaill and Upper Dounreay into permanent pasture, that is for a certain number of years.

23,021. It has been running for a number of years?—No, I intend that.

23,022. Owing to the difficulty of cultivation?—Owing to the price of produce and cattle and owing to the high expense of cultivating land.

23,023. You said there were 2000 acres that had been reclaimed. Was that on the estate of Murkle?—Mainly on the Dounreay estate, but there was a considerable reclamation made on moorland on the Mains Farm of Murkle, several hundred acres, perhaps 200 or something like that.

23,024. How is that land that was reclaimed being used now?—It is all in rotation.

23,025. Passing to the Broubster portion of Sir Robert's property, the sheep farm extends to 5570 acres?—Yes.

23,026. And you mentioned the carry, 1000, in two hirsels?—Yes.

23,027. What is the present stock?—About 1000 ewes and 300 or 400 gimmers.

23,028. And are there at present two hirsels?—Yes.

23,029. Would any portion of that land, in your opinion, be suitable for extension of crofters' grazings?—In my opinion it would not.

23,030. Why?—The expense in the first place of reclaiming land.

23,031. No, I am speaking of extension of grazing. Would any portion of that land, in your opinion, be suitable for the extension of crofters' grazing?—What crofters?

23,032. I am putting the abstract question?—Well, if the crofters were suitably placed, then, of course, it could be applied to that purpose.

23,033. And do you say there are no crofters in the neighbourhood?—There are none upon Sir Robert's estates, with the exception of the two that Mr Farquhar spoke about, Swanson and Gunn, and they are very small men paying very small rents.

23,034. What rents do they pay? Under £10?—Oh yes, £3 or £4 each. There is no crofting village abutting against the Broubster grazings, with the exception of Broubster village that has been spoken about, and there are only five crofters paying very small rents there, and I think they occupy about 18 acres of arable land divided amongst them. When I took charge of the property there were some twenty crofters there holding the same extent of land, and that has simply been consolidated. They still hold the same extent of arable land that was held then, and the same extent of pasture land.

23,035. Only it is held by five instead of twenty?—Precisely.

23,036. I suppose, however, that the land that is suitable for grazing by farmers would be suitable for extension of grazing to crofters if there were crofters there?—Yes. May I qualify that answer by a single expression that I don't think it would pay so well.

23,037. You think it would not be profitable whilst in the hands of a crofter?—No.

23,038. Why do you think so?—A grazing of that sort is subject, of course, to great losses of one kind or other. These losses, I think, would tell very seriously against the crofters.

23,039. More so than against the large farmer?—A man of capital is able to stand that. A man taking a grazing like Broubster is, of course, a man of capital, who is prepared to stand losses more or less.

23,040. Are the grazing farmers on the estates under your charge paying their way just now?—There is no grazing farm with the exception of Broubster, and that was given up by Mr Miller in 1884.

23,041. And is in the hands of the proprietor?—And is in the hands of the proprietor.

23,042. Did you endeavour to let the farm when Mr Miller gave up his tenancy?—It was advertised.

23,043. But it failed to find a tenant?—We did not get a suitable offer.

23,044. Now, on the Dounreay portion, what is the extent of it?—Upwards of 5000 acres altogether, exclusive of Broubster.

23,045. And what is the carry there?—The bulk of the Downreay estate proper is arable land.

23,046. Is there a stock of sheep upon the Dounreay portion?—Yes, along with cattle, there are between 400 and 500 ewes there on the farm of Upper Dounreay.

23,047. And what stock of cattle?—A large stock of polled cattle at present and a considerable stock of stirks; I am not prepared to give the details, but the place is fully stocked.

23,048. That is what I wanted to ask?—Fully stocked.

23,049. Have any applications been made to you of late years for land by small holders?—No, none.

23,050. *Mr Sutherland.*—I think your general conclusion was that for the purposes we have in view there is no land suitable on the Murkle estate?—No, I think not.

23,051. That was your general conclusion?—That is my conclusion.

23,052. I just then wish to ask a question or two with regard to the reasons which induced you to come to that conclusion. We could speak perhaps a little more directly if you had been kind enough to supply us with the areas of the various farms. Seeing there are so few of them, I don't think it would be much trouble?—I will have great pleasure in doing that.

23,053. You will perhaps kindly hand them in afterwards?—I will do that. Roughly speaking, I might say on Upper Dounreay, there are upwards of 1000 acres, of which 700 are under cultivation or under rotation more or less. Then upon the large farm of Skaill there are also nearly 1000 acres and upwards of 500 acres arable. The pasture land there I hold to be totally unsuitable for cultivation and reclamation. I hold that every inch there that can be profitably reclaimed and cultivated has been reclaimed and cultivated.

23,054. But in giving the reasons that led to the present distribution of the land, you gave us some historical details. How far back did that go?—To the year 1859.

23,055. Not before that?—No, I did not deal with anything before 1859, except stating that the whole of Dounreay and Broubster was let to two principal tacksmen and their sub-tenants.

Thurso. — William Reid Tait.

23,056. You could not give us any information, could you, as to how the land was held on the estate prior to 1859?—Well, it was held by two tenants, Captain Macdonald of Sandside and Mr John Paterson of Borlum.

23,057. But before that?—No, I could not. I think Captain Macdonald held Isauld and Broubster for two leases, but I am not quite sure.

23,058. Then you stated, as a general conclusion from some data you gave us, that the tacksmen had disappeared and the sub-tenants remained?—Yes.

23,059. By what process did that result come about?—The usual process, I suppose. The men went away and the others were allowed to remain.

23,060. The tacksmen were the men over whom the proprietor had control?—Yes, their leases had expired.

23,061. Had he no control over the sub-tenants?—They were entirely under the control of the principal tenant.

23,062. Then they were independent of the proprietor, were they?—They were independent of the proprietor so long as a principal tacksman held the ground.

23,063. So that, while he had the power of dispossessing the tacksman, he had no power to disposses the sub-tenant?—No, he had not.

23,064. That is a very important admission. Then they had a right to be there evidently, and are they there still?—Well, none have been evicted since 1859.

23,065. Ergo they must be there or their descendants?—Well, they are not all there. Death has been among them.

23,066. That leaves a hiatus which I cannot bridge. But at any rate the tacksmen, you say, have disappeared and the sub-tenants remained?—Yes.

23,067. Were the holdings as large during that time as they are now?—They are larger now, because I have gone on consolidating them whenever any of the crofters died without representatives. I don't wish to introduce another small crofter, and much prefer to add to another croft, making a respectable holding.

23,068. I think you gave us a very concrete example of that in the case of Broubster?—Yes.

23,069. I think you stated you found twenty tenants and left five?—Yes.

23,070. And the area is the same?—Yes, and there were none evicted.

23,071. Carrying that process on, where would you be in a few years?—You must deal with the thing practically.

23,072. And would it not be a reasonable thing to suppose that, instead of extending their holdings in that way, you should do it at the expense of the man who had 1000 acres.—No, I don't think it would be reasonable.

23,073. You take away from the man that hath not?—If you are going to break up Broubster farm that is a different thing altogether.

23,074. You think the first object must be to preserve intact the Broubster farm?—I don't say that is the first object. It is a question of money.

23,075. But, evidently, that is the result of the policy, even in your own case?—In what respect?

23,076. You found twenty tenants and left five?—No, we found twenty tenants in the Broubster village, not on the Broubster farm. None of these were evicted; they have died or left, and I think it is admitted on all hands, that it is good policy to consolidate these small crofts.

23,077. But extend the principle to the country, where would the population be?—But I am dealing with the estate of Murkle. Of course, I leave it to you to extend the principle as far as you care to.

23,078. You made this statement as a justification of a policy,—that you have enlarged (and you are entitled to credit to that extent) that you have enlarged the holdings of these people, but you have done it at the expense of the extermination of the people?—No, I did not exterminate the people.

23,079. But it has been done not by enlarging the boundaries out of huge holdings but by taking small holdings and adding them together?—No, it was not; it was by death; death came in and reaped his harvest; the people were not there, and the holdings thus emptied were added to the holdings which existed.

Thurso. — William Reid Tait.

23,080. But would it not be more reasonable to keep the twenty people there?—But I could not keep the twenty people there. They would not stop.

23,081. Certainly not, with restricted holdings?—It was not the restricted holdings that removed them. Death removed them.

23,082. Had you not the power to give them more land?—Yes, but—

23,083. And you did not do it?—They never asked it.

23,084. Then you stated that it was within your own experience that land was going out of cultivation in the county of Caithness or on the Murkle estate, and I think you expressed the opinion that it would require to do so more in future?—Yes, if things don't improve.

23,085. What class of farm had you in your mind when you made that statement?—I had Upper Dounreay.

23,086. Do you know any small holdings upon which land is going out of cultivation?—I know many small holdings where it is unprofitable to cultivate the land they are cultivating.

23,087. But, as a matter of fact, are they doing so?—Well, I cannot tell you. I think, as a rule, that the small crofts do not necessarily go out of cultivation in the same way; there is not the same scope for the thing.

23,088. In other words, they can farm more profitably than the larger farmers?—That I deny.

23,089. Is it not because of the way the large farmers carry on operations that they require to let the land go out of cultivation now?—That is not the question. The question you put was, can the large farmers or the small farmers cultivate the land most profitably.

23,090. Quite so?—I do not hold that the small farmers can cultivate their land more profitably than the large holders.

23,091. But, as a matter of fact, they are not allowing their land to go out of cultivation as the large farmers are doing?—I don't know what the other large farmers are doing, but my impression is that it will not be profitable farming to cultivate land that won't cover expenses, and land has been improved in Caithness and upon the estate of Dounreay that will not cover expenses.

23,092 But, taking human motives into account, is it not likely that if the small holder did not find it profitable he would not cultivate land?—They are telling me constantly it is not profitable.

23,093. Did you not hear the evidence of men reclaiming land from a state of nature?—Yes, I heard it.

23,094. You have no reason to doubt its veracity?—I am not doubting anyone's veracity.

23,095. You accept the statement?—Yes.

23,096. Well, then, while the large farmer is allowing the land to go out of cultivation, the small tenant is improving it?—I don't think the improvements are now going on in the way of reclamation.

23,097. I think it was admitted?—Except the reclamation of a small patch here and there, I don't know of any that is going on now.

23,098. I think you gave as a reason the land was allowed to go out of cultivation, that there was less price for stock now?—Less price for stock, and the cost of labour has gone up enormously.

23,099. Less price for corn?—Less price for corn, and cattle and sheep and the labour bill of the farmer has gone up.

23,100. Well, then, the alternative is, I suppose, to take to grazing?—To some extent, or for a time.

23,101. Wherein lies the difference if the price for corn has gone done and the price for cattle and sheep has gone down, what makes the difference then between the two cases? The product of land in a state of waste is sheep and cattle; the product of agricultural land is also that to a certain extent, plus corn. What makes the difference which makes it pay in the case of it going out of cultivation and not in the case of land under cultivation?—You can graze land a great deal cheaper than you can cultivate it.

23,102. Quite so; why?—Because you require fewer people.

23,103. Less labour?—Less labour.

23,104. It is the price of labour that makes the difference?—And then there is this to be taken into account, that in cultivation you can use a variety of implements in reducing manual labour and also have the whole arrangement for grazing.

23,105. That would lessen the cost of production then, wouldn't it?—I don't know.

23,106. If machinery would do what people were doing before?—But it is to increase production and lessen the cost that I talked about machinery.

23,107. But the important point, I think, is that the cost of labour makes the difference between the agricultural land and the grazing land?—No doubt of it.

23,108. Has it never occurred to your mind that the small occupier provides the labour himself and saves the money he would pay for it otherwise?—I don't see that.

23,109. You cannot expect a huge agricultural farmer to work the whole of his farm with his family?—He does not do so.

23,110. It is a physical impossibility?—The crofter just works as hard as the farm servant and has to keep on doing the same thing.

23,111. But he does not pay for it?—But he does pay for it.

23,112. Not in money?—He does pay for it all the same, because he has to pay for his food. You can't say he works for nothing.

23,113. But, as a matter of fact, he does?—No, he does not.

23,114. And he keeps his land in cultivation?—The land pays him for that.

23,115. But you admit?—I never admit that the small farmer labours for nothing.

23,116. Neither do I, he must have a profit on it?—Precisely so, and the big farmer has the same.

23,117. But he lets the land out of cultivation you say, and he means to do it more in future?—I don't know. He may leave it out of cultivation for a time, but that is a rotation, and the question is just whether it is a long rotation or a short one.

23,118. But you admit the general statement that land is going more out of cultivation?—I admit this, that probably it will be a long rotation instead of a short rotation. There are a series of rotations in agriculture, and it may be profitable, of course, to have a long rotation instead of a short one.

23,119. You stated as a difficulty in making small holdings that the houses would require to be better than they were in times past?—Yes, that is my experience.

23,120. You introduced the sanitary authorities?—I mentioned the sanitary authorities in respect of their regulation that they would not sanction houses of less accommodation for small farmers and farm servants than those I had erected for my shepherds.

23,121. Were there no sanitary arrangements in the old times?—I am not aware of any as to the erection of new cottages for small farmers or farm servants.

23,122. And it was left to a public body to step in and provide sanitary dwellings?—It was left to a public body to step in and provide a sanitary authority.

23,123. Did the landlord take no precautions before to have sanitation?—I think the usual precautions were perfectly patent to everybody.

23,124. But they were insufficient?—So the sanitary inspector holds.

23,125. And a public body had to step in to prevent it. You admit now that that is a benefit?—Well, I don't object to it.

23,126. Would it add considerably to the cost?—Enormously.

23,127. They don't insist upon small houses in rural places?—I am not aware exactly upon what they insist, but I have stated in my statement I don't think the sanitary inspector would pass a new house for a crofter with less accommodation than I have provided for our shepherds, which has cost each £120.

23,128. You think he would pass that?—I think he would, but I don't think he would pass anything less.

Thurso. — William Reid Tait.

23,129. But you are aware of the amount of that work that a crofter could perform himself on his own house?—If the crofter has to provide it, he must really pay for it in one shape or another. I don't understand how you imagine the crofter is going to work for nothing. I have never found them do that.

23,130. Don't you actually understand the question of opportunity; it is one thing to labour and another to get the opportunity of exercising it, and if a man is denied the opportunity of exercising his labour, what is the use of it?—I am not aware of very many crofters who are able to build houses.

23,131. We saw it all over the country?—No doubt, but these houses would not stand the inspection of a sanitary inspector now.

23,132. But I presume they were under the sanitary inspector when they were put up?—There have been none of them built since the sanitary inspector came into existence.

23,133. We saw them in course of erection?—I have not seen them.

23,134. Then you stated that you were compelled under certain circumstances to report to the proprietor when no more land could be profitably reclaimed. I did not catch exactly—it may be my fault, but the occasion slipped my memory upon which you made that report?—Well, in my opinion, there is no more land upon Sir Robert's estates capable of profitable reclamation and cultivation. I hold that all the land upon Sir Robert's estates capable of profitable reclamation and cultivation has been reclaimed already.

23,135. And I think you reported particularly that that was the case round about Broubster?—Since 1859 there was no land reclaimed or improved on the sheep farm of Broubster.

23,136. But what was the occasion upon which you, in conjunction with some other gentleman, made this report?—It was with the view of improving land on Broubster, but upon close examination we came to the conclusion that it would not be profitable for the proprietor to make any reclamation there.

23,137. Well, that being so, how does it come that the people are there?—You see there are no people upon the sheep farm of Broubster excepting shepherds.

23,138. Doesn't the sheep farm of Broubster bound with the crofters of Broubster?—Yes, but that is a separate thing altogether. You are dealing with the sheep farm of Broubster, I presume.

23,139. Well, if you reported that the land there was incapable of profitable occupation as cultivated land, how do the people come to be there?—Well, you see that is going back, you know, beyond the time I had to do with the estate, and, of course, the amount of cultivation there was really very small, and their rents very small.

23,140. The point of my question is this, why were there no steps taken to remove the people from this land that you reported to be unfit for cultivation, and put into better places in the estate?—We should have been very pleased indeed in 1859 if we could have got the Broubster people to come down to the estate of Dounreay and take small farms there. We should also have been extremely well pleased if we could have removed several tenants on the Murkle estate up to Dounreay, but we found in 1859, when making these arrangements, that it was perfectly impossible either to do the one or the other, and we had simply to deal then with the tenants that were sitting upon the Dounreay estate, leaving them as they were and improving the land that has been improved. I make this statement, and I mean all that it carries, that it was the desire of the proprietor in 1859 to reclaim and cultivate and bring into cultivation such land as we thought then was suitable for that purpose.

23,141. Well, I have only to say that your answer is, no doubt, perfectly intelligible from your point of view, but it does strike one that on land which you reported to be unfit for cultivation, in which I quite agree with you, that it is strange the people should be left there when there is better land to be got on extremely large holdings?—You see at that time the Broubster tenants were extremely poor and could not have taken any more.

23,142. So that you cannot help us in the inquiry into the subject that has been remitted to us?—I think I have helped you very considerably.

23,143. In telling us that there is no land?—No, in this way. I have told you here is the proprietor improving all the land capable of cultivation on his estate, cultivating it, and, of course, increasing the holdings and the extent of the arable acreage, and that seems to be the gist of the matter.

23,144. But you see our duty is to find land of such character, and your general statement is that you have no land of such a nature to show us?—I have not.

23,145. *Mr Gordon.*—Can you tell us the relative extent of your two hirsels?—The one is about 600.

23,146. I mean the area, not the number of sheep?—I have not got the area exactly, but I gave Mr Watson, I think, the boundaries on the map, and that can be very easily calculated.

23,147. Well, when you say that your inclination now is, from your experience, dealing with the land to leave out part of the land into pasture, you mean the worst land, not the best?—Certainly.

23,148. That is such portions of the land as you find or think should not have been originally reclaimed?—Quite.

23,149. And is your object to lessen the cost of cultivation, that is with regard to the expense of cropping?—Yes.

23,150. You find that you can rear sheep more profitably than you can grow corn?—Rear sheep and cattle more profitably than growing corn.

23,151. That is what you mean when you would recommend the land to go back into pasture?—Yes. Of course that land, I may explain, should be nursed and top-dressed so as to keep it in good pasture.

23,152. Could you give the Commission any information about this Skaill hill that we heard about? Is there any material portion of that hill belonging to the Crown?—I think there is a considerable proportion of it; but I can give you no reliable information about it.

23,153. How many proprietors were interested in the division of that common?—I really forget.

23,154. *Mr Sutherland.*—Is there a representative of the Crown in this locality, a Crown Agent?—I think Mr Mackay represents the Crown.

23,155. *Mr Gordon.*—I want to know how many people were interested in the division of this moss, this common; how many proprietors, had Forss estate anything to do with it?—I am not sure, but I think so, and the Sandside estate had.

23,156. *The Chairman.*—You are not able to speak definitely?—No. Sandside I know, because, of course, Shebster had to do with it. Sandside marches with the Dounreay estate and with Broubster partly, and, therefore, the march between the Shebster estate and the Broubster estate was settled when the commons were divided.

23,157. Was that under a decree of division?—Yes, a decree of division.

23,158. *Mr Donald Macrae.*—I understood Mr Tait to have said that it would pay better to give grazing land to a large farmer than to small tenants of the crofting class. In connection with that I should like to ask Mr Tait what was the rent of the big farm of Broubster when Mr Miller had it?—I can tell that Mr Miller's rent in 1859 was £425.

23,159. Was it after that £550?—It was £525 after that. Mr Miller had a lease at £425.

23,160. At £525?—Mr Miller entered at £425. He sat out a lease at that rent.

23,161. And did he sit under another lease at the higher rent?—Yes, he did for a portion of it.

23,162. What was that rent?—£525.

23,163. And was there money charged as interest along with that rent?—I think there was very little, without consulting the books.

23,164. Was the rent, between what you call rent and interest, amounting to £550 altogether under the second lease?—No, I don't think so.

23,165. But it was £525 without the interest?—Yes, I understand so.

23,166. Now, what rent is charged against that farm to-day; it is in the proprietor's hands?—You will see the valuation, £325.

23,167. I find that that represents a reduction of 40 per cent. on that farm?—Yes.

23,168. Now, are there other farms on this property under lease?—Yes.

23,169. And crofts?—Yes.

23,170. Is the witness Farquhar, who came before us, a crofter under lease?—Yes.

23,171. Did any of these small leaseholders get a reduction of rent?—I don't think Farquhar has got any reduction since he entered upon his lease.

23,172. My point is this, that this large farm of Broubster has been reduced in rent 40 per cent.; my question is, have any of the small holdings been reduced at the same scale? In the case of the small holdings many of them applied to the Crofters Commission.

23,173. But I speak of the small holdings under lease?—There have been reductions to some extent.

23,174. Has Farquhar got any reduction?—I am not aware that he has.

23,175. Could you mention any tenant holding under lease, any small tenant, who has got a reduction under that lease, a voluntary reduction?—Am I really bound to go into this question of telling about the private arrangement between Sir Robert Sinclair and his tenants?

23,176. I put these questions in their bearing upon the statement made by the witness that grazing lands paid better in the hands of big farmers than in the hands of small tenants. [*The Chairman.*—It has a bearing on that.]

23,177. I think so. And if he refuses to answer questions I have no objection whatever.

23,178. *The Chairman.*—I must tell you, Mr Tait, since you have appealed to the Commission, that I don't think you are bound to answer that question, but you may if you like?—What I object to, my lord, is this, I don't want to come here, and to go into the private management of Sir Robert Sinclair's estates.

23,179. *Mr Sutherland.*—Do you decline to answer the question?—I decline to answer the question.

23,180. *Mr Donald Macrae.*—I pass to another question, that is with regard to a statement made by the witness, that he embraced since 1859 the opportunity of adding to the small holdings of the crofter class, as opportunity offered, by the death of a neighbouring tenant?—Yes.

23,181. And that there were no evictions. Now, I refer to a man who was a tenant at one time in Broubster, a man of the name of George Macdonald. Has a tenant of that name been evicted since 1859?—George Macdonald left.

23,182. Was he evicted?—He was removed.

23,183. Was it by a process of law?—Well, really, I forget.

23,184. Might I ask Mr Tait what difference he makes between an eviction and a removal by a process of law?—There were reasons connected with Macdonald's removal.

23,185. *The Chairman.*—Was his an exceptional case?—His was an exceptional case.

23,186. *Mr Donald Macrae.*—Will Mr Tait admit that that was an eviction, reason or no reason, I am not concerned with the reason?—I simply say that that was a removal, but it was not a removal for the purpose of adding to a big farm.

23,187. *The Chairman.*—Mr Tait admits the man was removed, and he says it was done for exceptional reasons. I think that is an answer.

23,188. *Mr Donald Macrae.*—Might I ask now if another tenant of the name of Robert Sutherland was removed?—Yes.

23,189. Evicted?—He was removed.

23,190. By a process of law?—I am not aware. He also was removed for very exceptional circumstances.

23,191. *The Chairman.*—I think you can hardly pursue this further, Mr Macrae, because he has admitted that in these two cases there were removals? [*Mr Macrae.*—Yes, but another question arises out of this.]

hurso.

William eid Tait.

23,192. What is the question? [*Mr Macrae*].—The next question is this, What did you do with the lands of Robert Sutherland after you removed him? [*Witness*].—I relet them to another tenant from Achreamie.

23,193. *Mr Sutherland.*—As a separate holding?—As a separate holding.

23,194. *Mr Donald Macrae.*—What is the name of that tenant?—He was David Sutherland.

23,195. Was David Sutherland also removed from that holding?—He left and went to America.

23,196. And what did he do with that land?—It is now in the proprietor's hands; I should be very pleased to let it to-morrow.

23,197. No, but I am going to put a question, Mr Tait. Did you not in your evidence already state that it was your desire, as small holdings fell out, to let them to a neighbour, or to divide them among neighbouring tenants, with the view to enlarge their farms?—Yes.

23,198. Can you state the reason why you have not done it in this case?—There was no man really able to take that holding sitting alongside.

23,199. Except the laird?—Except the laird.

23,200. So poor, were they?—I did not say they were poor.

23,201. *Mr Peter Keith.*—I rather think you misapprehended Mr Sutherland's questions with regard to the tacksman and his relations with the sub-tenants. Mr Sutherland's question was, had the proprietor the power to remove the sub-tenants at the same time as he removed the principal tenant?—Oh, of course he had. I understood Mr Sutherland's question to be if the proprietor had the power to remove the sub-tenants during the currency of the tacksman's lease.

23,202. Well, I want to ask a question about that just now. Is it the case that the tacksman, under his lease, was bound not to remove any of the tenants from the farm?—That is distinctly stated in Captain Macdonald's lease.

23,203. And it was part of the conditions of his holding the farm as tacksman, that he would not remove any of the sub-tenants from the farm?—Yes.

23,204. So that neither the proprietor nor the tacksman really had the power to remove the sub-tenants during the currency of the tacksman's lease?—That is so.

23,205. But, on the expiry of the lease, he had the same power to remove the sub-tenants as to remove the principal tenants?—Not only that, but the principal tenant was bound to remove not only himself but also his sub-tenants.

23,206. But the proprietor could, if he desired, at the end of the lease, remove both principal tenant and sub-tenants?—Yes.

23,207. *Mr Sutherland.*—That was under an Act of Sederunt, was it?—No, but it was in respect of the expiry of the lease.

23,208. That was no statutory power at all; it was power derived from the Court of Session?—Very well.

23,209. *Mr Peter Keith.*—Was it not a condition of his lease, that on the expiry of the lease, he was bound to remove if required by the proprietor himself and his sub-tenants?—That is so.

23,210. But, in point of fact, the proprietor did not require the sub-tenants to leave?—That is so.

23,211. Are you aware that it is the case that several crofters and large farmers have reclaimed land that should never have been reclaimed?—Yes.

23,212. And you are also aware that it is only the best arable land that will pay at present the expense of cultivation?—I am quite aware of that fact.

xander clean.

SURGEON-GENERAL ALEXANDER MACLEAN, Thurso (61)—*examined.*

23,213. *The Chairman.*—You gave in a statement?—Yes, I have only come here just to present documentary evidence for the acceptance of the Commission, if the Commission chooses to accept of it. I have done my best for some years to get hold of reliable facts regarding the crofters, and I have gone to the very best sources, and I have given you there the facts. Thurso.

23,214. You gave in a number of papers?—Yes, and a covering letter. Alexander Maclean.

23,215. You say 'I have the honour to enclose 'herewith a statement by Mr Alexander Gunn.' Is Mr Gunn alive?—Yes, he is living now, and he is exceedingly disappointed that he could not be before the Commission on account of the refusal of the expenses; I understood it remained with the Commission to grant expenses, if necessary.

23,216. We have been obliged before, I must tell you, to decline to receive evidence tendered on behalf of a living man who could come himself. We had a case of that in Lochcarron where we were obliged to refuse to take Mr Manners's evidence. And if Mr Alexander Gunn is alive, I don't think we can take his evidence from you.—I have a letter from him now expressing his great disappointment at not having his expenses paid, which he understood the Secretary for Scotland allowed the Commission to do at its discretion.

23,217. No, the Secretary for Scotland does not, and we have no funds at our disposal to pay expenses, and very seldom indeed have we been asked to do so. I am afraid that, with every willingness to take evidence, we cannot take his statement, he being a living man?—It is very impartial, and the evidence is very important and specific. There has been no report like it before in Caithness.

23,218. I am not at all doubting its importance, but I am afraid we can hardly take you?—Very well, I want it, if possible, to be put amongst the Blue Book records of the Commission.

23,219. No, not unless we receive it?—His name is signed to it, attested by witnesses.

23,220. But we have not been in the habit of taking evidence from living people except from themselves?—Of course, it is in the discretion of the Commission, I presume, the taking or refusal. It is a very important matter.

23,221. I am very sorry Mr Gunn is not here?—I am very sorry too. I wrote one of the members of the Commission asking if the Commission would pay his expenses, and my friend on the Commission said he was sorry to say that the Commission were not in the habit of allowing such expenses.

23,222. We have no funds to do it?—Mr Gunn said he thought a question had been asked in the House of Commons and that the decision rested with the Commission.

23,223. Perhaps Mr Gunn could come to some other meeting of the Commission farther south?—Perhaps so.

23,224. He might do that to some place much easier of access from Glasgow than this is.—He says there is no man living who can point out the different holdings from which people were evicted in the Berriedale and Langwell districts but himself, except another man who is now too old, a man named James Sutherland, who is bedridden and cannot go, so that it is very important that this man's evidence should be got. I may say that I have tried for ten years to get evidence as to evictions in that part of the county and failed until March last.

23,225. I think we might possibly afford Mr Gunn an opportunity of appearing at some other place where we would be much nearer his residence than we are at present?—Thank you.

23,226. *Mr Wm. Mackay*, Factor for Freswick.—Might I ask if there will be notice given to the proprietors of these estates that such an examination will be held.

23,227. *The Chairman.*—Full and ample notice. [*To witness*]. Is there anything else in your statement than what purports to be evidence obtainable from Mr Gunn?—That is the only reliable evidence which I have ever seen in connection with those evictions. They began in the latter end of last century and the early years of the present.

23,228. But are there not other matters here in your paper which you desire to bring under our notice not depending on the knowledge of Mr Gunn?—Oh yes.

Thurso. — lexander laclean.

There are several documents. I also forward statements as to the evictions in the parish of Reay. 'Lybster; Forss, in parishes of Reay and Thurso, 63 'families, with 108 evictions from Langwell, sum total, '465.' But here are other ones with reference to Reay and Strathmore, Lybster, Forse and other parishes, and also a separate return from the facts furnished by Captain Gunn.

23,229. Who is Captain Gunn?—He was before the Commission in Wick.—Captain Alexander Gunn. That is a separate thing. It is really included in the parish of Reay.

23,230. Was that information you have got from Captain Gunn?—Yes.

23,231. *Mr Sutherland.*—With regard to what place?—With regard to Strathmore and Achlybster. It is specific information.

23,232. *Mr Shaw Stewart.*—He has already been before us?—Oh yes.

23,233. *The Chairman.*—And he gave his evidence pretty fully?—Yes, I think he did. It does not matter as to this, but I will leave it. These are what I have endeavoured to make reliable as historical records, as I have taken an interest in the subject for some years.

23,234. It is important if we could only have it from the witnesses themselves?—There is one here, Reay, I wish to point out it to you. The man is dead who gave it to me, David Campbell, Shurrery. He was one of the men evicted. I got this return in 1886.

23,235. You are quite at liberty to give evidence with regard to a deceased man?—He is dead, but it is simply corroborative evidence we had brought forward this morning, and it is more detailed perhaps.

23,236. That is a statement, I take it, made up by yourself?—No, made up by him with his letter to me.

23,237. And do you wish to read it?—It is very long; I will read it to you if you like. It is very long, but I will be delighted to read it.

23,238. *Mr Sutherland.*—Does it point out for our information, Dr Maclean, places which, *primâ-facie*, are fit for peopling now?—That is the general opinion.

23,239. Grounded upon the fact that there were people before?—I claim no expert knowledge of this matter myself, but I have been mixed up in this business for years, as you know, and I have got it from people all about, chiefly in Caithness, and they consider enlargement of holdings a vital matter, and this goes to show that those holdings were in existence before.

23,240. And *primâ-facie* evidence that they might be in existence again?—These holdings did produce and maintain able-bodied men in the past, and they are capable of doing the same thing again.

23,241. *The Chairman.*—To what estates does that document apply?—This document applies to a certain portion of the parish of Reay not belonging to the Forss estate. There is a portion of the Forss estate in Reay, and I have another one for the Forse estate in Latheron.

23,242. What estates does it apply to?—It applies to the Reay estate, all except the Forss property in Reay. To Sandside, to Broubster, to Shurrerey, to Shebster, that portion of Shebster not belonging to Forss, also to Isauld, Upper and Lower Dounreay.

23,243. The lands we have been hearing of to day?—Yes, except the Forss portion, which is separate.

23,244. Then is there any other document obtained from a deceased man that you wish to submit?—No, not from deceased persons, but there is one very important document which I will submit for the favourable consideration of the Commission,—a statement of he names of sixty-three families evicted from the estate of Forss, furnished by Mr James Mackay, Toftingall, who is unable to be present; I have also a medical certificate attached to the list, certifying his inability to attend.

23,245. Is it a statement made up by yourself?—By himself and signed by himself.

23,246. The medical certificate bears—'I hereby 'certify that I have this day examined Mr James 'Mackay, and I consider that in his present state of 'health it is not advisable for him to leave home at 'present.' But this is on 21st August. Is he still unable to come?—So I understand; he is an old man and very infirm. Thurso. — Alexander Maclean.

23,247. The certificate does not mention his age, but is it age and infirmity that prevents him attending?—So I understand.

23,248. *The Secretary.*—I have a letter from that gentleman dated 29th August.

23,249. *The Chairman.*—He writes a letter on the 28th saying:—I have received your circular of 26th, demanding me to come to Thurso Town Hall, on Tuesday 29th, to give evidence before the Commission concerning the evictions that took place in my district, and which I would be very willing to do, &c.'

23,250. That makes a considerable difference; I think we will admit this statement in the circumstances?—Very well.

STATEMENT of the number of tenants that I had seen evicted on the estate of Forss, on the south side of Forss, including Achater, part of the township of Assery, Carryside, &c., and adjoining new lands presently occupied by one sheep farmer.

1.	Widow Benjamin Macdonald, .	At present one tenant.
2.	Benjamin Macdonald, son, a farm of his own, ...	
3.	Francis Bruce, do. .	
4.	Harry Henderson, do. .	
5.	Hugh Elder, do. .	
6.	John Mackay, do. .	
7.	William Elder, do. Lean,	
9.	John Bain, New Park, . .	
11.	Angus Mackay, New Lands, .	
12.	William Elder, do. .	
13.	John Andrew, Achater, . .	
14.	Alexander Henderson, Assery, .	
15.	Robert Mackay, do. .	
16.	Donald Mackay, do. .	
17.	Alexander Meiklejohn, do. .	
18.	Widow Macleod, do. .	
19.	Henry Henderson, do. .	
20.	Peter Gunn, do. .	
21.	John Gunn, Carryside, . .	

1.	William Macpherson, North side of Forss, ...	At present one tenant.
2.	John Mackay, do. .	
3.	William Henderson, do. .	
4.	Donald Gunn, do. .	
5.	Christina Mackay, do. .	
6.	Widow Macdonald, do. .	
7.	Donald Sandison, Loanrevach, .	
8.	William Campbell, do. .	
9.	William Mackay, do. .	
10.	Widow Campbell, do. .	
11.	Alexander Mackay, . . .	
12.	Donald Gally, ...	

STATEMENT of the number of tenants that I had seen evicted on the estate of Forss, in the parishes of Halkirk and Reay.

1.	William Mackay, Achregall, .	At present one tenant.
2.	John Campbell, Bardnahoich, .	
3.	Niel Campbell, do. .	
4.	Benjamin Forbes, do. .	
5.	Alexander Macdonald, do. .	
6.	John Macdonald or Mackinlay, Achimore, ...	

Tenants in the Township of Lieurary.

1.	John Polson, ...	At present two tenants.
2.	Donald Campbell, . . .	
3.	John Mackay, ...	
4.	Magnus Henderson, . . .	
5.	Widow Robertson, . . .	
6.	Alexander Smith, . . .	

Thurso. Alexander Maclean.

Ascrabster, Achnavast, and its Environs.

1.	Alexander Doul,	At present one tenant.
2.	John Gordon,	
3.	Thomas Morgan,	
4.	George Macdonald,	
5.	William Meiklejohn,	
6.	Alexander Grant, Achnavast,	
7.	William Miller, do.	
	Tenants from Strathnaver.	
8.	Hugh Mackay, Achsmallery,	
9.	James Mackay, do.	
10.	George Mackay, do.	

Five of the above tenancies have been added to the Farm of Millen or Westfield.

Achalone, Parish of Reay.

1.	Donald Mill,	At present one tenant.
2.	Duncan Macdonald, Lean of Forss, Halkirk parish,	
3.	Widow Mill, do.	
4.	Donald Macdonald, do.	

Achaken near Millden.

1. Widow Clements.
2. James Sinclair.

The above tenants had been added to Millen or Westfield as a sheep run.

List of the number of tenants that had been evicted on the estate of Forss, in the parish of Thurso, and their farms added to the Mains of Oust as a sheep run.

1.	William Elder,	At present one tenant.
2.	David Sinclair,	
3.	Kenneth Campbell,	

Sir—By this list you shall understand the number of tenants that had been removed and the number that occupies the same ground generally for a sheep run. They have been evicted.

In all, 63 families evicted to make room for the existing 8.—Your obedient servant,

James Mackay.

23,251. We have his name down as a delegate to attend here?—This has been put into my hand by somebody.

23,252. Do you wish to make any statement of your own?—Not at all, only this, that I have every reason to believe that the substance of those documents which I wish to present are genuine, that they are substantially correct and I know the authenticity of them. There is one thing which I notice the Commission seem to wish to desire to know something about. That is, the amount of common land divided in Reay. I have got it here from the Sheriff Clerk's Office; if it would suit the Commission this is quite at their disposal. It is a list of 'plans of division of commonties lodged in the Sheriff Clerk's Office, Wick.' I don't know whether this has all the properties that were divided or not, but the question you asked to-day was, I think, with reference to the amount of common lands which were divided in connection with Sir Robert Sinclair's estate. I find the amount which was given to Sir Robert Sinclair of the common lands was 6908¼ acres, and here are the other divisions for Reay as well as for other parts in Caithness, amounting to 15,693 acres, and I have added 7000 to that which I have got from Captain Henderson's Agricultural Account of Caithness, dated 1812, but that is not so reliable as the Sheriff Clerk's.

23,253. You got that information except the last item from the Sheriff Clerk's books?—Yes.

23,254. And you put it in as a correct statement?—Yes, quite so.

List of Plans of Division of Commonties lodged in the Sheriff Clerk's Office, Wick.

Plan of Division of the Hill of Wick.
Plan of Forss Commonty.

Plan of Division of Reay Commonty; Interim Decree of Division; and Certified Copy Interlocutor.
Plan of Division of Lynegar Commonty.

Thurso. Alexander Maclean.

Abstract Division of the Hill of Wick.

	Acs.	Rds.	Pls.
Lord Duffus,	558	0	3
Mr Horne,	155	2	33
Mr Craig,	8	0	0
Feuars of Wick,	40	0	0
Total,	761	2	36

Abstract Division of Reay Commonty.

	Valued Rent.	Acres.
The Crown,	133 4 0	321¼
Sir J. G. Sinclair, Bart.,	1443 17 4	6908¼
James Sinclair, Esq., of Forss,	272 7 3	768¾
Capt. D. Macdonald of Sandside,	122 10 11	549¾
Parish Minister of Reay,	...	45
Total,	1971 19 6	8601¾

Abstract Division of Lynegar Commonty.

	Acs.	Rds.	Pls.
Earl of Caithness,	255	1	32
Sir Ralph Anstruther,	536	2	9
Mr Wemyess,	1082	2	17
Capt. Henderson,	82	0	0
Mr Traill,	76	0	29
Mr Sinclair,	230	3	33
Swartclate,	17	2	4
Minister of Watten,	25	0	0
Minister of Bower,	25	0	0
Total,	2331	1	4

Obtained from Sheriff Clerk's Office.

Total of above partitions,	15,693 Acres
Add 7000, divided before 1812. (See Capt. Henderson's Account of Agriculture, &c. in Caithness),	7,000 „
Grand Total,	22,693 „

23,255. Is there anything else that you wish to say?—No, I don't think there is anything else.

23,256. *Mr Sutherland.*—Do you submit yourself for examination with regard to the general terms of the remit to us?—Oh, well, I have not come here as a witness. You have kindly permitted me to come before you and present certain evidence, and I wish to say that that is all I came here for to-day.

23,257. Have you any objection to answer questions?—Oh no, not in a general way. I have already said I am not an expert as regards land. All I come for is to provide what I stated as facts, but I am quite ready to answer general questions if my evidence will be considered of any value in that respect.

23,258. I would wish to ask you, Dr Maclean, as a gentleman with intimate knowledge of Caithness, whether, in your opinion, there is such land as we are requested to make inquiry regarding available in Caithness for the purposes for which we were appointed?—A very large amount indeed, in my opinion, in parts of Caithness, which I could mention if necessary.

23,259. Have you a knowledge of the exact terms of the remit to us?—I have a general knowledge that you are here appointed to ascertain what land is available for small holdings which is now under deer forest, grouse

Thurso. Alexander Maclean.

moors, or big grazings, other than is in possession of the crofters.

23,260. That could be occupied by crofters or other small tenants advantageously?—Most decidedly, having been so occupied formerly.

23,261. And, generally speaking, you are of opinion that there is such land?—Plenty; and another thing, I look at it not only from the local point of view—it is very material that the wealth of the community locally should be increased—but I think the present system of denuding the country of its rural population is a most dangerous one, not only a ruinous one for the localities themselves, but imperially ruinous. I wish to have in the Highlands, amongst other things, a good recruiting ground for the army. I know something of the army, as I have served twenty-five years in peace and war; I know the kind of men we want, and "slum" soldiers won't do. We want soldiers taken from the ranks of crofters and labourers. I have felt a good deal upon that point, especially of late years, when I see our army is not the army it used to be, and I feel pretty strongly as to that.

23,262. Then, with regard to the objections that are commonly urged as to the difficulties of reverting to a more general occupation of the soil by the people, do you think that they are of such a nature as to present any serious obstacle?—They are largely fictitious, they are artificial, and I think that, with very little assistance from Government, things could be put straight enough. There is a precedent already in Ireland.

23,263. What do you refer to?—As regards the help, the pecuniary help which the Government has given to the Irish people.

23,264. Advances?—Yes, to take holdings and stock holdings; we want pretty much the same thing in the Highlands.

23,265. But are you of opinion that it would be necessary to the large extent that is sometimes supposed?—It is a mistake altogether. I heard evidence to-day adduced with reference to the great cost of crofters' houses and different buildings.

23,266. Do you agree with that?—Not at all; it is imaginary, mostly. The crofters put up their own houses before, and they could put up their own houses again for that matter, and as to this sanitary bogie which I have been listening to, I know something of sanitary science, I suppose during my twenty-five years' service, and I know this, that the making and building of sanitary houses need be no more expensive than the building of insanitary houses.

23,267. You are a member of the County Council of Caithness?—I am.

23,268. And are you a member of the Public Health Committee?—We have no Health Committee other than the District Committee—Public Health. It works partly through the General Purposes Committee, and I am a member of both.

23,269. So that you have to do practically with these things?—Yes, of course, and I have had for twenty-five years of my life to maintain the health of the soldier, to prevent disease, so I know something of sanitary science.

23,270. And you think the higher requirements now would be no obstacle?—No obstacle whatever. You have only to choose a good site, and then a great deal depends upon natural drainage.

23,271. Did you hear what was stated here to-day with regard to the tendency of allowing agricultural land to go out of cultivation?—Yes, I listened.

23,272. And you heard it admitted generally, I think, that there was a tendency in that way?—Certainly.

23,273. Do you agree with that?—Yes, of course, it is going on not only in this country, but has been going on elsewhere all over the United Kingdom.

23,274. And what is your opinion as to the cause of that?—I agree with you, Mr Sutherland. You gave an explanation. A man gets a holding of his own and makes it his bank, and he puts everything he can into that holding, and we know, as a matter of fact, it is on record the experiment of Lord Tollemache and of the Rev. Mr Stubbs.

23,275. In Cheshire?—Yes, and of Lord Carlingford I think, showing how small holdings will produce more than large holdings. You will see the statistics given in the Claims of Labour book. These experiments have been, I understand, successful, showing that small holdings will make better security than large holdings. The people put all their labour into these holdings, only having to pay a reasonable rent to the landlord.

23,276. And is it within your knowledge that the rents for the large arable holdings are smaller now than they were twenty years ago?—The rents have gone down, I know, in some cases a third. There is one case in which the rent has gone down a good deal more, it has gone down nearer two-thirds, a place in Strathmore—Rumsdale, that is a sheep farm though; but as to arable farms having gone down, the farm of Greenland in Dunnet there has gone down from £900 to £600. Clyth has gone down from £600 to £400, or perhaps a little under, and so on. As regards the large farms, that has been general.

23,277. And you have heard what Mr Tait has said with regard to the reason for it?—I have.

23,278. And you have no reason but to substantially agree with him?—No.

23,279. And you think, then, that there is land in this county of Caithness fit for the purposes for which we are appointed?—Plenty of land, I consider.

23,280. And you consider there are no insuperable difficulties?—None whatever; I think the Government that winked at the atrocity of the evictions ought now to make atonement. They helped to expatriate, and now they ought to repatriate on no other grounds than public grounds.

23,281. And apart from that, you are perfectly satisfied that on financial grounds also it would be successful?—If the people had proper security of tenure and fair rents, or if they possessed their own holdings.

23,282. Now, with regard to these reductions on large arable farms, are they not a little more difficult to ascertain than those of the Crofters Commission, which are embodied in a public document?—Most undoubtedly, because you can't get at it; it is between the estate officers and the farmers themselves.

23,283. And you only know it so far as it appears in the valuation roll?—Even then you can't be quite sure, perhaps.

23,284. But at any rate you think the one is more accessible than the other?—Oh, certainly.

23,285. Well, the general deduction from that would be, would it not, that large farming has proved more or less of a failure?—It has certainly.

23,286. You are aware that it was urged at the time these large farms were consolidated, that one of the reasons for so doing was that they would be financially more successful?—Quite so.

23,287. Do you think that hope has been justified?—Not at all, it is the opposite. You will have to break up large holdings, giving possession of them to the people as much as possible, in suitable holdings.

23,288. And you think, so far as you know, that the expectations of those who have made experiments in that way have been justified?—I think so. And then I heard to-day about the difficulty of making holdings out of waste ground. Of course I don't wish to detain the Commission, but I will allude to the case of Charles Calder in Killimster there as a very emphatic case. It is a case of a man taking a holding out of a peat hagg, 3 to 4 feet deep, and rough heather growing upon it. About twenty-nine years ago he went as a shepherd, middle aged, with some of his family to help him to bring this under the plough. They had no capital except sufficient to buy a cow, and they depended for their subsistence upon getting employment from the surrounding farmers. They persevered, and when I visited the place along with our member of Parliament and the late Mr Waters Faulds and Mr Miller, whom I saw here, and who will be able to corroborate me, he had 26 acres of beautiful arable under cultivation at the end of 26 years. This he himself and his family made. They built their own barn and thatched it. They had a horse threshing-mill, they had byres, they had a good

thatched house and a very nice garden surrounded by a wall. The man entered it having to pay 2s. 6d. for the whole thing, and when he began he trenched it, he dug it, he laid the tile pipes, and all that that holding cost the landlord was 30s. in tile pipes from first to last. He took over an adjacent holding belonging to a neighbour who could not carry it on, and who handed it over to Charles Calder; it was the same quality of ground with 1½ acres partially reclaimed. For this Charles Calder had to pay £6 annual rent.

23,289. For the part he took over?—Yes, to the landlord £6. By that time his own rent had been raised from 2s. 6d., on his own improvements mostly, to £2, that was £8 altogether; and the case came before the Crofters Commission, and, if I am not wrong, the Crofters Commission reduced the rent from £8 to £6—25 per cent. I think I am right. So there is a case in point, and that was brought before the Colonisation Committee, of which I think you were a member, Mr Sutherland.

23,290. What is the exact locality?—Killimster in Bower. Seater is the place. That is the name of the farm.

23,291. Now have you reason to suppose that there are other such cases?—I give you that case in point because it is a telling case, and it shows that out of the most hopeless hagg, intelligence and perseverance and industry will make in the course of a certain number of years a good farm. Of course it was a good farm before I saw it, three years ago, when it was 26 years in existence, but that was a case where the man had no capital to begin with except what enabled him to purchase a cow, and he had not enough to purchase a very big cow either.

23,292. So that he increased the land from the value of 2s. 6d. to £8?—And 2s. 6d. on the other side; from 5s. to £8.

23,293. And you think that was under very unfavourable conditions?—Most unfavourable in every way; a hopeless looking hagg. No capital except his bodily strength and skill, and that of his family.

23,294. *Mr Shaw Stewart.*—When you say it would be an advantage to the county to break up large holdings into small crofters' holdings, do you refer to pastoral farms or arable farms?—Well, I see the difficulties connected with arable farms, and they are great; but as regards pastoral farms, that is a different thing, it could be done more easily. Of course I don't forget that there are large steadings upon the arable farms that would have to be taken into account that cost a good deal of money, but my own opinion is that rents will go down and down with the increase of foreign and colonial competition, and it may be that landowners will be forced and compelled to lower the rents so as to enable the farmers to compete with foreigners and colonists. I see the difficulties you allude to as regards big arable farms.

23,295. What I was about to say was, I daresay your argument is quite correct, but you see the arable farms are out of our view. We are confined to grazing?—I understand. But the pastoral farms, I have no doubt, are quite capable of being utilised under the Small Holdings Act, which would be a capital Act to offer to the Highlands of Scotland, with a compulsory clause added; without that it is dead, that is all that we wish.

23,296. I only wish to point out that the breaking up of large arable farms does not come under our remit?—No, I know that; but I was asked to give you the information generally.

23,297. *Mr Peter Keith.*—Have you formed any idea of the cost of bringing under cultivation grazing land, say part of a grazing farm suitable for a crofter's holding of arable land?—I heard it to-day mentioned at £25. I think that is simply ridiculous, for this reason, that what crofters, so far as I know, have been allowed by the Crofters Commission for land reclaimed has been if I am not mistaken—I am under correction—about £5 an acre, generally speaking. That has been allowed to the crofters for each acre that they have reclaimed.

23,298. Where was that done?—In the crofters' court. I think that is generally what is allowed, £5 to the crofters. That is the estimate; it is supposed that each acre that the crofters have reclaimed has cost the crofter, well I say under correction, about £5.

23,299. You have no practical knowledge?—No, but I have a knowledge of facts.

23,300. You don't speak from your own personal knowledge when you say that?—No, because I never reclaimed an acre in my life, and very few have done it here.

23,301. Have you any notion of the cost of erecting a steading for such a holding?—Yes, I have given you the case of Charles Calder. Their own skill and their own hands did it all.

23,302. There was in that case, I think you said, a thatched roof?—Yes.

23,303. Will you tell us the extent of the steading in this place?—It consisted of a farm of 26 acres arable, with a certain amount of wild outrun, heather mostly. The house the man built, and his family helped him, I suppose. Very well, he had his barn, threshing mill, he had—all the outhouses I may say in brief were built by himself and his family.

23,304. From whom did you get that information?—On the spot, from Charles Calder and his family.

23,305. Are you aware whether the proprietor in that case gave very much assistance in the erection?—No, 30s. was the entire sum total that the landlord gave in twenty-six years, and that was for drain pipes.

23,306. Then, if rents of arable farms are coming down, and as you say must come still further down, how do you think it would be profitable to improve and bring under cultivation pasture lands probably at very considerable expense?—If the land is got cheap enough there can be no dread as to that land not paying, if improved. All that has to be done is to reduce the price of the land in accordance with the amount of foreign and colonial competition.

23,307. But are you not aware that on account of the foreign and colonial competition it is almost impossible, even on the best agricultural lands in the county, to raise stock and crop to compete with what is sent in from abroad?—But there is competition, as a matter of fact, now. Our Christmas cattle compete with any cattle in the world. There are no finer cattle, I understand, than the Scottish Christmas cattle sent to London.

23,308. It is not as to quality but as to price. They can send in from abroad and sell them in this country cheaper than they can be raised in this kingdom?—Because they have the land cheaper abroad and so much cheaper that they can afford to pay and transport also.

23,309. Well, with such cheap means of transport, do you think that even if the places were given almost rent free it would be possible to raise stock and crop that would compete with that imported from abroad?—Certainly. I have given you the case of Lord Tollemache's tenants and the Rev. Mr Stubb's, I think he is the gentleman, and Lord Carlingford. The tenantry under them have made their places a success, but we know, as a matter of fact, that all you want is reduced prices of land and then you can make holdings pay.

23,310. Are these cases not chiefly dairy farms?—No, they grow wheat, and it is recorded I think, I am under correction again, I have it in my book at home, that the holdings of some of the smaller tenants produced a bushel more over a given area that that given area produced to those who had larger farms; so that settles that point. For every 3 bushels produced by the large holdings, the smaller produced 4.

23,311. That would depend on the soil?—Everything was put in by the tenants that they could. They made a bank of the soil, and these gentlemen's experiments were successful, as I think they deserved to be.

23,312. You are aware, I think, that Cheshire is almost wholly a dairy county?—But I am telling you, as a matter of fact, as regards the wheat product in these places, it exceeded by one bushel the produce over a given area, as between the big farmers and the small.

Thurso.

John Manson, Dunnet (50)—*examined.*

John Manson.

23,313. *The Chairman.*—Are you a crofter?—No.

23,314. Do you hold under lease?—No.

23,315. What is your occupation?—Farmer.

23,316. What rent do you pay?—£37.

23,317. What is the extent of your farm?—About 40 acres of land.

23,318. Altogether?—Yes.

23,319. How much of that is arable?—Altogether.

23,320. What is it you wish to give us evidence about?—I have been delegated to come here by the parish of Dunnet to give a general statement of the lands available for cultivation that is presently under sheep, sheep runs.

23,321. Have you a written statement?—No, I have no written statement.

23,322. Of what farms are you to speak in particular?—The farm of Rattar in the first place.

23,323. What is it you wish to say with regard to the farm of Rattar?—The pasture lands of the farm of Rattar were formerly inhabited by crofters to the number of something like 30; this is an under estimate.

23,324. Were they entirely separate holdings?—Separate holdings.

23,325. There was no township?—No township.

23,326. When did they cease to occupy them?—I think it was between 1830 and 1840.

23,327. They were removed or left about that time?—They were removed.

23,328. And is that land suitable for new settlements or for grazing purposes only?—Partly both.

23,329. Some to one and some to the other?—Yes.

23,330. How is that land occupied now?—Under a sheep walk.

23,331. Is any of it under rotation?—None of the part that I am to speak about.

23,332. Has it been under rotation within your recollection?—Not in my recollection. I recollect when the houses were partly standing.

23,333. The old houses?—The old houses, and they are visible yet.

23,334. As far back as your memory goes, has any part of that land been under crop?—No.

23,335. Is there any other land you wish to speak to?—A son of one of the evicted. I went and got a statement from him, or rather he came to me to give a statement. He is rather decayed, and he could not come here. He told me it was good land, and it is visibly good land.

23,336. You have seen the land yourself?—Oh, I have gone through it often.

23,337. Then you are able to speak of it yourself, and, in your opinion, it is land that could be reduced to cultivation and occupied by crofters in separate holdings and to profit?—Yes.

23,338. And in giving that opinion, you are speaking as a man of practical skill?—Yes.

23,339. You are able then, I take it, to carry on your own farm to a profit?—I have always done so. I have always paid my rent.

23,340. And paid your way?—And paid my way.

23,341. And has your rent been reduced in recent years?—Yes, and it rose in recent years too. It rose from £32, and £33 to £41, and a few years ago it was reduced to £37, and I have twice or three times got 10 per cent. off the £37, two or three years, not in succession.

23,342. But occasionally?—Yes.

23,343. Is there a desire for land in the locality which you represent?—Very great.

23,344. Are the holdings, in your opinion, too small?—Yes, congested villages.

23,345. Now what are the names of these villages?—Brough, Dunnet, Scarfskerry, and Barrock.

23,346. Have these villages or townships grazing at present?—Yes.

23,347. Is it too little, in your opinion, or is it sufficient?—It is very poor.

23,348. Is there any other land you wish to mention?—Yes.

23,349. What is that?—The farm of Lochend, in the same parish, adjoining the farm of Rattar. Thurso.

23,350. And on the estate of Rattar, I suppose?—No, it is a separate estate, it belongs to Mr Ferryman. John Manson.

23,351. And is it all grazing?—No.

23,352. What does it consist of?—Grazing and arable.

23,353. How much of it is grazing?—There are eleven names here that I have, who have been evicted from that place.

23,354. Do you know that of your own knowledge?—Yes, I know part of that, of my own knowledge. My grandfather lived here.

23,355. And you know that partly from your own knowledge and partly from him?—From residenters that have been there, or other people.

23,356. And is it suitable for occupation?—Yes, very suitable, part of it; the people were very comfortable on it until they were evicted out of it.

23,357. How many holdings, of the kind you have in your mind, would it accommodate?—There are two farms I know that had a pair and odd of horses that they were evicted from; and the others had perhaps two ponies, some of them, and some of them one.

23,358. And, in your opinion, it could be resettled?—It could be resettled.

23,359. Then, besides these, are there any other lands?—Yes, there is the farm of Reaster on the Traill estate.

23,360. What extent of land is there?—Perhaps a thousand acres or over.

23,361. But available?—Perhaps 100 acres.

23,362. Of grazing?—More than that of grazing, but what could be perhaps profitably put into agriculture.

23,363. Is that land under crop at present?—No, nor for many years.

23,364. Permanent grass?—Permanent grass.

23,365. And is that land suitable for settlements or for grazing?—I think it is.

23,366. Suitable for settlements. Now, is there any other land?—Heartfield, in the parish of Dunnet.

23,367. What extent of acreage is there there, which according to your judgment is suitable?—I am not very sure, perhaps 80 or 100 acres.

23,368. Of grazing ground?—Of grazing ground suitable for agricultural purposes.

23,369. Are there any townships near it?—Not at present.

23,370. How far away is the nearest?—There is Reaster adjoining, where there are a lot of crofters.

23,371. How far is Reaster from Heartfield?—Their crofts go almost to the pasture.

23,372. They march with each other?—They march with each other.

23,373. Do the Reaster tenants desire new holdings or extension of their present holdings?—Well, I am not very sure, but expect they would desire extension.

23,374. You think more of extension?—They are shut in by the dykes and the moss.

23,375. They are congested,?—Congested, and very poor stuff they have got.

23,376. And you think there is available land upon Heartfield?—I think so.

23,377. Now, besides Heartfield, is there any other land?—There is Rattar and Lochend and Reaster and Heartfield; Cooper Hill, that is on the Traill estate, also.

23,378. What extent of land is there?—Perhaps 70 or 80 acres.

23,379. Of grazing land?—Grazing land.

23,380. Available in the same sense?—In the same sense; it formerly was agricultural land.

23,381. How far is Cooper Hill from Heartfield?—A long distance, it belongs to the farm of Greenvale, it adjoins the Freswick estate.

23,382. Who is the farmer in Greenvale?—Mr James Younger.

23,383. Now, besides these places, any other land?—There are the grazings of the township of Dunnet presently in the occupation of the innkeeper.

23,384. And is that land available, according to your opinion, for extension of grazings?—Yes.

23,385. To whom would you extend?—To the village

of Dunnet, or the township of Dunnet as it formerly was. They were evicted out of it, I think, in 1841 or 1842.

23,386. Who holds that land at present?—The innkeeper, Mr Mitchell; he came there last term.

23,387. Who held it before Mitchell?—The Spence family, John Spence.

23,388. Any other lands?—No, I don't think there is very much but what is under agriculture. Though it was formerly under the crofters it is at present under agriculture.

23,389. You mean it is under rotation of crop?—Yes.

23,390. *Mr Shaw Stewart.*—Whereabouts on Reaster farm is the land that you allude to?—Next to the Greenland march, between the county road and Lochend, part of it.

23,391. Is it green land?—Yes, green land.

23,392. You are not alluding to the moss on the north side of the road?—No.

23,393. And on the farm of Rattar, what land do you allude to?—Likely it is marked on the map, Grotesland and Broadlean. Grotesland is next Lochend farm.

23,394. Is that where the loch was drained?—It is the side of the farm of Rattar next to where the loch was.

23,395. *Mr Sutherland.*—You stated that there was land available for making new holdings on certain farms. On what farm is Lucifer Moss? Do you know Lucifer Moss? That is to the south of the road coming from Mey to Barrock?—Yes.

23,396. Is that part of the land that you refer to?—Yes.

23,397. What do you call it?—Broadlean.

23,398. Have you any idea of the amount of land that there is there that could be cultivated?—Well, I took a survey of it, not measurements. I think there could be very good land up to 200 to 300 acres in that pasture.

23,399. And you think that these 200 or 300 acres could be occupied to profit and to advantage by small crofters?—I think they could.

23,400. How long is it since that was put out of cultivation?—Perhaps nearly sixty years, between fifty and sixty.

23,401. And is it at present on the farm of Broadlean?—It belongs to the farm of Rattar, which comprehends something like 1700 acres between arable and pasture.

23,402. Then you state that there were about thirty tenants on what is now one farm?—Yes.

23,403. And was it during the time they were on the farm that this cultivation took place? Was it cultivated at any time after it was made into a large farm?—No, it immediately went under a sheep walk.

23,404. As soon as the people went out, it went out of cultivation?—Yes, and a dyke was built around it.

23,405. Then you spoke of the townships of Brough, Scarffskerry, and Barrock as congested; what made them congested?—These evictions.

23,406. The people were driven off these lands that were allowed to go out of cultivation and driven into these places?—That is so; there are some on the farm of Ham that were driven into the Brough village.

23,407. Had these townships pasture at any time?—Yes, some of them.

23,408. And was that pasture taken away from them subsequently?—No, they had the run for their cattle in the hill of Dunnet, the Brough people.

23,409. Have they got that still?—They have got that still.

23,410. And have they in any other townships?—Yes, the people of Dunnet, or rather the west side of Dunnet, have the run of the hill too, the same hill, but there is a fence between the landlord's properties; it belongs to two different landlords.

23,411. But I think you stated that the Dunnet villagers had the pasture that is now in the occupation of the innkeeper?—Yes.

23,412. When was that taken away from them?—In 1841 or 1842. The place that I occupied I had the benefit of, and there was no reduction of rent.

23,413. And could you give us a general idea of what the total acreage is of the land that you have mentioned in all these places that could be profitably occupied again?—The grazing land of Dunnet could not be very profitable, perhaps 10 acres.

23,414. I am talking just now of all the places you mentioned. Could you give us any idea how much there is in the whole of them put together?—I will underestimate it. I think between 400 and 500 acres.

23,415. Some of which could be brought under cultivation and others which could be more profitably used as pasture?—Yes.

23,416. Now you stated that you have no outrun?—I have no outrun. The outrun was taken away from us, in 1841, I think it was.

23,417. Why was that done, do you know?—I don't know. It was done—I have heard my father say who was tenant before me—to get the rent, and it was to be grazed in common with the innkeeper, the Spence people, and since they got a hold of it, it was wholly taken away from them, and they were summoned out of it, or at least they were evicted out of it.

23,418. Could pasture not be as profitably occupied by you as by a large farmer?—Certainly, I believe that the taking away of the pasture from the small holdings was their first ruin.

23,419. And you think that if they had a proportion of pasture, according to the arable they hold, the arable could be more easily cultivated to a profit?—Yes, I can prove that, because there the people that got a portion of the pasture and the arable they are the most able to turn it to profit.

23,420. As a matter of fact, that is the reason that is assigned sometimes for taking away pasture from small holders to give it to the large holders, so that the latter can occupy the arable to advantage?—I think that is something like it.

23,421. And these places you have mentioned you could get pointed out to us?—Yes, yes, I will get people that were living on it to point it out to you.

23,422. To show us?—To show your honours the extent of land.

23,423. *Mr Gordon.*—You spoke first of land on the farm of Rattar. Did you mean, talking of Rattar, this Broadlean place?—Yes.

23,424. You did not refer to the farm of Rattar proper?—Not to Rattar proper.

23,425. Do you happen to know what the rent of the inn farm at Dunnet is?—I have not very much idea.

23,426. Is it a big farm or a small?—It is a big farm, perhaps six or seven hundred acres arable, the farm of Rattar and Charlestown combined.

23,427. But I am speaking of the farm of Dunnet, the innkeeper's farm, is it a big place?—No, not a very large place.

23,428. What would be the rent or the area of it?—I think close on £80 of rent the former tenant paid.

23,429. Does that include the inn?—Yes, I think it included the inn, £86.

23,430. And how much of that would be applicable to the inn itself?—Perhaps £20, or the like of that.

23,431. Then the farm to which this pasture is attached is only a farm rented at £66.—Yes, and before him Spence had it and he was unable to run out the lease; it was very much lower. I think £60 of rent.

23,432. Now, about this Lochend farm, whereabout is the pasture upon it—the land under pasture which you say would make good arable land?—Round the loch.

23,433. The loch that was drained?—Yes, that is where the crofters were evicted partly.

23,434. Not out of the loch surely?—Not out of the loch itself, but partly at the north end.

23,435. But is it not still damp in the loch; has it been thoroughly drained?—Well, the drains are not very good to get into it. [*Mr Shaw Stewart.*—We saw a great many rushes in it?—Yes.]

23,436. In point of fact, if you were going to put crofters there you would have to redrain it?—Oh, they never inhabited the loch before, and likely they would not think of it now.

Thurso. John Manson.

23,437. Whereabouts is the land?—At the north west end of the loch.

23,438. Is that not arable land?—It is partly, but it is going out in grazings something like what I heard to-day that it would be more profitable to keep as grazing than agriculture.

23,439. Then that is rather against your theory?—It depends on the people that work it.

23,440. But is it not a fact that it is in cultivation at present? Is there not a pretty large field of turnips across it?—Perhaps they occasionally take out a field.

23,441. And is it not a fact that there is another farm with a crop on it?—Perhaps.

23,442. We saw it the other day?—Then there is a part of Holland Mey.

23,443. We have been all over that too. Now about this Cooper Hill. Is that a place near Dunnet?—Yes.

23,444. Beside a farm called Hillhead?—Yes.

23,445. What land is there that you would suggest?—It formerly was under agriculture, and it was put out to grazing.

23,446. Is it to the south side of Hillhead?—Yes.

23,447. How is it occupied just now?—Grazings, altogether grazings.

23,448. At Hillhead?—Yes.

23,449. What is the rent of Hillhead?—It does not belong to Hillhead.

23,450. Who does it belong to?—Greenvale.

23,451. Hillhead comes in between?—It belongs to two different proprietors.

23,452. We will see when we go to the ground, but it seems to me that Greenvale is situated at some distance from Cooper Hill?—The arable ground nearly adjoins the pasture.

23,453. Is Corsback and Greenvale the same place?—No, but the land adjoins.

23,454. But Corsback comes in between Greenvale and Cooper Hill?—Not exactly, on one side of the road it does, but on the other side Greenvale adjoins the pasture lands.

23,455. Now with regard to this Reaster land, is it wet or dry ground?—It is fairly dry.

23,456. It would not require draining?—Part of it, the low ends of part of it might require draining.

23,457. Does it extend down towards the Reaster burn?—Yes, the crofters had it down to the burn.

23,458. Down below, to the east of the Free Church school?—Yes.

23,459. And there is part of that land dry?—Yes.

23,460. Up next the road?—Next to the boundary dyke.

23,461. Do you suppose that you would get people to remove from Dunnet to Reaster or to Broadlean?—I have no doubt but they would, or from Scarffskerry and Brough and these places.

23,462. I think they would be more apt to do it from these places than Dunnet, because Dunnet is, to my recollection, one of the best places in Caithness?—Their crofts are very small. They farm it well.

23,463. I quite agree with you. Do you think you would get people to remove from these other townships, Brough or Barroch or Scarffskerry, to the land you have mentioned?—I have every reason to believe they would if they got it on reasonable conditions.

23,464. And you think there are men there who could afford to improve and stock holdings?—Yes, I think there are.

23,465. You see there would be a considerable expense attending the removal. What kind of holding would you propose on these places? Would it be crofts or small farms?—I would prefer over 30 acres, with an outrun in proportion.

23,466. As much as would keep a man and his family?—Yes.

23,467. How many acres do you think you have spoken to?—Perhaps 300 acres that could be profitably occupied.

23,468. That would only be ten people, you see, after all, that we would be able to provide for?—That would be a very good thing however.

23,469. Yes, it is always something, but it would make little impression upon a populous place like Scarffskerry?—But there is more than that; that is a very low estimate. Thurso. John M

23,470. You think there are more than 300 acres?—Yes, I question but there is nearly 300 acres that could be profitably occupied at Broadlean itself.

23,471. Well, I would not say you are far wrong. Now, with regard to Dunnet Links, it is not suitable for cultivation?—No, there might be a few acres, but it would not be very profitable.

23,472. And seeing that the Dunnet crofters and tenants got that links, what distance would those getting the benefit of it be from it, fully a mile?—No, not half a mile.

23,473. Does the Dunnet Links extend in below the church on to the seaside?—Yes, into the burn.

23,474. That is the burn going from St John's Loch?—Yes.

23,475. There would be fully half a mile, but not more. But there is no part of that land that you would suggest to be cultivated?—No, it would not do, but it is fine pasture.

DONALD HENDERSON, Tannach, Near Wick (74)—*examined.* Donald Henderso

23,476. *The Chairman.*—Whose estate do you live upon?—The estate of Hempriggs.

23,477. How far is your croft from Wick?—Four miles.

23,478. What rent do you pay?—£40.

23,479. Do you wish to call our attention to particular lands?—Any part in the parish of Halkirk, and the main reason that brought me here, I believe, after being called, is to say that all my neighbours, and all the country, as far as I hear, have grievances through having so little ground, and the hill ground and the best was taken up in sheep runs and deer forests and large farms, and the poor people set out on hillsides and mosses.

23,480. Have you a written statement?—No.

23,481. Would you like to ask our attention to lands that you think are available now?—I know there is Shurrery, Broubster, Achater, North Calder, and Skinnet, on to near Halkirk.

23,482. All these places?—Yes.

23,483. Well, we have heard some of them mentioned prominently already. Can you mention any place that our attention has not been called to?—Well, I can speak about Achater; it is lying waste at present.

23,484. Whose estate is Achater upon?—It was on Sinclair's estate when he was alive, it will be his trustees now, I suppose.

23,485. Is there grazing land there suitable for occupation?—No, the arable land that the tenants were in before is in it now, but pastured with sheep.

23,486. What extent of land is there of that kind there?—It was yielding about 150 quarters, the main part of it, and there are small tenants round it that were evicted at the same time.

23,487. But can you tell me the extent of ground which you think would be suitable now?—Yon land would be good still. There is not better land in the county.

23,488. What is the area of it?—It may be about 100 acres of arable into one spot and the small tenants that were evicted; three or four farms had, I should think, five or six head of cattle each.

23,489. How many tenants were there?—Four of them that I remember.

23,490. And how many could live there now?—If it was squared out it would keep a great number yet.

23,491. How many would you put upon it?—Nine or ten tenants.

23,492. What size of holding would each tenant have?—They would have about ten acres, at any rate, but there is a great deal of hill pasture in it, there is more than a square mile of hill pasture.

23,493. And is that land, the nine or ten acres to

each, suitable for crofters' holdings at the present time, do you think?—There would be more than that I think, but I am not safe to say it.

23,494. And could they live there and cultivate their land to a profit?—Yes, there is a great range of hill, and good hill.

23,495. Could they cultivate their arable to a profit?—It is easily cultivated, because it has been cultivated for a hundred years.

23,496. And you expect it would yield good crops?—Yes, for I have seen good crops upon it.

23,497. I don't know whether we have seen that ground, but, of course, if not, we will take care to go and see it.

23,498. *Mr Shaw Stewart.*—Do you think a man could live on a croft of ten acres on that land?—Yes, and hill pasture, but I think there is more than ten acres in it, but I could not be just sure. It is more than twenty years since I did not see it. I have been in the parish of Wick since twenty-eight years, but it is a large piece of ground.

23,499. *Mr Sutherland.*—The places you mention were Achater and Skinnet?—There is Achscrabster not far from it, then Skinnet.

23,500. You say you saw crops on these places that are now waste, yourself?—I did.

23,501. How long ago is that?—Forty years.

23,502. They have not been cropped for the last forty years?—No.

23,503. Does that apply to all those places you have mentioned?—No, part of the others are cultivated.

23,504. And did you see small tenants on that?—Yes, I saw them on the farm of Scrabster. There was a Donald Henderson and a George.

23,505. How many were there altogether on the farm of Achscrabster?—George Macdonald and two Sinclairs, John and another, and another man up on the hill, say five; George Macdonald was six; there were twelve farmers in it.

23,506. There were twelve farmers where there is now but one?—Yes.

23,507. And part of the land that was taken from them is now allowed to run waste?—It is all into one.

23,508. Part of it cultivated and part allowed to run waste?—Yes.

23,509. What is the waste part used for now?—Well, there is very little of what is waste but could be improved.

23,510. But what purpose could it be put to?—Grazing sheep.

23,511. You are of opinion, are you not, that they could be occupied?—For a great number of tenants.

23,512. Now the farm of Achscrabster at present, is it a very large farm?—Yes, pretty large.

23,513. Have you any idea of the extent of it?—It will be more than a mile square.

23,514. Is that all arable land?—There is a bit of it to the south west side that is common hill ground, common pasture.

23,515. Is Skinnet a separate farm?—Yes, it is a farm by itself.

23,516. But at present is it a large farm?—Very large, more than a mile square.

23,517. And was Skinnet also made up of separate small holdings?—Yes, except one farm, the main farm of Skinnet.

23,518. The small farms surrounding it were added?—They were not very small. He was an exciseman that had one to the north side of Skinnet.

23,519. Was that near the river?—Yes, down to the river. Then there was the farm they call Sixpenny. There was Donald Calder in it, James Davidson, Walter Innes, William Henderson, John Manson, and there were three girls on the top of the hill that kept three or four cows.

23,520. And all these are now in the farm of Skinnet?—Yes, and what did that was big John Paterson that came down and took it and evicted everyone of these out in one year, about forty years ago.

23,521. And who is tenant of Skinnet farm now?—George Waters, he died here shortly ago.

23,522. Was that the gentleman that also had the farm in the neighbourhood of Thurso here?—He had the farm of Tister, and he had another farm besides.

23,523. He had more than this farm of Skinnet?—Oh yes, he had other two.

23,524. Were they as large as Skinnet?—No, I don't think they were.

23,525. *Mr Gordon.*—Who is the tenant of Achater just now?—One Donald Elder.

23,526. Where is the land upon Achater that you think would be suitable for crofters; is it the present arable farm of Achater?—It is green pasture, at present under sheep.

23,527. Is there no part of the farm cultivated at present?—None whatsoever.

23,528. All under sheep?—All under sheep; there is a range of hill upon it, but there is more to the south east, more than a mile to the end of the farm, and there is a farm at the south end of it.

23,529. Does the farm of Achater extend down to the loch of Calder?—Yes, to the south end of it.

23,530. Is that all upon the Forss estate?—Yes.

23,531. Which is the land upon Skinnet which you mentioned as available for crofters?—I could not say the distance of it.

23,532. Where does it lie?—It lies on the road coming from Halkirk.

23,533. But where is the land upon the farm of Skinnet which you think could be applied to crofting?—The most of it.

23,534. Is that the arable land or the hill land?—Most of it was in cultivation.

23,535. Is it in cultivation now?—Well, it may be green, but all the strath along the river is green, but it is capital land if it is improved or kept in rotation.

23,536. But is the land that you refer to along the river or on the west side of the public road, or both?—Above the road as you go into Halkirk it is not so good, but there is a good deal of arable land which they have improved.

23,537. And would you propose to put crofters on the west side of the road?—Well, if they had a run up and down it.

23,538. What do you mean across the road?—Across the road, give them hill and down.

23,539. Would you include the present arable land of Skinnet in your proposal?—Getting from the top of the hill down to the river. [*The Chairman.*—Do your present proposals include the arable land?—Well, they would have hill land.]

23,540. You mean that there is a strip of pasture land between the arable land and the river?—Yes.

23,541. And it is pasture land above the road?—Yes.

23,542. You want this farm to be divided to give so much of the hill, so much of the arable land, and so much of the waterside pasture?—It would do well enough.

23,543. *Mr Laughton, Factor, Forss.*—In connection with Achater you stated that it is a grazing farm?—At present.

23,544. Are you aware that it is part of a mixed farm, arable and pasture?—The arable ground is on the centre of the pasture.

23,545. But are you aware that it is part of an arable farm let to Mr Hunter, the farm of Forsie, all let as one farm?—Yes, it is. Forsie is along with it.

23,546. Are you aware that it is all one farm, Achater, Forsie, and Port-an-Eilein?—Yes, but the pasture follows Achater, and did not use to follow Forsie.

23,547. You mentioned that Achater ran all the way to Loch Calder?—Yes.

23,548. Are you aware that Port-an-Eilein comes in between a large peat moss?—Well, the far end of it runs to the end of the loch. There is a place there, Caryside, and it joins with Caryside, which is connected with Port-an-Eilein now.

23,549. Can you tell me how far Achater is from the public road?—It may be about two and a half miles or the like.

23,550. Do you consider that Achater would be a suitable place for crofts at such a distance from the

Thurso. Donald Henderson.

public road?—I am farther than that from the public road myself.

23,551. You mentioned also ten acres as a suitable size for crofts?—There is many a one living on less.

23,552. The evidence given here has generally been 30 acres of arable?—Well, I don't confine them to be more than that, but I would like to be on the safe side.

23,553. Then, with regard to Achscrabster, are you aware that the arable ground of the farm of Achscrabster considerably exceeds the pasture in extent?—Yes, it is nearly all in cultivation.

23,554. And the pasture there contains a considerable part of heather?—It is mostly green.

23,555. *Mr Sutherland.*—Mr Elder occupied the farm of Achater?—When I remembered he had the farm of Forsie along with it.

23,556. He has the farm of Forsie and the farm of Achater. Do you know any other he occupies?—Yes, there are two or three other small fields he occupies.

23,557. Do you know if he is the Mr Elder who occupies the farm of Armadale in Sutherland?—I think he does, but I was never there.

23,558. Does Mr Elder also occupy the farm of Calder or North Calder?—He occupies the farm of South Calder.

23,559. *Mr Gordon.*—What is the name of your own farm?—Swarthouse is the name of the farm. It is in Tannach.

John Miller.

JOHN MILLER, Brabsterdorran (45)—*examined.*

23,560. *The Chairman.*—What rent do you pay?—£16.

23,561. Are you a crofter under the Act, or do you hold under a lease?—I am under the Act, I think, but I have never applied.

23,562. Now you wish to call our attention to particular lands, I understand?—Yes, in the parishes of Watten, Bower, and Olrig.

23,563. Take first the lands in the parish of Watten?—Yes.

23,564. Are you going to read a statement?—No, I have only notes. The first is the township of Munsary, the property of the Duke of Portland, in the parish of Watten, occupied by Peter Munro, Knockglass, for grazing sheep; once held by four occupying tenants with arable and pasture combined. Second, Halsary, a good Highland farm, on which I saw oats, bere, potatoes, and turnips; the property of Sir Ralph Anstruther, also occupied by Peter Munro, Knockglass, as a grazing farm. Third, Torran, also the property of Sir Ralph Anstruther. Grew all the crops for an arable farm; now wholly under sheep and cattle and occupied by the same Peter Munro, Knockglass. Fourth, Iryglass, in the parish of Watten, on the estate of Toftingall, that is on the estate of William Murray Threepland, Esq. of Fingash and Toftingall; in the hands of Peter Munro. Fifth, Bowlangla, alongside Achalybster and Badlibster. There were in my early days four occupying tenants in this township; it is now in the hands of one tenant. The cultivation of three of the farms has been kept up, but Bowlangla is waste, in pasture under sheep. Sixth, the big grazings of Wester Watten, a large area of superior land on which there were seventeen occupants; wholly under sheep, tenanted by Mr Davidson, Oldhall, who occupies one or two other larger farms. It is the property of the Duke of Portland. Seventh, the grazings of Dunn and Oldhall and Laurel, also occupied by Mr Davidson, Oldhall, and in the parishes of Bower and Watten, and the property of Sir Ralph Anstruther. A number of tenants were also evicted from this ground. Eight, the grazings of Lynegare, the property of Thomas Adams, Aberdeen Town and County Bank, Wick, between 300 and 400 acres, perhaps more, perfectly capable of being cultivated; the greater portion at one time cultivated, now lying under sheep. Ninth, the grazings of the Messrs Barnetson, Clayock. The tenants are in the parish of Bower, the grazings are in the parish of Halkirk, the property of Sir Tollemache Sinclair. Two farms on which there were resident tenants now wholly under sheep, Labour in Vain and Georgemas. Tenth, grazings of Tister, in the parish of Bower, and on the estate of the late Earl of Caithness, and some of the grazings are in the parish of Olrig. Mr Miller of Scrabster is trustee, and I think the poor of Thurso are the owners. Swarclet farms, the grazings of Tister; there cannot be less than 500 acres in this ground; a portion of the land is excellent quality and was under the plough; is occupied by the trustees of the late Mr Waters of Tister. Eleventh, the hill park of Brabsterdorran, on the estate of Mr Henderson of Stemster. There are about 100 acres in this park in the occupation of the proprietor; would be suitable for grazing to ten crofters on the estate, with no grazing, who would be willing to pay a fair rent. Twelfth, the Mains of Durran; the people were cleared off this ground; it is the property of the late Earl of Caithness, and is under sheep to the extent of 200 or 300 acres, occupied by pluralist farmers, Messrs Barnetson Clayoch. Thirteenth, the grazings of Mirza in Bower and Dunnet; partly spoken of by a previous witness, Mr Manson, who referred to Heartfield. There is a congested township that would be considerably improved; at the end of this ground on the west side of it, to get a portion of it. That is the township of Bower Madden. Fourteenth, grazings, on the estate of Lyth, a portion of the farm of Reaster, occupied by David Clyne, Reaster, under sheep. About 50 acres of good arable ground from which a tenant was evicted so that the sheep run might be enlarged. It is wholly under sheep now. Fifteenth, the grazings known as Keorse, from which four families were evicted. This forms a part of the sheep run for a farm known as West Side, on Sir John Sinclair's estate, Barroch. Sixteenth, grazings at Bilbster; were under the plough; would make two moderate sized farms keeping a mixed stock; occupied by pluralist farmers, the Alexanders of Quintfa' as a sheep grazing; it is on Sir John Sinclair's estate. Seventeenth, the grazings on Stanstill, the property of Mrs Wemyss of South Dunn; about 200 acres under sheep. Land of fine quality, with a county road in the centre; would make fine crofts or farms, and occupied by a pluralist farmer. Olrig parish.

Thurso. John Mill

23,565. You have been dealing hitherto with the parish of Watten?—And Bower.

23,566. And now you are going to deal with the parish of Olrig?—Yes. The estate of Major Smith of Olrig. A considerable portion of this estate has been consolidated. Part of the farms are under regular rotation, and part of the farms form grazing for sheep. It lies handy to the principal industry of the county, the pavement works, and could be profitably occupied as small farms. A particular field in Murkle, the property of Sir Robert Sinclair, from which a small farmer was cleared, I am unable to say the extent, but the small farmer's rent was £38.

20,567. And is that now incorporated with a large farm?—The landlord, at a considerable expense, put up a heavy wire fence round this croft, and it is let as grazing to a pluralist farmer at a rent, well, I think between £18 and £23. There are also grazings on the farm of Lochside and Thurdistone; a considerable extent pastured by sheep that would be perfectly capable of being cultivated.

23,568. You don't mention the extent?—No, I don't know it.

23,569. Does that exhaust your notes?—I have just omitted one case in Bower, the Mains farm of Stemster, in the hands of the proprietor. There are about 200 acres in sheep grazing that could be occupied by crofters.

23,570. That concludes your notes?—Yes.

23,571. All these lands, as I understand you to say, are available either for extension of grazings or for settling crofters on?—Principally for settling crofters on.

23,572. And do you mean by that in holdings which they could easily make self-sustaining holdings?—Yes.

23,573. Living entirely by the holding and without labour or fishing or any other extraneous assistance?—With the exception of the estate of Olrig, where the pavement industry would aid in the making of crofts.

Thurso. John Miller.

23,574. You would have holdings there where the occupant lived partly by his holding and partly by the industry?—Yes, and the same sort of holding might be formed on the estate of Oldhall. It lies contiguous to the Spital quarries.

23,575. You would have holdings there also where the occupant depended partly on the flagstone quarries and partly on his holding?—Yes.

23,576. But with these exceptions is it your opinion that these areas would afford self-sustaining crofts?—Yes.

23,577. And is there a desire for self-sustaining holdings in your quarter?—Oh yes.

23,578. There are people who would be willing to take such holdings and able to carry them on to a profit without assistance?—We part with such people every year; they emigrate. Such a class of people leaves my district every year.

23,579. *Mr Gordon.*—You have mentioned a good many places here; do I understand that these grazings, most of which you have mentioned, are at present held in connection with the arable farms?—Wester Watten grazings, Oldhall and Lynegar, Stemster and Durran, are all in connection with arable farms.

23,580. Now are these sheep grazings, or are they part of the cattle grazings of the farm?—They are mostly sheep grazings.

23,581. Could you without much trouble distinguish between what are exclusively sheep grazings and what are partly sheep grazings and partly cattle grazings?—There is a number of them that I have never seen cattle on.

23,582. Could you just shortly give me these?—Wester Watten, Oldhall, Durran, Munsary, and Halsary. I have seen cattle at Durran.

23,583. Durran is up in the same direction?—Yes, the county road divides the two farms.

23,584. Durran is down towards the river?—Yes. The other grazings of Tister I have never seen cattle on.

23,585. Now that is six places which, so far as you know, are exclusively sheep grazings?—Yes.

23,586. And the others are all more or less cattle grazings?—Well, they are mostly sheep grazings, but cattle may get a look on at a time if grass was getting scarce.

23,587. They would be used as part of the farm grazings for their cattle in the event of the cattle grazings in the arable fields being scarce?—Yes, for a month or two weeks perhaps in the back end of the season.

23,588. Would you say that the Lynegar Parks were a fair specimen of the other places you mentioned?—No, Lynegar mostly make use of their grazings for sheep also. I have seen 40 acres of the Lynegar grazings there for cattle but nothing else. I have seen it used occasionally for cattle and nothing else, only when arable grass would get bare.

23,589. Now take such a place as Brabsterdorran, on the estate of Stemster, is that sheep grazing or cattle grazing?—I have never known the landlord for the last twenty years make any use of this grazing but to give turnips to his hoggs a little time in the springtime. When the laigh fields would be ploughed up I have seen him give the turnips to the hoggs in springtime, but I have not seen him make any other use of it.

23,590. Did he ever put cattle there at all?—No, I can't say I have ever seen the landlord's cattle there.

23,591. With the exception of the six or seven places which are all sheep ground, the rest of them are more or less cattle ground?—To a very small extent they are cattle ground.

23,592. I quite understand it is only occasionally, but they graze cattle occasionally?—Not exceeding one month in the twelve.

23,593. *Mr Shaw Stewart.*—In your opinion there is a great deal of land in Caithness that could be occupied by crofters?—Yes.

23,594. Do you think there is room in Caithness for the importation of crofters from the congested districts of Skye and the Hebrides?—At the present time there is; there would be plenty of room.

Thurso. John Miller.

23,595. The people of Caithness then don't wish to take it up themselves to a great extent?—The people of Caithness are at the present moment, I believe, not in sufficient number to occupy the whole of the land capable of being improved. I mean that there are not as many people requiring land in Caithness as could occupy it the first five years.

23,596. Would there be any feeling among the people in Caithness at the settlement of crofters from the Hebrides for instance, would there be any feeling against that?—I would have none myself, but I have never heard that question discussed.

23,597. I don't quite see how you limit the time when there would be a demand for more land in Caithness; do you mean that the next generation that is now growing up would not be sufficiently large to take up the available land in Caithness?—I don't think that a generation comes to maturity in six years.

23,598. I don't suppose it does, but I want to know why do you limit it to six years. I did not choose the five or six years?—Knowing the great quantity of land idle in Caithness or under grazings capable of being improved, I just made this remark that there would not be in Caithness itself that would occupy it for six years at any rate.

23,599. Why do you say six years? Why not twenty-five years?—I have not the slightest doubt, if every facility was got for occupying that land; if it was got in fair and equitable terms, in twenty-five years it would be all occupied, but I think it would not be in six.

23,600. *Mr Sutherland.*—Who occupies the land of Wester Watten that you referred to?—Mr Davidson, Oldhall, is tenant.

23,601. Have you any idea of the extent of the grazing that is attached to Oldhall farm?—What is green and hill I have heard estimated at 6000 and at 7000 acres, but I am unable to say if that statement is correct. But it looks a very large area.

23,602. And are there any cattle on that?—I have never seen any cattle.

23,603. Do you know how many shepherds he employs on that?—Perhaps three; there may be four. I am only calculating on their houses; it is an ordinary way that there might be two or even three shepherds in one house; at least there is that number of other servants, whether it applies to shepherds or not.

23,604. And a great proportion of that land that is held in connection with the Wester Watten grazings is good land?—Land of very excellent quality.

23,605. In which you said 17 tenants were?—There were 17 tenants, 6 or 8 having as high as 60 or 80 acres of land.

23,606. And how much arable land has that gentleman got?—I could not say what number of acres he has, but I think he has 5 miles in length along the country road.

23,607. As an arable farm?—Two arable farms that adjoin one another, Wester Watten and Oldhall.

23,608. He has got two farms, Wester Watten and Oldhall, and this grazing of Wester Watten besides?—Yes, and the grazing of Oldhall besides

23,609. And the land that he occupies as the grazing of Wester Watten is, in your opinion, well adapted for making new holdings?—Oh, very good ground indeed. The crofters round about it, or in fact I may say in any part of Caithness, scarcely any of them hold land so good.

23,610. Are there any people, then, in that neighbourhood that, in your opinion, would be benefited by getting larger holdings than they have and would be willing to take them?—Oh yes, there is a number of people that would be ready and willing to occupy the land if there was only free access to be got.

23,611. Do you know Auchengill?—Yes.

23,612. Are there many families resident there?—I think 12 or 15.

23,613. Is that near it?—Yes, very near it.

23,614. How much land have they got?—Only the joiner and the blacksmith have any land, and I think they cannot have more than 12 acres between them.

23,615. And what about the rest?—They have none

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at all but the little garden. They have no cows and nowhere that they could keep a cow.

23,616. And they are beside an arable land that stretches how far along the country road?—I think 5 miles.

23,617. Then, with regard to some of that land that you have already spoken to that has gone waste, has any of it been under cultivation within your memory?—On the estate of Olrig and on this farm of Durran Mains and this part of Clayock farm that is made up from Sir Tollemache Sinclair's estate. I remember these two farms in rotation, nearly every inch of them. I remember a portion of Lochside farm in Olrig under the plough.

23,618. Then have you given us the total estimate you make of the acreage you have spoken to. I think you have given it in some cases to us; have you made an estimate of the acreage of all the lands?—No, I have not.

23,619. But have you any general idea of what it would amount to?—I have not added it together.

23,620. But you could do so. But before departing from that you mentioned a croft that was vacant in Murkle?—Yes.

23,621. What was the extent of that croft?—I have heard 23 acres.

23,622. You stated that it went through a certain operation; it was well fenced?—Yes, since the crofter left it.

23,623. And then it was disposed of, how?—To a pluralist farmer.

23,624. Is he a large farmer?—He has two large farms.

23,625. He has already two large farms and he was given this vacant croft besides?—He is also a cattle dealer, and this park is very handy at the side of the public road, and he was likely the highest bidder, therefore he is in possession.

23,626. So he gave an accommodation price for it?—Well, I have heard he gave £18, and I have heard he gave £23, but the small farmer was paying £38.

23,627. And how far away was the nearest of the other two farms he held?—Not more than one and half miles.

23,628. Was that farther away than the croft he got?—It was one and half miles from the public road, but the croft that was newly fenced was alongside the public road and handy to it.

23,629. That was all the difference between the croft he got and the large farm he held before?—Yes, about one and half miles.

23,630. I think you have already stated that it is your distinct opinion that all those lands you have spoken to could be profitably occupied?—Yes.

23,631. By crofters or other small tenants?—Yes.

23,632. *Mr Logan.*—I really don't think there is any need for putting any questions. I may state, I think on behalf of Sir Tollemache Sinclair, that if the court should be of opinion, after going over the land of Labour in Vain, that it is worthy of being thrown into small holdings, Sir Tollemache would have no objections whatever, but I think the very name that it bears is a true indication of its character and quality.

23,633. *The Chairman.*—You have no questions to put? [*Mr Logan.*—None whatever.]

23,634. It is my duty to afford you the opportunity.

23,635. I wanted to ask you one thing, Mr Miller. Is it common in the county of Caithness for more than one farm to be in the occupancy and possession of a single tenant?—Yes, I have known as many as six large farms in the hands of one man.

23,636. Is that so at present?—Well, I can't say, but Mr Davidson, Oldhall, presently occupies three large farms, all very large farms, Oldhall and Wester Watten, and Buckies is in addition to that. The trustees of the late Mr Waters will very likely be the occupants of five large farms.

23,637. At present?—At present.

23,638. Mr Waters is a deceased farmer, is he?—Yes.

23,639. These farms were in his occupancy at the date of his death?—Yes.

23,640. And are now in the hands of his trustees?—Yes. — Thurso.

23,641. Are there any other instances?—Well, there are several other instances of two and three farms in the county. — John Miller.

23,642. In the hands of one man?—In the hands of one man. The large farm of Rattar and Dunnet, and the large farm of Reaster, partly in Dunnet and partly in Bower, are in the hands of one tenant at present.

23,643. Now, does it consist with your knowledge that such gentlemen holding several farms in this county in their own possession at one and the same time have also farms in Sutherlandshire?—Some of them have farms in Sutherlandshire, the neighbouring county.

23,644. One or more?—Two gentlemen belonging to this town have farms in Caithness and a farm each in Sutherlandshire, Mr Elder and Mr Sinclair.

23,645. How many farms in Caithness?—Mr Elder has two or three farms in Caithness, and a very large farm in Sutherlandshire.

23,646. And are there several instances?—There is the case of Mr Sinclair, also of this town.

[ADJOURNED.]

TWENTY-THIRD SITTING.

THURSO, September 5, 1893.

Present:—

DAVID BRAND, Esq., Advocate, Sheriff of Ayr, and Chairman of the Crofters Commission, *Chairman.*
MICHAEL HUGH SHAW STEWART, Esq., M.P.
ANGUS SUTHERLAND, Esq., M.P.
JAMES NOEL MULLER FORSYTH, Esq.
GEORGE GORDON, Esq.
WILLIAM MACKENZIE, Esq., *Secretary.*

HUGH DONALDSON, Strath, Watten (58)—*examined.* — Hugh Donaldson.

23,647. *The Chairman.*—Are you a crofter under the Act?—No, I have been a farm servant, and latterly a farm manager.

23,648. Are you a farm manager at present?—Not for three years back.

23,649. When you were a farm manager, for whom were you acting?—For a Mrs Mackay in Watten.

23,650. How long were you with her?—I was about thirty-two years with her altogether, and for fifteen years I was manager.

23,651. Have you any written statement?—I have a written statement. I was appointed by a meeting at Wick to give evidence from the southern portion of Watten.

23,652. A meeting of crofters?—A meeting of the Land Law Reform Association in Caithness.

23,653. And was anyone appointed along with you?—Mr John Miller, the last witness here yesterday.

23,654. You heard his evidence, I suppose?—Yes.

23,654*a*. And do you concur with that evidence?—I do.

23,655. You have a statement of your own?—I have a statement of my own. I did not understand that Mr Miller was to deal with the southern division; I went over the portion myself and gathered all the information I could get, and I have a statement to that effect.

23,656. Read it please.—*Munsary*, at the time of these removals, was the property of George Gordon

Thurso. — Hugh Donaldson.

Sweney, Esq., from which there were four tenants removed, viz.:—Donald Bruce, sen., Donald Bruce, jun., Alexander Bruce, and David Bruce. This was in 1865. It was let to an Edinburgh wool-broker then, and it has been out of cultivation since that date. One of the old tenants says there were about 100 acres in cultivation. It is now occupied by Mr P. Munro, Knockglass, and the property belongs to his Grace the Duke of Portland. *Achrole*, the sheep run spoken to by Mr Miller connected with West Watten farm, was at the time of the evictions the property of Sheriff Horne of Stirkoke. I find there were fourteen tenants who were driven out of their homes to make way for sheep, of whom the following are the names:—David Ross, David Sutherland, Donald Bain, John Meiklejohn, John Sandison, Robert Tait, Magnus Tait, Henry Finlayson, Donald Williamson, William Tait, John Geddes, David Robertson, John Mackay, and Andrew Sutherland. Some of these tenants were paying £70, some £50, and some £40. These evictions took place about the year 1839. My information is from one of the evicted tenants. He says the combined rental was over £300.

23,656*a*. What was the name of your informant?—Magnus Tait, now deceased.

23,656*b*. When did he die?—Almost three years ago.—I do not think it can be paying that now, for that would make the huge arable farm of, 1100 in statement, but probably 11,000 is correct, West Watten, with its 11,000 acres, something between £400 and £500 only. To keep within the mark there will be 600 acres of land in this sheep run capable of cultivation, along with about 100 on West Watten farm. This land is occupied by John Davidson, Old Hall, and has been out of cultivation for the long period of fifty-four years, it may be more. It was from an old lease I took the figures. This property also belongs to his Grace the Duke of Portland. *Iryglass*, the property of W. M. Thriepland, Esq. of Fingask. This is an arable farm of 50 or 60 acres. It was tenanted by a Miss Sandison, who kept the farm in regular rotation until some time about the year 1875, when old age made her give it up. It has been the greater part of eighteen years out of cultivation. It is occupied by Mr P. Munro, Knockglass, as a sheep run. There is an old steading on this farm. The following are on the estate of Sir R. Anstruther:—(1) *Larel*—I am told most of the evictions that took place here were from lands that are now under the plough, and as they are outside the scope of this inquiry, I have taken no note of them, but there is from three to four hundred acres of a sheep run—all meadow grass, no heather, and capable of cultivation. This is occupied by Mr John Davidson, Old Hall. (2) *Halsary*—A fine Highland farm tenanted by Widow Alexander Munro. I do not know how she left. The public had a great deal to say about it, but I am not to call it 'eviction,' in case I be wrong. The place was turned into a sheep run some time about the year 1875, and has remained so since. There will be about 30 acres capable of cultivation, and by improvement it could be made more. There is also a good house on this farm; it is occupied by Mr Munro, Knockglass. (3) *Strathbeg* or *Torren* was tenanted by Mr William Sutherland, who left it about the year 1875. It was turned into a grazing farm then in the hands of the factor, but he has let it as a sheep run last year to Mr Munro, Knockglass. There is an old steading on this farm, and over 20 acres are lying capable of being cultivated. (4) *Backlass*, a farm occupied by Mr P. Finlayson, or rather two farms put together. I find that of the farm of Leenmore some 60 acres have been let out in grass, and have not been cultivated for some years back.

Watten is a parish of some six miles square or thereabout, and I find there are some 1300 acres under sheep all capable of being cultivated, and I know I am inside the mark. I see that some of the former witnesses have been questioned about the altitudes of some of the places on which they have been examined. If the four hill tops in Watten—which was the city of refuge for the evicted crofters—if they can exist there, how much more would it be expected they could make a more comfortable living in these fertile plains. With the exception of some of the hills about the country march, Spittal Hill is the highest in Caithness, and it is planted with crofters up to the top. I have seen the corn and turnips growing on the southern slopes, almost to the very top.

Thurso. — Hugh Donaldson.

23,657. You mentioned particularly 600 acres, I think, on the farm of West Watten?—Yes.

23,658. Are these 600 acres enclosed?—Yes, there is a ring fence over the whole acreage, moors and all, round the whole sheep run.

23,659. And are these 600 acres all in one enclosure or in separate enclosures?—They are all in one enclosure.

23,660. Namely, this outside fence you have mentioned?—Outside the county road that cuts it off from West Watten farm.

23,661. How are these 600 acres being used at present?—Under sheep.

23,662. Are there any cattle upon them?—I was for a long period of years beside that, and I could scarcely say I had seen a herd of cattle, further than the shepherds' cows.

23,663. There was no herd of cattle upon them that you ever saw?—Not that I ever saw.

23,664. Now you say there are 300 to 400 acres near Larel?—Or thereabout; I could not be sure, further than what the people of the place said was supposed to be in it.

23,665. You estimate that as the extent?—Yes.

23,666. Which Larel do you mean, Lower Larel or Upper Larel?—Upper Larel.

23,667. How is the ground being used?—Under sheep entirely; since my memory I saw nothing but sheep there.

23,668. You are well acquainted with it?—I have been there very near Larel for about forty years.

23,669. Is that land fenced?—Yes.

23,670. With Caithness pavement?—Just a ring fence round it.

23,671. There is a road that runs through there, I think between Lower Larel and Upper Larel?—Yes.

23,672. And that land is on the south side of the road?—On the south side of the road.

23,673. And what is the farm of which it is a part?—The farm of Oldhall or rather the Larel farm, that being joined to Oldhall many years ago.

23,674. Larel at one time formed a separate holding?—Certainly.

23,675. And it is now consolidated with Oldhall?—Yes.

23,676. Forming one very large farm?—A very large farm.

23,677. Can you tell me of how many farms Oldhall is made up?—I could not say.

23,678. There is Oldhall itself to begin with, and there is this farm of Larel? Are there any others?—There is a farm of Laid too, between Watten and Oldhall steading.

23,679. Was that a separate farm?—Yes.

23,680. In your recollection?—In my recollection.

23,681. Are there any other small farms absorbed in Oldhall?—There were a number of small farms before my day, taken in by the factor of that time and joined to Oldhall.

23,682. Do you mean holdings of the crofter class?—There were some of them that would have a pair of horses, and maybe some two pairs; but with the exception of Larel and Laid, there have been no additions to Oldhall in my memory.

23,683. Then do you remember when these blocks of ground you have mentioned formed part of the farm of Larel?—I could not be very sure.

23,684. What I mean is this. You have spoken particularly of 600 acres in Larel?—300 to 400 acres.

23,685. Quite so. Do you remember that land before it was consolidated with the farm of Oldhall?—I could not be certain whether it followed Larel or Oldhall.

23,686. It may have been a part of Oldhall?—It

Thurso. Hugh Donaldson.

might have been a part of Oldhall for all that I remember, because I was very young then.

23,687. If you are not certain of it, you had better not say.—I am not certain, but I would suppose that it belonged to Larel, because it joins Larel all along.

23,688. However, you are not able to speak positively?—No.

23,689. Now you mentioned 20 acres or so about Strathbeg or Torran?—Yes.

23,690. Is it enclosed land?—There is a fence between it and the neighbouring tenant on the one side.

23,691. And is that the only fence?—That is the only fence.

23,692. Is that land in what one might call permanent pasture?—Yes.

23,693. Have you ever see it in crop?—I have.

23,694. How many years ago?—I have given the date,—I forget now, but it is about eighteen years since the deceased William Sutherland kept it in regular rotation.

23,695. How is it being used?—The factor took it into his own hand when Mr Sutherland left, and he kept it as a grazing farm, and sent his cattle and sometimes his sheep from other farms he has got on the estate and grazed them there; but he has got another farm into his own hands now, and he passed that one off to Mr Munro, Knockglass, who has it as a sheep run.

23,696. *Mr Sutherland.*—What farm did you say you were farm servant on? Were you upon more than one farm?—I have been on different farms in Caithness as a farm servant.

23,697. And then, when you were manager, what farm was it?—Newton, Watten; the march runs between it and this sheep run I have referred to.

23,698. So you have had abundant opportunities of knowing definitely about the land you are speaking of?—I know it perfectly.

23,699. You have walked over it?—Many a time.

23,700. So that everything you have spoken to is of your own personal knowledge?—I have spoken conscientiously and according to my judgment.

23,701. And you have had abundant opportunities of seeing for yourself?—I have.

23,702. With regard to this land you have spoken about on the farm of Larel, is that in the neighbourhood of Banniskirk farm?—It borders on it.

23,703. Near the mill dam?—Near the mill dam.

23,704. How many acres do you consider there are there?—I would suppose from 300 to 400.

23,705. Capable of cultivation?—I would think so.

23,706. And the remainder of it is good pasture?—It is all meadow grass.

23,707. Now, I just wish to ask you one question with regard to sheep. I think you mentioned that some sheep were grazed on the farm that were sent there from a Highland farm; is that a common thing in Caithness?—Oh, quite a common thing to winter hoggs in Caithness from a Highland farm.

23,708. Sheep that are kept all the summer on a Highland farm are sent down here in winter?—Yes.

23,709. And are no integral part of the stock of the lowland farm?—None whatever; they come here about speaning time, and they must leave at the 20th of March; then they are away from you and you have got nothing more to do with them.

23,710. So, if we were going over Caithness and seeing sheep wintered there, we would not be justified in supposing that they were sheep that were always there?—In no case; because a tenant may buy sheep and winter them, but he must sell them off because he has no grass for them. It is a general thing in Caithness for the smaller farmer to buy in hoggs and to winter them and sell them off at the first opportunity.

23,711. So that they are no part of the permanent stock?—No, they are no part of the permanent stock.

23,712. You spoke also of Torran, and said you saw that area cropped?—I did.

23,713. Were the crops you saw there good?—Oh, fairly good crops.

23,714. As good as the crops in the surrounding district?—As good as the ordinary crops in a Highland place.

Thurso. Hugh Donaldson.

23,715. Then, with regard to altitude, what is the altitude of the land you say is cultivated at Spital?—I could not say; but Spital Hill is almost the highest point in Caithness.

23,716. And do they raise fairly good crops there?—Fairly good crops in connection with Spital farm; The parks go out on the southern side, almost to the hill top, and the crofters come up from the northern side, almost to the hill top.

23,717. So that I take it you are of opinion that the question of altitude does not enter very much into the matter in Caithness?—Not in Caithness.

23,718. However much it may in other parts?—I cannot speak as to other parts.

23,719. You have had great experience as a farm servant; is it your opinion that farm servants would take small holdings if they had the opportunity?—I believe they would; I believe the worn-out farm servants would take it as a great favour if they could get some bit of land to work on in their declining years.

23,720. And they are men of agricultural experience, highly practical men?—Certainly.

23,721. In your opinion, are they as good farmers as some of the large farmers in Caithness?—I think they *are* the farmers in one way.

23,722. Are they as good farmers, do you think, as Thurso merchants?—Yes, and much better.

23,723. And you are certainly of opinion, are you, that if they got the opportunity they would be very glad to take small holdings?—Yes; but I do not agree with some of the witnesses with regard to building steadings. That would deprive the class that I would expect was to be benefited entirely, and open the country again perhaps to merchants and publicans from the towns, and in the end the cure would be worse than the disease. The people that would be willing to get land would be entirely shut out from it.

23,724. How would the building of steadings do that?—It is so expensive; it would shut them out altogether.

23,725. And, in your opinion, is the building of such expensive steadings necessary?—Well, I don't say expensive steadings; but go on to a farm such as this I have mentioned, that has been lying out of rotation for fifty years, and begin to plough it up, and you will find you will be a good few years before you get any return worth speaking about.

23,726. And how does the question of the building of steadings come in?—Well, I find at the present day, on some of these old farms, that Government money is given for making drains and building houses. I have no knowledge of how it has come, but I know that the Government inspector comes and inspects drains which I have made, and I have seen him inspect new houses which have been built; and that leads me to think that there is Government money given for these purposes.

23,727. To whom?—To farmers or the landlord, I cannot say whom.

23,728. Oh, you refer to the money which has been advanced for improvements?—I refer to money used at the present day in some places in Caithness.

23,729. What you state is that, as a matter of fact, Government is already advancing money to landlords for the improvements of land?—My reason for saying so is that I see a Government inspector passing these works.

23,730. But, as a matter of fact, Government does so every year?—Very well.

23,731. And your contention is that you see no reason why it should not be given to crofters?—I should think it would be a much better thing in the long run if there could be something done in that form, because if you go on to say that the people are prepared to build the houses and to stock holdings without assistance, that means arrears of rent and that means beggary to the farmer and beggary to the landlord. It would be much better to get it on a firm basis, where both could live in harmony together.

23,732. Then your contention is that this land would not for the first year bear a crop?—I say for the first

Thurso.

Hugh Donaldson.

year it would not bear a crop,—I suppose you would scarcely get the seed off it.

23,733. Land that has been lying waste?—For such a length of time: we have no implements that would cover the seed so that it would do; by harrowing it over you shake it all down to the bottom.

23,734. But after the first year?—The second would be better.

23,735. And how long would it take to get into proper working order?—The third year, I believe, it would have to be cropped again before you could try to put turnip in.

23,736. Have you seen any field cropped that had lain fallow for five or six years and more?—Yes.

23,737. And have you ever seen it fail to bear a crop?—I have seen the first year scarcely a crop.

23,738. In what respect?—We never could cover the seed; it neither ripened nor grew regularly.

23,739. And, with regard to this land that is being reclaimed every day in Caithness, does it take a number of years before it bears a crop?—The fourth year you can put in turnip, and the fifth you would be dead sure of an excellent crop; and for years afterwards it would be better than old arable land.

23,740. Suppose for a moment that money were advanced by the Government for the erection of steadings, for how many years do you suppose it would be necessary not to make any repayments in order to give the tenants a chance?—At the end of seven years a tenant that was active and doing for the best would be pretty well under weigh, in one of these new steadings I mean.

23,741. Is it with regard to steadings alone you are speaking?—With regard to the new land.

23,742. And, is it your opinion, that a farmer could settle down upon one of these places without building an expensive steading and finishing it right off to begin with?—He could build a steading as he was going along, and put additions to it; but everything put together, with the land not giving a crop for the first year and the great expenses connected with it, and the steading going on too, it is a matter of some consideration; and it is one who went through it that knows it best and knows the consequence.

23,743. Have you gone through it yourself?—Not entirely, but I have taken up a farm the most of which had lain out for about fifteen years, and I found it a very unprofitable affair. The farm was put under sheep and it lay out for about fifteen years. It did not suit sheep, however, and we began to take it up again. Well, it put it out of crop for years, and it took us years before we got it into cultivation again. But after we got it in it paid better for a number of years after the rest it got.

23,744. But we were referring to land that has had a rest for a long period of years?—I think you could come to the same conclusion about that as you would do about the fifteen years.

23,745. It would be a certain number of years before it would come back again to a proper state of cultivation?—Immediately after the first crop of turnip you could depend on an excellent crop, but not till then.

23,746. And it would improve every year after that?—If you did justice, did your duty to it, it would be better for a great number of years after the rest it got.

23,747. As a matter of fact, I think you have spoken to a case in which you had experience yourself of it?—I have.

23,748. Where was that, may I ask?—On the farm of Newton; I have spoken of Newton, Watten.

23,749. Where Mr Sutherland is now?—Where a Mr Sutherland is now; a farm of about 200 acres arable.

23,750. Yes, I know it very well. That is higher up than the land you were speaking about?—It is more on the slope of Blacklass hill.

23,751. You are aware of the conditions under which the farm is now let?—I think I know them.

23,752. Why did the old tenant leave it?—He died.

23,753. And what were the conditions upon which his successor went in, do you know? How does his rent compare with the previous tenants?—He pays I think £70 of rent, and I believe the former tenant paid £85, but the rent was £130 when I managed the place.

Thurso.

Hugh Donaldson.

23,754. So that the rent has been reduced nearly 50 per cent.; would not that be a condition that would militate against the success of a holding in your opinion?—I don't know.

23,755. Is not the ability to pay the rent an element in your mind?—Certainly.

23,756. And would not such a reduction amounting to near 50 per cent. be an important consideration?—It would be that too; but it was as easy to pay £130 then, as it that is to pay £70 to-day.

23,757. But the land is getting better, is it not?—I don't know.

23,758. Was there a considerable area of new land there?—There was no new land; all that was under cultivation since I went there, and was all lying under sheep for nineteen years if not more.

23,759. How have you had experience of breaking up land?—Because I broke it all up first.

23,760. To begin with?—To begin with, Mr Brown, Watten, had it for two 19's. I think.

23,761. It was lying vacant for two 19's.?—I think so, at any rate for one 19.

23,762. Was it all green?—All green.

23,763. Was it as good land as the land that is lying waste below now?—I don't think so.

23,764. The land down below is better land?—It is a deeper soil.

23,765. Then, with regard to the desire on the part of farm-servants to have small holdings, do you think it is a pretty wide-spread desire in Caithness?—Yes, I feel it is wide-spread, if it could be managed.

23,766. And is that difficulty of putting up steadings the greatest obstacle?—That is the greatest difficulty.

23,767. You have told us yourself with regard to these farms that on a number of small farms which have been absorbed into a larger one there are steadings standing idle, I presume?—There are goodish houses on Munsary, and there is one good house at Halsary, and there is a whole steading on Strathbeg or Torran. On the farm of Threipland of Fingask too, the whole of the old steading remains.

23,768. Are they being put to any use now?—Some of the workmen at the Spital Pavement Works live in the houses and pay rent to Mr Munro.

23,769. But for ordinary agricultural purposes, they are not used?—Not used whatever, because they are not needed for that.

23,770. And do you think that is a waste of capital that might be saved if the farms were broken up again?—Yes, I think it is too bad that one tidy little farm for a working man should be used for that purpose where the man has four or five already.

23,771. But you are generally of opinion that under favourable conditions which would not involve the difficulties you are speaking of in every case, and if there were such opportunities given to men who were of practical experience such as farm servants they would be willing to take them up?—They would, certainly.

23,772. And, in your opinion, could they manage them to a profit to themselves?—If a steading was on, I have every belief they would.

23,773. But the difficulty you have is that with regard to building the steadings?—Building the steading.

23,774. And paying interest on it from the commencement?—Yes.

23,775. Now, with regard to that point, are you conversant with the conditions that were offered to emigrants to Manitoba, and other places, who were to get advances from Government?—I could not say about that.

23,776. Did you ever hear that for the first five years or seven years they were to be asked for no return at all? Were you aware of that?—No, I was not aware of that.

23,777. Is it in your opinion a wise provision, and one that would apply in this country with beneficial effect as well as abroad?—I would think so.

23,778. Would it meet your objection with regard to the burden of paying interest on the farm steading

Thurso. Hugh Donaldson.

for the first few years?—I would not grudge to pay the interest on the farm steading if it was put up.

23,779. From the beginning?—From the very beginning, if I got the land at its value.

23,780. But we are assuming that all the while?—Very well, I would not grudge to pay interest, I would not want the steading to go up otherwise.

23,781. We are assuming all along, at least I am, that you would have your rents fixed by an independent tribunal who would take every circumstance into account?—Certainly, it is not another way I would want to see them fixed.

23,782. And would that take away part of your objection?—I think it would.

23,783. You have no doubt the rent would be such as would enable the tenant to live and thrive under such circumstances?—It would be a very good way to make the rent a little lower for the first seven years, and at the end of seven to put it up.

23,784. Would not that in your mind be a material consideration in the minds of many men?—Certainly it would, and I think it would be a success.

23,785. You think under such conditions it would be successful?—I think it would: it is my impression it would.

23,786. *Mr Shaw Stewart.*—Do I understand that if the land was given at a fair rent your objection to the expense of putting up the steadings would be obviated? Or do you still think that the expense of the new steading would handicap a small farmer too much?—It would depend on the number of years you would stretch the interest over, and how much the interest would be.

23,787. *The Chairman.*—What size of holding would you propose for farm servants?—The size of holding I always thought would be best was the holding on which there was work enough for a pair of horses; on a less holding than that you have to keep a pair of horses and you have to feed them, and I consider these horses eat the provender that should go to feed cattle; they are not constantly required, but you cannot do without them. I would prefer to see a holding where there was abundant work for a pair of horses, or else make it so little that one horse would do: or, as I have seen, two neighbours plough together.

23,788. In a case of that sort, do you contemplate that the farm servant should go on working as a farm servant, or that he is to devote himself to his holding?—He would devote himself entirely to his holding.

23,789. He would have ceased to be a farm servant?—He would cease to be a farm servant.

23,790. Now, are you in favour of farm servants who continue to be farm servants?—I am, certainly.

23,791. Wait a moment.—As long as they are able to work.

23,792. Let me finish the question. Are you in favour of farm servants, who continue to be farm servants, getting a holding larger than anything they have yet received?—No; while they are farm servants I do not see it is of any use to them.

23,793. You would not give a holding of any size to a man so long as he continues to be a farm servant?—No, I would not.

23,794. You think his time would be fully occupied?—Entirely.

23,795. In performing the services for which he gets his wages?—Entirely.

23,796. And, therefore, you would be against giving the land to such a person?—Anything further than a garden.

23,797. Quite so, when he can work it after hours?—Just so.

23,798. But you would propose that facilities should be afforded for giving holdings to men who had been farm servants, but were anxious to retire and devote the rest of their lives to cultivating their own holdings?—I am greatly in favour of that.

23,799. Now, taking average soil in this county which had been under permanent grass for fifteen or twenty years perhaps, and breaking it up and reducing it to a state of cultivation, how many years would you expect to have to work it before you got any profitable return?—To take it as a whole, I would work hard at it for seven years. Thurso.

23,800. You would not expect a profitable return before that?—Not before the end of seven years; I would have a profitable return from parts, but not over all. Hugh Donaldson

23,801. But at the end of seven, you would expect it?—I would expect it to be in working order.

23,802. And you would expect a profitable return, with average weather, to continue for a good number of years?—I would, more so than if I had got an arable farm to begin with.

23,803. Then you mentioned the difficulty you would have about a steading. You mean that a house and steading could hardly be put up by a man in such circumstances without some assistance?—I do not see how it could.

23,804. Suppose he got assistance for the house and steading, how would he meet his rent during the first seven years, I mean for the ground?—He would have his grass, and he would make his rent out of his younger cattle.

23,805. He would look to the stock for his rent?—Almost entirely to his stock.

23,806. And for his own maintenance, and the maintenance of his wife and family?—He would have that on the farm.

23,807. But he would have a good deal of privation to undergo?—A great deal.

23,808. Do you think from your knowledge of the country and the other tenants in the county that there are many who would face such difficulties as that?—There would be no difficulty in getting them to face it if the steading question was settled.

23,809. You think if the steading question was put on a satisfactory basis, they would be prepared to face the rent?—I think so. I will give you an instance. That farm of Newton, of which we have spoken, was advertised last year, and I found out there were 19 offerers for the one farm. That number would occupy more than all the ground that lies adjacent, this sheep run that I have spoken about, if the steadings were there, but it would not do without the steadings. Well, there was another little croft across in Bower which was advertised, and there were 24 offerers I was told for it. There was also another little croft in Thrumster, which the Crofters Commission went over, and reduced the rent from £12 to £6. The crofter died, leaving no successor, and the cry for land was such that they put up the rent of that croft to £12 again; there were so many bidders. Those are three instances of the demand that there is for land.

23,810. But, as I understand, you yourself would not venture upon such a holding as we have been describing, unless you got some assistance for the erection of the house and steading?—I would not; but if I got the steading I would be most happy to-morrow to take one of these holdings.

23,811. *Mr Forsyth.*—You have given us very clear evidence as to the larger style of farm,—what I may call the pair horse farm which you have been describing and discussing. Can you give us any information as to the smaller size of holding, whether there is much demand in this county for a much smaller holding, which a man would cultivate and also be a labourer,—I don't mean a farm servant, but a labourer?—Yes, there would be a good many of that kind. A good many of these labourers can take days now and again when it suits them, and they are very much inclined for such places, say about 10 acres or thereabouts.

23,812. How would they cultivate this, by horse labour?—They pay their neighbours for ploughing it and doing that work, and they don't keep a horse; all that they keep is in the cattle way, to help to pay the rent.

23,813. But these men, as a rule, have houses already, have they not?—They have.

23,814. How would you do with a man who wanted a new holding of that kind, and to put a house on it; do you see your way there?—Oh, there would require to be some help, just the same as I have described for the others.

Thurso. — Hugh Donaldson.

23,815. But on a smaller scale?—On a smaller scale.

23,816. And do you consider that there is a demand for that in this county?—There is.

23,817. Do you think that a labourer could meet his engagements, as regards house and land, and pay a fair rent?—I believe he could; we have such men amongst us already, around the pavement works that I spoke about there and in Watten. There are numbers of these men who hold a little croft and work at the pavement works.

23,818. And you think about 10 acres arable of fair land would do?—I think that would be plenty, because if it was much more than that it would take up too much of their time; and probably if they spent too much of their time at home they might be paid off.

23,819. And they would be inclined to devote their attention almost entirely to that small subject, and that would not pay them, is that your view?—That would not pay them.

23,820. Ten acres is quite enough; or is it not too much?—Yes, I would say it is quite enough.

23,821. For one or two cows, with a bit of outrun?—It might keep two if it was goodish land.

23,822. But a holding of that kind, from 5 to 10 acres, would be a convenience?—I would think so.

23,823. *Mr Sutherland.*—In reply to a question by the Chairman, you stated that you did not think it would be desirable to give small holdings to men who are at present farm servants?—I did.

23,824. May I ask you what was your reason for that answer?—My reason is this. A farm servant in Caithness, at the present time, works ten hours in the field. Very well, he works about an hour in the stable in the morning, between going there and feeding and coming back; and he works another hour at mid-day.

23,825. That makes twelve hours?—He works another hour after 6 o'clock at night.

23,826. Making thirteen hours?—That makes thirteen hours that a farm servant in Caithness, generally speaking, has got to work at the present day; and what time has he got to go and work a croft?

23,827. So it is not a question in certain circumstances his being able to do it, but on the ground of time alone that you see the objection?—I don't approve of it any way. I think a farm servant, in the employment of his master, has got enough to do to attend to his work there.

23,828. Thirteen hours a day?—I think so.

23,829. But it is all a question of want of time?—Want of time.

23,830. You think it would be a great benefit to a man who was a labourer otherwise?—I do.

23,831. Altogether, because he has shorter hours than the farm servants?—He has the ten hours of work and no more.

23,832. Now then, with regard to the new holding and the paying of rent upon it, have you any idea as to the rent per acre that is being paid for the waste land at present?—Well, I could not say as to that. The whole farm pays one rent; I cannot be sure by the valuation roll in the case of the Duke of Portland's grounds, because he gives a percentage off, some 3s. in the pound, when you pay your rent.

23,833. But as an experienced man, do you know or have you ever heard what the value of that pasture is per acre; what is being paid for it now?—No, I don't know what they pay for it now, but it was said to be £300, the combined rent, when the tenants were evicted.

23,834. But it was arable land then, you know?—Well, I suppose I am safe to say that I have seen 1000 lambs sold off that ground at speaning time.

23,835. Have you any reason to suppose it is a high rental that is being paid for the waste land?—I don't think it is a high rental; I don't think it is as much as the rent paid by the old tenants, because that would reduce the rent of West Watten to 7s. per acre.

23,836. You think that the rent that is paid for the waste land is not a considerable figure?—I could not state what it might be calculated to be at the present time, as both farms are combined.

23,837. But you are of opinion that it is nothing in comparison with rent that is paid for land under cultivation at present?—No, it cannot be that.

Thurso. — Hugh Donaldson.

23,838. Well, would you contemplate under any circumstances paying more for it after it is brought under cultivation than is payable for it now?—If it was brought into rotation possibly it might be worth more than it is just now.

23,839. To whom?—To a working farmer.

23,840. But, with regard to the rent?—Well, as I have stated I cannot say what is the present rent, or what might be the actual acreage after it was taken up.

23,841. But would there be any loss to any person if you paid for it when it was cultivated, the same rent that is being paid for it now?—Certainly, there would be no loss.

23,842. No loss to any person?—None. The rent that is being paid for it now is, I think, under the old rent paid by the evicted tenants. That is my opinion, when I calculate on what West Watten pays.

23,843. *Mr Gordon.*—Upon this question of rent, I would like to understand from you whether you think a tenant would be safe to promise anything like the same rent which the tacksman is now paying to the landlord, and also pay to the Government a return of interest on the cost of the buildings?—The difficulty is that I cannot be sure what is the present rent.

23,844. Well, but you are a Practical Man; do you think the man could afford to pay the same rent as a tacksman, and to pay the interest on buildings and fencing too?—I think so; I think it would be much better than to go into the other form.

23,845. But do you think he could manage to pay that additional rent and interest?—I would think so; if the interest had been stretched over a number of years so that it would not be too heavy in one year.

23,846. It depends upon that a little. But for a £30 rent, what do you think would be the expense of buildings; say on a pair horse farm?—You scarcely could expect to get it completed under £200.

23,847. You would hardly get up a dwelling-house and a barn and a byre and stable for £200, would you?—I think you would in Caithness, where the quarries are so convenient.

23,848. The quarries would be convenient, and the cartage is not large?—And the slates so convenient, and all these pavements so convenient, and the farmer might save the driving by doing the cartage himself, and working hand in hand, thus lowering the interest.

23,849. You think he would be able to pay 3 or 4 per cent., say 3 per cent., which would be a very small percentage even on £200, but I would be inclined rather to put it at £300, which would mean £9 a year additional to the rent?—That would be hard enough too, but I still would prefer the steading.*

23,850. No doubt it is better if you get it?—I would prefer, and I would try it that way.

23,851. I quite understand your proposal is that you would relieve the tenant of the expenditure of his own capital?—Certainly.

23,852. But it would be a pretty hard tax upon him to pay interest on the building, to say nothing about the fencing?—Well, if he got the land at its fair value.

23,853. It is all a question of rent?—All a question of rent.

23,854. But you say you would pay the same rent now? I am rather afraid you would not be able to pay the same rent, and you might be doing an injury to the

* Mr Donaldson has since written setting forth the details on which his estimate of £200 was based. They are as follows, according to Caithness prices:—

12 roods mason work,	£48	0	0
Roofing,	65	0	0
Slating,	35	0	0
4 doors,	4	0	0
5 roof lights,	1	10	0
3 windows,	3	0	0
20 bolls lime,	3	10	0
Total,	£160	0	0

"This," he adds, "is the money I would have to pay interest on. I would finish all inside work, but the building would be mine, and not the landlord's."

Thurso. — Hugh Donaldson.

man by saying he could do it?—I cannot be sure what is the real rent.

23,855. But I mean that he would be able to pay the tacksman's rent whatever the rent is, whether £200 or £300?—I think if I got it into rotation, I would be able to pay the present tacksman's rent; about 8s. an acre.

23,856. Some of it would be dear enough at that?—And some would be dear enough at that, because it is not all good ground. There is some very good ground and some very poor.

23,857. We saw part of it very good; but I am afraid you could scarcely calculate upon a tenant being able to pay the tacksman's rent *plus* interest on the building?—Well, I said I would prefer to get the first seven years' rent a little cheaper, and I would agree then to give an advance.

23,858. Till the interest was paid off?—Yes.

23,859. *Mr Sutherland.*—With regard to the amount of rent, if you got tacksman's land, would not you pay tacksman's rent?—Yes.

23,860. *The Chairman.*—Suppose you got a holding of this kind, and looked forward to working it for about seven years before you got a profitable return, and you had the fixing of your own rent the first seven years, what rent would you assess upon yourself?—It would not be worth over 5s. an acre to me for the first seven years.

23,861. You would assess that upon yourself?—About that.

William Taylor.

WILLIAM TAYLOR, Carrier, Halkirk (68)—*examined.*

23,862. *The Chairman.*—Are you a leaseholder or a crofter?—I am neither.

23,863. What is your occupation?—A carrier.

23,864. But have you a holding? Have you a croft?—No, I have some feus in the village of Halkirk.

23,865. Is there land to which you wish to ask our attention?—I was cited here to appear to give in the list of some lands in Gerston, where I was evicted from in 1854.

23,866. Have you the list with you?—Yes.

23,867. Read your statement if you please.—The first place is Gerston, and the names of parties who were evicted between 1848 and 1854 are George Douglas, James Sinclair, John Douglas, John and Donald Gunn, George Sutherland, Donald Macpherson, William Bain, Donald Mackay, Donald Mackinlay, John Allan, Bell and Janet Budge, John Munro, Sinclair Murray, and William Taylor.

23,868. Were these all removed in your own knowledge?—Yes.

23,869. Between 1848 and 1854?—Yes, I was about the last that was put out, and it was in the year 1855.

23,870. How are the lands that were occupied by these persons now used?—After 1854 it was occupied by one tenant. All these were sub-tenants before.

23,871. Under whom?—Under the tenant who had the farm of Gerston; his name was Mr Swanson.

23,872. Is the land part of a farm now?—Yes, it is all in one farm, in this district, under one tenant.

23,873. What is the name of the farm?—Gerston.

23,874. It is part of the farm of Gerston. Is that all land now under rotation, or is it in grass?—Part of it under grazing and part under rotation.

23,875. Is the part under grazing enclosed land?—It has a ring fence round it all.

23,876. And is it land that has been under rotation?—Part of it is and part not.

23,877. Is the land that is not under rotation, land that had been under rotation within recent years?—Yes.

23,878. How long is it since that land now under grazing was under rotation?—Since 1850 and 1854.

23,879. Has it been cultivated at all since these evictions?—No, not since 1854.

23,880. Is it land in your judgment suitable for occupation by crofters now?—Decidedly, some of it is excellent ground.

23,881. What is the extent of the land?—There is one farm called Deakless with about 50 to 60 acres of arable ground.

23,882. Then, is there any other land?—Yes, on the river side, what they call the strath; there are three farms there that I recollect. Thurso. — William Taylor.

23,883. You mean three holdings, I suppose?—Yes.

23,884. And what extent of land is there?—From 12 to 20 acres in the first; and in the second about 6 acres, and in the third 12 to 15 acres.

23,885. Do these acreages you have given, which are approximate I suppose, embrace all the lands you are referring to here?—Yes, on the farm of Gerston.

23,886. You hold feus in Halkirk?—Yes.

23,887. You have given us the account of removals from 1848 to 1854. Are you desirous yourself of obtaining a holding?—I would like to see the ground cultivated, but I am getting too old for taking a farm.

23,888. You have not that in view for yourself?—No.

23,889. Is there any other place you would like to mention?—Yes, there is another place on the farm of Brawl. I was just asked to take the names of the places I knew.

23,890. Is that between Brawl Castle and Skinnet?—Yes.

23,891. What extent of land is there?—I cannot say, but it is mostly grazings.

23,892. Under sheep, or under sheep and cattle?—Under sheep and cattle.

23,893. Have you names to give us?—Of tenants that I have seen there?

23,894. Just give us their names.—George Manson, [Wm.] Jack, Donald and James Davidson, Walter Innes, and William Henderson.

23,895. That land is now part of the farm of Brawl?—Of Brawl.

23,896. How far is that from the Castle?—Just surrounding it to the north and north west.

23,897. Is there any other land?—On the Calder estate, a lot of it.

23,898. What land is there on the Calder estate?—John Charleson, North Calder; Donald Bain, Musal; James Henderson, Togie; William Williamson, North Calder; George Campbell, North Calder; Alexander Campbell, Kirkal; John Bain, Hishal; George Sinclair, Framside; John Sinclair, Framside; Neil Sinclair, Framside; William Gunn, Framside; Donald Manson, Framside; Alexander Falconer, Framside; William Meiklejohn, Parish of Framside; John Keith, Framside; Widow William Manson, Framside; Andrew Miller, Achavern; William Macdonald, Achavern; Alexander Gunn, Calder; James Macbeath, Calder; John Bain, Calder; John Mitchell, America, Calder; Donald Taylor, America, Calder; Angus Macdonald, America, Calder; William Manson, Calder; and John Manson, Calder. All this land is now occupied by three farmers.

23,899. Who are the farmers?—In North Calder, Mr Innes; in Calder, Mr Daniel Elder, Thurso; and in West Calder, I forget the tenant's name.

23,900. All these lands form part of farms?—Yes, of these farms.

23,901. And are these enclosed lands?—Yes.

23,902. What are they being used for at present; sheep, or sheep and cattle?—Sheep and cattle, and cultivated.

23,903. Some of it is under rotation?—Oh, yes, a considerable part of it is under rotation.

23,904. More than half, would you say?—Perhaps it would be that.

23,905. A considerable portion at all events?—Yes.

23,906. *Mr Sutherland.*—Are you of opinion that that land could be profitably occupied by small tenants again?—Oh, decidedly, it could be; it would be a great boon to small tenants to get a stretch off the sides of these big farms.

22,907. Take the farm of Gerston; have you any idea of the size of it?—I think it is about 1000 acres within the ring fence, but I cannot exactly say.

23,908. But it includes the land of all these people you named that were removed from it?—Yes.

23,909. What is the total number that were before on the farm of Gerston?—Fourteen that I remember, and I am within the mark I believe.

23,910. Have these proceedings any connection with the feus in Halkirk? When did Halkirk begin to be feued?—It was feued long before I remember anything about it, but, of course, it increased as they were put out of the crofts, such as I did myself.

23,911. You are a case yourself, are you?—Yes.

23,912. What is the extent of the feus in Halkirk?—About an acre.

23,913. And what is the feu-duty?—From £1 to £2, 10s., and thereabout.

23,914. They vary, do they?—Those that I can speak for principally are those that I occupy myself at 35s.

23,915. They are not all the same price?—No.

23,916. Is it a perpetual feu you have?—Yes.

23,917. Are they all perpetual feus?—Yes, in the village of Halkirk.

23,918. What do you do with the remainder of the acre that you do not occupy as a house?—Grow corn or potatoes or turnips.

23,919. You farm it?—Decidedly.

23,920. What state was it in when you got it?—Part of the feus that I have got were arable; indeed, all the feus I have got were arable except one.

23,921. And occupied as a feu before you got it?—Yes.

23,922. It was an old feu that you got?—Yes.

23,923. Did any of them get new feus?—Yes.

23,924. Within your memory?—Yes.

23,925. And what sort of land did they get?—Some of it moss ground, some of it arable.

23,926. Was the moss ground growing heather?—Yes, heather and grass.

23,927. And they were put down there?—Yes, on the road side, it is what they call moss ground on the road side, but through it a bit there was arable land.

23,928. Do you know any feu that was all moss ground?—Oh, yes.

23,929. And what state is that land in now?—In cultivation.

23,930. Does it bear good crops?—Yes, when it is trenched and drained.

23,931. And did the feuars build their own houses?—Oh, yes.

23,932. Did they get assistance from any person at all?—Not for feus; I am not aware of any assistance.

23,933. Either in building houses or in reclaiming the land?—I am not aware of anything of that kind in feus.

23,934. I am talking of feus with an acre of land, for which they pay £1 to £2?—Yes, and some £2, 10s.

23,935. Did they build good houses?—Cottages generally; some of them good cottages.

23,936. Some are two-storeyed houses, are they not?—Yes.

23,937. With slated roofs and outhouses?—Yes, such as a byre and a barn.

23,938. And they rear good crops?—Some of them are very good that have been in cultivation some time and well done to.

23,939. And they did all that without any assistance from anybody?—Yes, those who took feus.

23,940. *The Chairman.*—Are you here as a delegate?—I was cited to come here.

23,941. But you were not appointed by a meeting to come here as a delegate?—I was appointed by some meeting, but I forget what meeting; I don't know what meeting it was, but I got notice to that effect.

23,942. When was the meeting held?—I cannot say that.

23,943. *Mr Shaw Stewart.*—May I ask who you got notice from?—I got notice from the Secretary. (*Letter produced.*)

23,944. *Mr Sutherland.*—All the facts you have spoken to are from your own personal knowledge?—Oh decidedly, there is not a house I have mentioned but I have been in it and seen it.

DONALD HENDERSON, Crofter, Geise (63)—*examined.*

23,945. *The Chairman.*—Are you a crofter or a farmer?—A crofter.

23,946. What rent do you pay?—£21.

23,947. Was your rent dealt with by the Crofters Commission?—No.

23,948. Have you a lease?—Yes.

23,949. For a term of years?—It will be completed in 1895.

23,950. Is it a nineteen years' lease?—No, eight years I think.

23,951. Have you any written statement?—Yes. On Sir Tollemache Sinclair's estate, on the north side of Halkirk village, are the two large farms of *Brawl* and *Skinnet* joined and occupied by a non-resident tenant. Bounding the road which goes through the centre on the one side and the river Thurso on the other, there are about 200 acres now a sheep run. It is excellent ground, and was formerly occupied by crofters, the sites of whose houses are still there. Altogether there are 15 tenants said to have been evicted out of this holding. Connected with the farm on the west there is a beautiful hill, an excellent slope to the east, very productive and fertile in appearance, and from the fact of rig marks being yet discernible, it is supposed to have been once reclaimed and occupied by crofters. It runs two miles long by ¾ mile broad, but this includes the parts belonging to the three adjoining farms of Aimster, Buckie, and How. The farm of *Calder* was already spoken to, so I do not mention it here.

23,952. You concur with the evidence given with regard to Calder?—I decline it, as it has been already touched by the previous witness.

23,953. But you concur with the evidence given with regard to Calder?—I heard the evidence, but, of course, the previous witness gave it.

23,954. The evidence that was given, with regard to Calder, is very much what you wish to give yourself, and accordingly you pass it over?—Most certainly, except that a vast deal of waste property was not described aright. There is something like 600 acres connected with the main farm of *Calder* and *Framside* that is reclaimable and has been previously occupied by crofters. From the march dyke separating Sir Tollemache's estate from Mr Guthrie's until Brims is reached is 5 miles in length, and from the Crown lands of Lythmore to Holbourn is 3 miles in breadth. The whole range, prior to 1815, was unreclaimed people's common or public property; two-thirds of it are now peopled, with about 35 holders paying an annual rent of £400. About the said date the Sinclairs of Forss and Ulbster with Threipland Stewart agreed to divide this common, which as far back as the memory of man could guide was public property. From the fact that when divided the small peace-offering of 10 acres was given to each of the Thurso citizens or householders, public feeling still thinks the present possessions have no charter claim, and on strict inquiry the whole range would again become public property. By mistake the present rental goes into the wrong pocket. However, that part, now waste, includes the hills of Forss and Lythmore. *Lythmore* has a park of about 200 acres where some crofts had been. It is partly heath and green. On the hill of *Forss* is about a square mile, containing productive earth resting on good-bearing clay soil. One good little farm is reclaimed from the side of this hill to the east. There are symptoms of crofts on other parts of the hill, but two in my own memory that lined the river of Forss called Brimside of 50 acres each are now a sheep run connected with the farm of Forss. There were about 15 tenants evicted from the farm of *Scrabster* whose lands were added to the main farm now in possession of Mr Miller. There is a hill-park of about 500 acres of as good-bearing clay as there is in Caithness, and in all respects capable of reclaiming. On Forss estate *Holbourn* has 300 acres heath and about 60 arable, nearly all in sheep run.

23,955. You mentioned 200 acres between Skinnet and Brawl?—Yes.

23,956. Is that part of the land that was referred to by one of the previous witnesses, William Taylor?—No, he made no mention of Skinnet at all.

23,957. These 200 acres are land that you think suitable for occupation?—Most suitable and fertile in appearance, and the sites of the crofters' houses are still there.

Thurso. — Donald Henderson.

23,958. Of how many houses are the remains visible there?—Of course, I could not accurately say; it does not stand to my memory now, although on the ground I could mention them.

23,959. We will see the ground when we go there. How is it presently occupied?—In my memory it was never cultivated; but it has been cultivated, and you have signs to that effect. It is now grown over with rush and whins to a great extent.

23,960. But it has not been cultivated in your recollection?—Never.

23,961. Then, what is it used for now?—Sheep run.

23,962. Sheep exclusively?—Yes.

23,963. No cattle?—I never saw cattle there.

23,964. Is it enclosed land?—Yes, it is enclosed; the river bounds it on the one side, and a dyke adjoining the county road on the other; I should think it is ¾ mile in length from the river to the dyke bounding the county road.

23,965. You heard the evidence given by Donaldson with regard to the difficulties attending the taking up and carrying on of a new holding. Do you agree with that evidence?—Certainly I do not, most that I have heard.

23,966. You do not agree with that?—As to Donaldson it does not stand in my mind exactly what his statement was, but I know one thing, that the Highlanders are more holden to the stock than the crop of their holdings. They had the hill of the heath, and that was mostly their support, and if they were still allowed to exist upon the holding they would exist as noble a race now as before. That is my opinion.

23,967. They trusted for their rents more to the stock they grew than to the land they tilled?—At all times in the periods backwards, and most certainly in the future as well, if the ground was allowed to be the people's property as of old; if they were just allowed to live on it.

23,968. Suppose a man got a new holding on land that had been cultivated many years ago, but had been grazing for a long time, how long would you expect him to have to till the land before he was able to do it to a profit?—I agree with Mr Donaldson's statement; seven years is the period.

23,969. Do you agree with his view in regard to steadings?—At the same time I cannot see that the land should bear any rent at all for that, because previously the land was given for nothing for the first three, and then the rent was raised a little, possibly a shilling an acre, on to seven, and then it was rented according to its value.

23,970. And would you repeat the process in the event of a man getting a holding on land that had been out of cultivation for many years?—Most certainly; a man without capital could not exist a day on any other terms.

23,971. Would he require assistance for the steading or the house?—All I have to say is that all these 30 crofters that occupied the commons in the centre of which I dwell myself have had £5 given for the building of a steading. The ground was wholly reclaimed out of the heath, without a single plack from the proprietor. The rest of the building was done and the ground was reclaimed by the crofter that was evicted from other places.

23,972. Would you expect a man who got a holding of that kind to put up the house and steading himself, or would you propose that he should receive assistance?—I could not look on it, but at the same time regarding it as gross injustice. The lairds, of course, dispossessed the people, put them out of their holdings that were built and out of the land with it, and I do say that it is but fair they should bear the expense of repeopling the land as they dispeopled it.

23,973. On that footing you think a man getting such a holding should have some assistance for the erection of his house and steading?—Either from Government or from the proprietor.

23,974. You referred to the crown lands of Lythmore?—Yes.

23,975. Are these lands now part of a farm?—Well, I must acknowledge that the main farm of Lythmore includes about a chain beyond the steading on the east side. There is a park attached to it, and I am not certain whether that belongs to the Crown, or whether they have it from some other proprietor. But I know that the park itself consists of something like 150 acres, and that there have been crofts there.

Thurso. — Donald Hender

23,976. Can you say what the extent of these Crown lands is altogether, how many acres?—In Lythmore I should think there are 600 acres, including the hill and the arable. The arable farm, of course, is kept in regular rotation.

23,977. And is all the Crown land under sheep now?—By no means.

23,978. How is it occupied?—It is wholly cultivated and kept in regular rotation by the tenant, except this park.

23,979. All under rotation except that park?—Yes.

23,980. Now you mentioned some lands on which crofters had at one time lived having been added to the farm of Scrabster?—Yes.

23,981. Did you say fifteen tenants had been there?—Yes.

23,982. What was the name of that bit of land afterwards added to Scrabster?—The burn goes under the name of Holburn, and the tenants lined each side of that burn; but, narrowly speaking, both go under the name of Scrabster.

23,983. When was that land added to Scrabster; was it before Mr Miller's time?—Oh, yes.

23,984. Was it added to Scrabster when the land formed Crown land?—Certainly it was; it was Crown land all along.

23,985. Now, that land that was added to Scrabster where the fifteen tenants were, was it Crown land?—Yes, certainly.

23,986. Do you remember it being added to Scrabster?—No, I remember one in particular of the tenants, but no more. But, of course, I have it from the tenants, and my father was there as a servant and as a small boy, and I have it from my father.

23,987. A servant to whom?—To one of the tenants that were on Scrabster; one of the fifteen.

23,988. One of the fifteen who were removed?—Yes.

23,989. And that land is now part of the farm?—It is a part of the farm of Scrabster.

23,990. Is it as grazing, or as land under rotation?—It is under rotation, regular rotation.

23,991. *Mr Gordon.*—As to this land Lythmore, which farm is it upon; is it on the farm of Lythmore?—Yes.

23,992. And is the land you speak about there under rotation the same as Scrabster?—It is all under rotation except the park I referred to.

23,993. Except the portion you referred to. And is it down by the waterside?—The main farm is; the arable ground of it lines the river.

23,994. But the land you refer to, is it between the farm and the water, or on the hill?—The water runs by the line of the farm; the water bounds the farm.

23,995. But is the land that was formerly small holdings on the hill of Lythmore, on the waterside?—It is on the east.

23,996. And is it now under arable land or under pasture?—The greater part of this park is heath, but there are some small green spots and sometimes crofters' sites there. But the people of the Highlands, as I say, are more holden for their support to the heath than to the crop.

23,997. It is more grazing land than arable, but there is part of it arable?—There is very little arable, except small spots connected with the sites of the crofters that were there; the rest is heath.

23,998. Is it occupied by crofters at present?—No.

23,999. There are no crofters within it?—I am not aware that there are any.

24,000. This land of Brawl and Skinnet that you told us about; is any part of the land that you spoke about, from which people were evicted, part of the arable lands of Brawl and Skinnet?—No, what I have referred to is not.

Thurso. Donald Henderson.

24,001. Is it all on the hill?—It is all in beautiful green.

24,002. On the hill?—Not on the hill; it is from the county road down to the river.

24,003. Have you a farm on Geise yourself?—Yes.

24,004. How many acres has it?—I have not a correct measurement, but I should think about 40 acres of arable.

24,005. And your rent is £21?—£21, and there are about 20 acres of pasture.

24,006. Is that the only farm you have?—It is the only farm I have.

24,007. You are not tenant of any other place?—No.

24,008. And you would like your farm enlarged?—Yes.

24,009. *Mr Sutherland.*—Are you here advocating your own cause, or are you for the public?—By no means; I took a lively interest in the public all through.

24,010. I wish to ask you a question with regard to the common. You spoke of a common?—Yes.

24,011. Where was that common?—I dwell in the centre of it.

24,012. Where your farm is now was at one time a common?—Yes.

24,013. Is it a large common?—Certainly; it was 15 square miles; it was 5 in length and 3 in breadth.

24,014. Now, let me understand the nature of the common. To what did the common rights extend at that time?—It was regarded as public property by every one, and no man interfered with their claim to it; and it was so as far back as the memory of man can guide us. The public feeling is that indeed there is no charter claim to it, but they grasped it without a claim at all.

24,015. Who did?—The proprietors.

24,016. That is to say, the neighbouring proprietors got the land divided among them?—Exactly so.

24,017. And what became of the class who were on the common?—They gave a small parchment to every householder in Thurso who were regarded as citizens.

24,018. That was a recognition, was it, of the public right in the common?—Exactly so, as you throw a bone to a dog that he may not bite you.

24,019. But what became of the commoners who lived on the common?—The commoners meant the whole people. The fact is this that Thurso takes its name from that; it is presently called Newton, one half Thurso, but then it was called Bourag town from the fact that it was there that the people took all their fuel.

24,020. Was the common occupied in any way?—It was occupied in every respect as a public right.

24,021. Did any person live on the common?—Not any.

24,022. But they had certain rights of which they were deprived?—It was regarded as commons that they grazed on. There was a centre place called Waas; this took its name from the people who had taken their fuel and other things from the hill having a house there where they put in the harness of the horse and the oxen, and the name as then known was the colour which was on the horses or the oxen.

24,023. What share did the participators in the common get when it was divided?—Every one that could call himself a citizen, of public right, got a patch of about 10 acres.

24,024. Were there many of those?—There are some dozen or so still.

24,025. Do they hold these patches still?—Yes, their heirs do.

24,026. And what became of the remainder of the land?—The remainder of the land is in the hands of Sinclair of Forss, and of Ulbster and Threipland, and it is under land rent. The crofters cultivate it to the extent of 30, paying about £400 of rent annually. They cultivated the ground wholly themselves without any assistance from the proprietor except that they had got £5 for the building of the steading.

24,027. You spoke also of Crown property; where is the Crown property?—The Crown property consists of Lythmore, at the river of Forss, and then Scrabster here.

24,028. Do you know how it came to be Crown property? What are the circumstances that led to it? Is it part of the Bishop of Caithness's lands do you know?—It became the Crown's from the fact of the war that there was between King George and Prince Charles; as many as supported Prince Charles in the rebellion lost their rights to property.

Thurso. Donald Henderson.

24,029. They were forfeited lands?—Exactly so.

24,030. Now you stated that some tenants were evicted from land that is now on the Scrabster farm?—Yes.

24,031. Was it the Crown that evicted them?—It was certainly the Crown's factor.

24,032. Who was the local Crown agent at that time?—There were different people.

24,033. But at the time the evictions were carried out?—I believe the present Magistrate's father, Mr Donald Mackay, had been factor for some time.

24,034. These people were evicted from the Crown property, and the land was added to the farm of Scrabster?—Yes.

24,035. What was the date of the transaction?—I am not very certain about the date, but I believe it was between the year 1815 and the year 1828.

24,036. You yourself, you said, got a farm upon this common that was divided?—Yes, at least, my father got it.

24,037. And was there any of the land broken in when your father went there?—Half an acre.

24,038. And you overcame the steading difficulty by a grant of £5, did you?—We cultivated it wholly ourselves.

24,039. On an advance of £5?—An advance of £5.

24,040. I would take it, therefore, that you do not share the apprehensions of Mr Donaldson, that there would be such great difficulties as to buildings?—I certainly do not; I am more of a practical farmer than he is. He can give a description of what the state and position of a servant is, but I can give that better of a crofter.

24,041. And were all the steadings upon the small holdings in Caithness built in that way?—I say it is quite practicable and quite profitable that the people could be returned to the land, and that the crofters who now people the vast Colonies in the British dominion would again exist upon the lands of Caithness, Sutherlandshire, and Ross-shire.

24,042. I presume that you would have liked to see such great solicitude and care on behalf of the new tenant when these evictions were carried out?—I would have the evictors all driven to America and the evicted brought back.

24,043. But, with regard to the solicitude that they may not undertake unprofitable bargains, you would have liked to see some solicitude at that time as well as now?—Oh, yes.

24,044. But you never heard at that time of any difficulties being started as to farm steadings when the people were put on the bare land?—No.

24,045. And yet they overcame all the difficulties, did not they?—Yes.

24,046. Did they overcome all the difficulties in their way in building steadings?—My motto is this—

24,047. But were these difficulties overcome? Did the tenants erect their steadings themselves, notwithstanding these difficulties at that time?—I regard it as gross injustice that they should be compelled to erect it themselves.

24,048. But they did erect them?—They did.

24,049. My question was, they did overcome these difficulties in the way of completing these steadings themselves without help?—In the past they did, and I see no reason why they should not in the future. There is something else that I add; give the land to the people, and the quarrel with all parties is at an end.

24,050. Do you know anything about Dorrery?—Yes, I know about Caithness in general.

24,051. How is Dorrery Crown land, do you know?—Upon the same principle as Scrabster and Lythmore.

24,052. Forfeited lands?—Yes, and Calder was Crown land too.

24,053. How is the Dorrery Crown land occupied at present?—Wholly as sheep run.

Thurso. Donald Henderson.

24,054. Was it always so occupied, do you know?—Most certainly not; there is as fertile ground there as in Caithness.

24,055. Was it ever peopled since it became Crown property?—It was.

24,056. And were there evictions carried out on the Crown property there?—I am not very certain.

24,057. You are not so very well acquainted with Dorrery?—I am acquainted with it, and I see an excellent farm there, waste to an inch.

24,058. And are you of opinion that it would be a good place for putting people on?—Certainly, it is just the place which would suit the Highlander.

24,059. Would you advise us to go and look at it?—Most certainly I would; Broubster also, and Shurrery.

24,060. *The Chairman.*—What is the extent of land at Dorrery that you have been describing?—I should think it is upwards of 300 acres.

24,061. But it has been a long time out of cultivation?—As far back as my memory goes.

24,062. *Mr Peter Keith, Agent for Sir Tollemache Sinclair.*—You mentioned, I think, that the proprietor usually gives about £5 to the tenants to assist in the erection of their house and steadings? [*Mr Sutherland.*—Oh, no, he said that in certain defined cases that was done]. Are you aware that it is the general rule on the Ulbster estates to give a sum of money to tenants who erect their own houses to start with?—I am not aware of that.

24,063. And what cases had you in view when you mentioned this sum of £5?—I had it in view that I had the reports from the occupiers almost to a man.

24,064. Almost to a man?—Yes.

24,065. So that the rule is general, of a contribution in money?—It is £5 that they get from the proprietor, and they meet all the extra expenses themselves.

24,066. There was a steading erected, I think you said, by your father, a house and steading on your own farm. What became of that house and steading?—I made no mention of such a thing.

24,067. Was there not a house?—There was no house built by my father. There is presently a house upon it, but upon a different principle altogether.

24,068. Well, will you explain in what way the house and steading presently on your farm were erected?—The proprietor gave so much.

24,069. What did the proprietor give in your case?—But this is a different thing.

24,070. Oh, no.—It certainly is; this is a new arrangement with the proprietor.

24,071. In your own case, what assistance did the proprietor give towards the erection of a house and steading on your own farm? (No answer.)

24,072. *The Chairman.*—What is your answer to that?—You see up to, I would suppose, 1863 it was the old system; the houses were built upon the old condition, but after that Sir Tollemache changed, and he erected other buildings. The first building was simply two rooms and a closet, of something like 33 feet in length and about 18 feet in breadth; and the next was nothing short of 40 feet in length and 16 in breadth.

24,073. *Mr Keith.*—Is that your dwelling-house?—The present dwelling-house. Of course, the proprietor pays for the wood, and the tenant pays for the workmanship of the wood. The price of the wood of my buildings, *i.e.*, the house, cost something like £28, and the price of workmanship of the same wooding cost me about £17. The proprietor also provided slate and flooring. I had myself to provide the stones by quarrying or paying for quarrying; 'drivage' and paying for the building. So that, as a rule, on every building for every shilling the proprietor puts out, the tenant puts out another; that is the last rule. It costs the tenants equally as much as the proprietor.

24,074. Does that apply also to your offices as well as the house?—They are built upon the same principle.

24,075. Did the proprietor provide you with lime, slates, and flooring?—Yes.

24,076. And with the wood?—Yes.

24,077. And what money contribution did you get for the house and steading?—I could estimate at leisure; but the thing was not with me at all, it was with the contractor that the proprietor dealt. It was Mr Durie that was paid.

Thurso. Donald Henderson.

24,078. *The Chairman.*—Can you estimate to us how much it would be?—I should reckon it would be about £45.

24,079. Of cash?—Yes, of cash to the proprietor.

24,080. *Mr Keith.*—Is it the case that the proprietor paid the joiner work?—Yes, that is for the main house, and the office house would cost something about the same amount.

24,081. Then, the proprietor in addition to giving the slates, lime, and flooring free of charge, and providing the wood, also paid for the whole joiner work?—He did not.

24,082. Did not you say that he paid Mr Durie?—Only for the workmanship.

24,083. For the wood?—For the wood.

24,084. What was the £45 given for?—£45 was given for the wood, that is £28, and the price of the slates, the flooring, and every other thing that the proprietor gave.

24,085. Are you aware that it is the custom on the estate in all cases for the proprietor to provide slates and lime, and flooring and timber free of charge to the tenant?—Yes, I am aware of that.

24,086. That is the custom on the Ulbster estates?—That is the custom of the estate presently, but it was not so previously. What I speak of is the time of eviction; there is a change now, a stir. We brought to a great extent the proprietors to their senses. This roaring of the Highland lion for his Highland deus struck terror to their hearts, so that there was a change for the better, in regard to allowing the rent on other terms that our forefathers knew little or nothing about.

24,087. *The Chairman.*—Your father put up the house that was erected on the ground at his own expense?—No, my father was suffered as a rack-rented person to live in the old house, and it was I who built the new one.

24,088. What I wanted to ask was, did your father erect the house that was first put up at his own cost?—Certainly; but that was not one of these houses that he got £5 for.

24,089. *Mr Keith.*—How long has this custom that you speak of on the part of the proprietor obtained on the Ulbster estates,—how long is it since the proprietor has been in the habit of contributing to the cost of erection of dwelling-houses in the way you spoke to?—I should think, if I am correct, about the year 1863.

24,090. You gave us information with regard to this commonty. You are aware, I suppose, that the commonty was divided under decree of the Court of Session?—I am not aware of that. If that is the case, most certainly inquiry should find a charter claim to it.

24,091. You recently got another croft in addition to the one which you held formerly?—My principle was that a man ought to have as much land as would meet his existence, and that 14 acres of ordinary land is not. [*The Chairman.*—Did you get another croft, that is the question?]—I did, but the two put together only consist of about 40 acres, which is just sufficient to give work to a man and a pair of ponies.

24,092. In what year did you get this additional croft?—The year 1887, I think.

24,093. And on this additional croft there was a house also?—Yes.

24,094. You spoke of the farm of Brawl; is not that farm an arable or agricultural farm?—Partly arable and partly agricultural.

24,095. And Skinnet is the same if the pasture or common grazing were taken from either of those farms, is it possible to cultivate the remainder to profit? Can the remainder of the arable ground be cultivated to profit without the pasture?—Most certainly, and in particular to a non-resident tenant who has a number of other farms as well.

24,096. What do you mean by that?—I mean that the man does not keep this farm at all for his subsistence or the raising of grain. I say that the farm of Skinnet could be cultivated to profit by any tenant that was con-

Thurso. Donald Henderson.

fined to it, although the whole of the 200 acres that I speak of, and the hill ground of nearly 2 miles, were taken from it and given to the crofters.

24,097. Are you aware that the farm of Skinnet just now is occupied by a tenant, and that it is his only farm?—The tenant that presently occupies it is a representative of George Waters, Tister, who is non-resident, and who has a number of other farms in Caithness besides.

24,098. You don't know that; you see you are wrong there. [*The Chairman.*—That is his statement]. There is a separate tenant for each farm.

24,099. *Mr Sutherland.*—What is his name?

24,100. *Mr Keith.*—Mr James Clyne. [*To Witness*]. Are you aware that there is a separate tenant who occupies the farm of Brawl?—It is the same tenant that occupies the farm of Brawl.

24,101. *Mr Sutherland.*—With regard to the second croft you got, you did not take it of your own accord, did you?—Most certainly not. The tenant that then occupied it, although there were other differences between the two neighbours, came to me and said 'The 'place does not pay, and I am really miserable in it; and' he says, 'I am under lease, and the Agricultural Holdings Act binds me to give a twelve-month's warning. 'Now there is a farm in my view that is now vacant; if I 'should get that farm, will you oblige me by taking my 'farm off my hand? 'Go on' I says 'Kenneth, I don't 'want your farm, but if you should get that to better your 'state I certainly will take it off your hand.' I never interfered with the man or his farm till I saw him go and take the other farm, and according to promise I took his. I argued that I did not give a two-penny piece for the farm, but that I was contending for the interest of the people myself, and that as the Government Commission inquiring into the grievance of the crofters held that the smallness of the holding was their grievance, I reckoned that the two holdings put together were only sufficient to support one family, and I would give the additional rent of £15 for the place.

24,102. And then the landlord consented?—The landlord consented.

24,103. He could have kept it from you if he had liked?—And if he was to secure me half a crown of a profit more on any other place, I would give it to him to-morrow.

orge Logan.

GEORGE LOGAN, Factor for Sir Tollemache Sinclair of Ulbster, Thurso (72)—*examined.*

24,104. *The Chairman.*—You are factor on the Ulbster estates?—Yes.

24,105. How long have you been factor on the property?—For thirty-three years.

24,106. I understand you wish to submit a written statement?—Yes.

24,107. Please read it.

STATEMENT by Mr George Logan, Factor and Commissioner for Sir J. G. Tollemache Sinclair of Ulbster, Bart., with reference to the grazing farms of Rumsdale, and others, in the Strathmore district of the Ulbster estates, and with reference to the estates, generally, in the parishes of Halkirk and Thurso, and county of Caithness.

As some of the Royal Commissioners, a few days ago, visited the Strathmore district of the Ulbster estates belonging to Sir Tollemache Sinclair of Ulbster, and as Sir Tollemache is desirous to afford the Commissioners every possible facility to enable them to prosecute their inquiries in connection with that portion of his estates, and also to furnish them with the fullest particulars respecting the general management of the Ulbster estates, I have been authorised by him to draw up for your information the following brief history of the property and its management up to the present time, and with that view I now beg to submit the following statement:—

1. *Rumsdale.* Sir Tollemache purchased from Mr Horne, in 1863, the grazing farm of Rumsdale, extending to 10,378 acres 1 rood 25 poles or thereby, the grazings of which were then let on lease to William and John Grant at a yearly rent of £290

To which was added in 1863, part of the adjoining farm of Dalganachan at a yearly rent of 30

Together £320

It is now let to Mr James Macbeath for £130, being at the rate of 3d. per acre.

2. *Glutt.* Sir Tollemache also purchased from Mr Horne at the same time the adjoining property of Glutt extending to 6766 acres 2 roods 9 poles or thereby, the yearly rent of which as then let to Mr James Elder was . £140

When Mr Elder removed from Glutt in 1870 it was then let to Mr John Grant on lease for fourteen years, from Whitsunday 1870, at a yearly rent of £232, which Mr Grant continued to pay till 1886 . . . . . .

From 1886 to 1890 Mr Grant's rent was . £100
From 1890 to 1892 Mr Grant's rent was . 140

In 1892 Mr Williams, the lessee of the Glutt shootings, became lessee of the grazing at a yearly rent of 100

The purchase price which Sir Tollemache paid to Mr Horne for the properties of Rumsdale and Glutt in 1863 was . . £16,500

3. *Dalnaglaton and Dalnawillan.* In 1862 Sir Tollemache acquired from Sir George Dunbar of Hempriggs, by means of excambion for the estate of Tannach, in the parish of Wick, the properties of Dalnaglaton and Dalnawillan (both situated in the Strathmore district adjoining Rumsdale and Glutt). Dalnaglaton extends to 4839 acres 0 roods 38 poles or thereby, and Messrs. D. & R. Elder, who were the first tenants of these grazings under Sir Tollemache, paid a yearly rent, from 1862 till Whitsunday 1883, of £261

From 1883 till 1887 Robert Elder paid . 206
From 1887 till 1891 Robert Elder paid . 186
From 1891 till now it has been let to Messrs. Mackidd & Logan, the present tenants, at . 155

Dalnawillan extends to 3490 acres 1 rood 2 poles, and Mr Donald Macpherson (who was the first tenant of these grazings under Sir Tollemache), paid a yearly rent therefor, from 1862 till 1870, of £218

To which were added the grazings of Lower Dalganachan at a yearly rent of . . . 45

Together £263

D. and R. Elder paid from 1870 till 1884 . £280
Daniel Elder paid from 1884 till 1888 . . 200
Daniel Elder paid from 1888 till 1891 . . 180
Daniel Elder paid from 1891 till now . . 155

Note. Dalnaglaton and Dalnawillan having been acquired by means of excambion for the property of Tannach, no exact purchase price was fixed; but their estimated value was £17,750 (including a mortgage of £2000, of which Sir Tollemache agreed to relieve Sir George Dunbar, the former proprietor.)

4. *Achalibster.* Sir Tollemache purchased the small property of Achalibster at Lower Strathmore from Mr Smith of Olrig in 1864. The extent of that property is 2139 acres 2 roods 25 poles, and the purchase price was £5500. Messrs. J. & D. Munro, who were the first and only tenants on the property since Sir Tollemache became proprietor, paid from 1864 till 1878 a yearly rent of £205

Add interest on improvements made by Sir Tollemache 10

Together £215

Thurso. George Logan.

From 1878 till the present time the yearly rent has been £250

5. *Dalemore and Dirlet, Dalnaha, Knockdhu, Dalacher, Achscoriclute, and Lower Strathmore*, extending together to 15,461 acres or thereby, are old family properties, and have been let since the year 1865 to Messrs. Clyne, the present tenants.

From 1865 till 1884 the aggregate rent was . £667

Dalemore, Knockdhu, and Dalacher are now let to Mr John Clyne at a yearly rent of . . £130

Dirlet, Dalnaha, Achscoriclute, and Lower Strathmore are now let to Messrs. H. Clyne and Sons at a yearly rent 370

Together £500

6. *Backless and Benalisky*, extending together to 5598 acres or thereby, are also old family properties, and the grazings have been let as undernoted:—

To Mr Donald Mackay from 1862 till 1866 at a yearly rent of £180

To Mr Donald Mackay from 1866 till 1880 at a yearly rent of 200

To Messrs. J. & D. Munro from 1880 till now 150

7. *Leosag*, extending to 104 acres 3 roods, also an old family property, immediately adjoining Achalibster, has hitherto been let as under.

To John Sinclair from 1855 at a yearly rent of £35

To Donald Sinclair (John's son) from 1873 at a yearly rent of 60

To Donald Sinclair (John's son) from 1885 at a yearly rent of 50

To Donald Macadie (brother-in-law) from 1886 at a yearly rent of 50

To Donald Macadie's representatives, still occupying 50

8. *The shootings* over the foregoing properties are let at the undernoted rents:—

1. Rumsdale Shootings, ...		£500
Less for keeper's wages, rates and taxes, interest on furniture, &c., . . .		200
Net		£300
2. Glutt shooting and grazing, .	£900	
Less wages, taxes, &c., . .	270	
		630
	£ s.	
3. Dalnawillan, ...	785 6	
Less wages, taxes, &c., . .	205 6	
		580
4. Lower Strathmore, . . .	£1200	
Less wages, taxes, &c., . .	240	
		960
		£2470

The boundaries of the shootings are somewhat different from those of the grazings, but the foregoing statement correctly indicates the rents both of the grazings and shootings of these properties.

Since I became factor for Sir Tollemache Sinclair, about thirty-three years ago, I find that Sir Tollemache has expended £75,590, 1s. 7d. in general improvements on the Ulbster estates. Of this sum £45,337, 16s. 3d. has been expended on farms and crofts, chiefly in drainage, fencing, housebuilding, &c., whilst £30,252, 5s. 4d. has been expended in other general improvements under my own superintendence.

Sir Tollemache has also made 30½ miles of roads on the estates in Caithness—extending from his property in Harpsdale to Westerdale, 2½ miles; from Westerdale to Strathmore, 6 miles; from Strathmore to Dalnawillan, 7 miles; from Dalnawillan to Glutt, 4 miles; from Glutt to Braemore, 7 miles; and from Dalnawillan to the railway station at Altnabreac, 4 miles—the expense of making these roads and constructing the bridges being about £3600. Thurso. George Logan.

Sir Tollemache likewise gave to the Highland Railway Company, *free of charge*, the whole land required for their line, so far as it passes through his estates, extending from the town of Thurso to the top of Strathmore, where it joins the county of Sutherland—being a distance of about 15 miles, including 10 miles of arable ground, and 4 acres of feuing ground—the value of the land required for that portion of the line being estimated at from £6000 to £7000, including loss on Sir Tollemache's railway shares.

In respect of the depressed state of agriculture, during the past ten years, Sir Tollemache has also voluntarily granted abatements of rent to the tenants and crofters on his estates to the amount of £4044, 11s. 7d., being equal to about £400 a year, of which the crofters or small tenants have received abatements at the rate of 20 per cent., on an average, during the last ten years. Previous to that time abatements were not much required, as agriculture was in a flourishing condition. Sir Tollemache has further paid donations and subscriptions in Caithness, since Sir George Sinclair died in 1868, to the amount of £13,811, 3s. 11d., including his contribution to the Highland Railway and proposed Thurso harbour, being upwards of £550 per annum in each of these years. Sir Tollemache assumed the management of the Ulbster estates in 1849, and they were conveyed to him in 1854 by his father, the late Sir George Sinclair; and the following is a statement of the total expenditure made on the estates by Sir Tollemache from 1849 to 1893, including the £75,590 expended in my own time, as already noted.

Expenditure on the Ulbster estates from Martinmas 1849, when Sir Tollemache undertook the management of the estates, until Lammas 1893:—

	£	s.	d.
1. General expenditure, . . .	123,257	0	10
2. Tenants' and farm servants' houses now being contracted for, .	1,200	0	0
3. Abatements to tenants since 1882 (equal to about £400 a year), .	4,044	11	7
4. Donations since Sir G. Sinclair's death in October 1868 (being upwards of £550 a year), .	13,811	3	11
Total expenditure on improvements &c., from 1849 to 1893, . .	142,312	16	4
(Being about £3200 a year.)			
Deduct expenditure on Thurso Castle, shooting lodges, &c., . .	41,000	8	1
Net expenditure on estate, excluding Thurso Castle and lodges, .	£101,312	8	3

Or about £2400 per annum, being equal to about 25 per cent. of the net average rental of the estate for the last forty-four years.

I have thought it right to mention these facts to show that liberal and enterprising landlords are a blessing and a benefit to the district in which their properties are situated, inasmuch as they give an immense amount of employment to the working classes generally, and consequently set in circulation large sums of money which greatly tend to benefit all classes of the community.

The *land* rental of Sir Tollemache Sinclair, exclusive of shootings, quarries, feu-duty, &c., is £9216, 4s. 3d., while the *total* rental, as per valuation roll for 1892-93, is £14,461, 17s., the difference consisting of the shootings and quarries, &c.

I feel it now to be my duty to state, after my lengthened experience in connection with the Ulbster estates, and from my knowledge of the climate and whole circumstances connected with the grazing farms in the Strathmore district of the estates, that I am clearly and decidedly of opinion that, while some of the lower parts of Strathmore, in the neighbourhood of Westerdale, are capable of bearing corn crops, those on the heights, such as Glutt, Rumsdale, Dalnawillan, Dalnagleton, and Dalnaha, are *not* at all suitable for the

Thurso. George Logan.

class of tenants or crofters proposed to be dealt with by the Commission, because, in the first place, the hill pasture and heather in those parts (with the exception of a few small detached spots) are not capable of being converted into good arable land, and that even if they were, the crops would seldom reach maturity or ripen in time; and in the next place, even if it were otherwise, the enormous expenses that it would take to drain, trench, and reclaim the land, and to build suitable dwelling-houses, farm-steadings, &c., would render the enterprise a complete failure—so much so that in the event of the Government voting funds to meet the expense, it would be utterly impossible for the tenants to repay either principal or interest; and as to payment of a fair yearly rent to the proprietor, that would be quite out of the question; because, however willing the tenants might be to pay a fair rent, they would be altogether unable to do so. Besides the enormous expense of buildings, fences, drains, and roads, &c. (say £400 for each holding), I feel certain there would be little or no demand for such unpromising and unremunerative holdings. And I am confirmed in this belief by the fact that so recently as September 1885, by direction of Sir Tollemache Sinclair, the proprietor, I advertised in the local newspapers the large *grazing* farm of Rumsdale, in the parish of Halkirk (including Glenmore and Glendhu), extending together to 11,937 acres or thereby, to be let either as a co-operative club farm for the accommodation and convenience of small farmers, crofters, or others who might desire to possess such land, or to be let in such other manner as might best suit intending offerers (all the sheep stock, if desired, to be handed over by the proprietor at valuation, or otherwise as might be arranged); and although that advertisement appeared in the local papers, week after week, not so much as a single offer was received, nor did any one even make the slightest inquiry on the subject. During the same year—1885—Sir Tollemache advertised in the local newspapers the following *arable* farms in the parish of Thurso, to be let either to crofters or as a co-operative club farm, or in such other manner as might best suit intending offerers, viz. :—

(1.) Glengolly—total extent, 248 acres; arable, 234 acres; pasture, 14 acres; (2.) Bleachfield—total extent, 88 acres; arable, 80 acres; pasture, 8 acres; (3.) Geiselittle—total extent, 366 acres; arable, 256 acres; pasture, 110 acres. But not one single offer was received for either of these farms, excepting for a small portion of Bleachfield, and it was subsequently arranged to allow the tenants who then occupied them to continue in possession. Again, in October 1885, Sir Tollemache advertised from 50 to 100 allotments or feus, to be laid off in the immediate vicinity of Thurso, in small lots to suit tradesmen and others who might wish to possess a bit of accommodation land. But he only received one offer for an allotment of one acre, and an offer for a feu of half-an-acre.

I may here remark that, on the appointment of the Crofters Commission, 1886, with your honourable President as Chairman, I intimated to forty-five crofters on the Ulbster estates that Sir Tollemache would make them all heartily welcome to lodge applications with the Crofters Commission for the purpose of having their rents adjusted by the Commissioners. But of these forty-five only nine availed themselves of the opportunity of doing so, thus showing that they had the most perfect confidence in the kindness and liberality of their landlord; and, as a proof that the crofters' rents on the Ulbster estates were comparatively moderate, they were only reduced by the Crofter Commissioners on the average to the extent of about 19 per cent., the rents of one or two of the nine applicants not being reduced at all. We frequently hear in these days of what are termed the "good old times," but those who thus speak apparently do not really know the actual circumstances. Whilst we would all sincerely wish to see the crofters, small tenants, and large tenants prospering alike, it is best that the whole truth should be known, and as a clear and convincing proof of the pecuniary difficulties in which the smaller tenants constantly were who occupied small holdings in the "olden times," I append hereto several excerpts from the minute books of the Ulbster trustees in the time of the Right Hon. Sir John Sinclair (Sir Tollemache's grandfather), extending from the year 1816 to 1833 with reference to small tenants in Lower Strathmore, and which are in the following terms :—

Thurso. George Logan.

Excerpts from minute book of Ulbster trustees from 1815 to 1833 :—

8th March 1816.—Mr John Henderson, factor, reports:—"If the same low prices for victuals and cattle 'continue for another year, one-half of the tenantry 'must quit and go to ruin."

16th March 1817.—As to the Strathmore Highland tenants, "the factor will hypothecate their crop and 'stocking for the proprietor's security, but he will not 'follow out the measure by sale or otherwise."

20th February 1818.—"The factor stated that the 'Highland tenants had sent him notice that, if they 'were not supplied with seed corn, they could not lay 'down their crops this season."

5th March 1819.—"Abatement of rent given to 'Highland tenants."

4th February 1830.—"Another abatement of rent 'to Highland tenants."

28th April 1830.—"The Strathmore tenants must 'fail unless a reduction of rent is given them beyond 'previous reductions for the flood—their October crops 'were so much injured by early frosts that it would not 'be safe to use them for seed. They have, likewise, 'been very unlucky in their cattle for two years, great 'numbers having died, which, added to the low prices, 'is ruinous to them."

6th January 1831.—"As to the Strathmore tenants, 'unless a very material improvement took place in the 'price of black cattle they could not possibly pay. John 'Macdonald, tenant of Achscoraclet, was last year 'obliged to purchase seed and meal for his family; while 'the whole sales he made were a very few young cattle, 'to the extent of about one-third of the rent. The 'losses of the smaller tenants may be safely taken to be 'greater, because Macdonald, generally, had it in his 'power to do more justice to his cattle in their keep 'than these smaller tenants."

3d February 1832.—There was laid before the Trustees a letter from the tenants of Backlass, Bualmore, and Ishnamalt, giving up their farms unless they got an abatement of one-third of their rent. "The 'Ulbster Trustees gave abatements for 1830-31 and '1832, in addition to the abatement for 1829." In 1832 "the Trustees received settlers in Harpsdale, and 'several new lots were let, and many settlers were 'received in the Ulbster estates in Latheron and Wick."

19th February 1833.—"Read a letter from Mac-'donald, Achscoraclet. He asks an abatement of 10 'per cent. for three years."

I may just add that none of these tenants paid high rents, I understand, and none of them had to pay interest in addition to the rent, such as crofters or small tenants would now have to do in the event of new houses, and new steadings requiring to be erected for their accommodation in conformity with the present sanitary requirements; and I submit that if they could not pay the small rents that were fixed in those days, they could very ill afford to pay now, in addition to their rents, interest to the Government on any money that might be lent them for the purpose of making improvements on their little holdings. I have duly certified the excerpts which I have now read; and I shall be happy to supply any further information that may be calculated to facilitate the object which the Commissioners have been appointed to report upon, provided there are any other points on which I can give reliable information. (Signed) GEO. LOGAN.

Ulbster Estates Office, Thurso, September 1893.

24,108. You mentioned an expenditure of £45,337, 16s. 3d. on farms and crofts?—Yes.

24,109. Does your information enable you to say how much of that was expended on crofts?—£15,337, on crofts.

24,110. During the whole period?—During the

Thurso. George Logan.

whole period; at least during my own time, since 1860.

24,111. What was that expenditure upon mainly?—Partly in draining, partly in house-building, and partly in enclosing; in short, general improvements upon their small crofts.

24,112. Was that expenditure made generally upon application by the crofters, or in the course of estate management?—Generally on application by the crofters.

24,113. And were these applications by the crofters acceded to either in whole or in part?—Sir Tollemache was always considered a very liberal landlord, and to my knowledge he was so; and he was always willing to meet his tenants or crofters in a liberal spirit; we could not comply with all requests.

24,114. The applications generally met with favourable consideration?—Favourable consideration.

24,115. You mentioned the matter of employment on the estate. Has the proprietor, in your time, been in the habit of giving a good deal of employment to crofters on the estate?—Yes, the crofters have got a very considerable amount of employment, between carting and other work.

24,116. Estate employment and labour?—Estate employment chiefly. And they work at other employment besides, I mean those in the neighbourhood of the towns who can get work at the quarries and other places of that kind.

24,117. Are there quarries upon your estate?—Sir Tollemache has only two quarries now; he used to have half a dozen, but four are exhausted. There are still two working, and there are workmen employed at both.

24,118. Are these workmen tenants of his own?—The lease to the Flagstone Quarrying Company binds them to employ the tenants on the Ulbster estates in preference to others.

24,119. And is the obligation carried out?—It is a fact that to a great extent the tenants on the Ulbster estates find employment there.

24,120. You mentioned particularly the lower parts of Strathmore, as in your judgment, a locality of land that might be for our consideration?—It might be; only I may explain that the grazing in the immediate neighbourhood of each of these farms, Dalemore and Achalibster (for these are really the two farms where there is arable land) is required to enable the tenants to work their farms.

24,121. So that you make the observation subject to that comment upon it?—Quite so.

24,122. But what extent of land in the lower parts of Strathmore is there of the kind you mention? How many acres, roughly speaking?—Including pasture and arable land, there are in Achalibster about 5000 acres.*

24,123. And do you say that there are 5000 acres, subject to the observations you have made, suitable for our consideration?—I could scarcely say that. It is only the arable land that would be worthy of your consideration, because the pasture is really so poor that it would not pay the expense of improving.

24,124. When you say arable, do you mean old arable or land under rotation?—I mean land under rotation. It is all under rotation that ever was under rotation so far as I know. I should say there are about 200 acres of arable upon the farm of Achalibster.

24,125. When you say land under rotation, do you mean land under rotation now, or land formerly under rotation, but at present under grass?—I think that all that was ever under rotation is under rotation at this moment.

24,126. Either a long or a short rotation?—The usual rotation: it is generally five shifts.

24,127. Is all the land that you say would be suitable for our consideration under a five shift rotation?—It is under a five shift rotation, and it is under lease at this moment.

24,128. But is it your view that besides that land there are other lands in the lower parts of Strathmore not under rotation which would be suitable for our consideration?—No, I don't think there is almost any. There might be small detached spots here and there, as I have said, but no spots where a tenant could be satisfactorily placed with the view of making a living and a profit.

* Mr Logan has since stated the area at 2139 acres.

Thurso. George Logan.

24,129. You said, I think, that sometime ago you advertised Rumsdale?—Yes.

24,130. And the proprietor indicated a willingness to subdivide the land and assign holdings for crofters?—Sir Tollemache heard it reported in public that there was a great hunger for land; and Sir Tollemache, who is always very enterprising in these matters, said to me 'Now as Rumsdale is out of lease' (from the fact of Mr Grant leaving it) 'you might advertise that to give the people a chance.' I advertised the whole of Rumsdale, with two of the best spots in the district called Glenmore and Glendhu extending altogether to 11,000 acres or thereby, and although that advertisement continued to appear in the papers from week to week, there was not one single inquiry for it.

24,131. Did the advertisement specify the willingness of the landlord to subdivide?—It expressed the willingness of the landlord to let it either as a co-operative club farm or in small lots to suit intending offerers.

24,132. In fact the land to be cut off?—The land to be apportioned as indicated in the advertisement.

24,133. And lotted out?—And lotted out.

24,134. Is it land that would have been suitable for that purpose?—I don't think it would; there may be a few detached spots that might be converted at no very great expense into arable ground, but it would be so small that really there would not be any encouragement to anybody to place himself there.

24,135. Well, I am not surprised at your answer, because I understood you to say in your statement that Rumsdale was not suitable?—I am convinced that it is not suitable, but the people were saying that it was suitable, and Sir Tollemache wished to give them a chance of putting it into practice.

24,136. You don't think then that a crofter who had practical knowledge of land would have been well advised to venture upon such a holding?—Certainly not, because at the present moment, as I stated here, it is let at the rate of 3d. an acre all over, and I should think a place worth only 3d. an acre could not be converted into a profitable farm for a croft.

24,137. Then, do I understand you to mean that that farm was advertised less because you thought it suitable than because there was an apparent demand for holdings?—That is so. I never thought it suitable, but the outcry was for land at that time, and Sir Tollemache said 'There is a place that they have referred to as likely to be suitable; advertise it.'

24,138. Had it been so referred to?—Yes, it was referred to in the public,—it was at the time the agitation was beginning to get up; certain agitators were coming forward, and they said 'Oh, there are lots of land in many places', and Strathmore was one of them.

24,139. Was that the only land at that time which Sir Tollemache had it in his power to offer in that way?—It was the only land in Strathmore; but, as I mention in my statement, Sir Tollemache was so desirous to meet the wishes of the people that he arranged with three sets of his tenants who were then under lease in the case of arable farms very near to Thurso to allow him to advertise these places, and to quit the place at the first term of Whitsunday thereafter in the event of suitable parties coming forward to make application and to take up and work those farms either as a whole or in small lots.

24,140. In small holdings?—Or in small holdings.

24,141. He had it quite in view to subdivide into small holdings if offerers came forward?—He was quite willing to do so.

24,142. Was that land suitable in your judgment if such offerers had come forward?—There was no better arable land to be found in this neighbourhood. There may be better in Caithness, but not in this district.

24,143. Much better than Rumsdale?—Oh, infinitely better.

25,144. Did no offerers come forward?—Not one.

24,145. You mentioned that there was a proposal made by the landlord to assign or render available land for the formation of from 50 to 100 allotments. Were

Thurso. George Logan.

these allotments to be self-sustaining, or were they to be taken up by persons who had other employment?—Persons who had other employment chiefly; people in the immediate neighbourhood of Thurso.

24,146. With employment?—With employment; people who had houses in the immediate neighbourhood.

24,147. And who would get these allotments of a size arranged and according to such terms as might be adjusted?—That is so.

24,148. What year was that?—1885; eight years ago.

24,149. Have you ever, in your long experience as factor for this property, been obliged to cancel the whole of the crofters' rents?—Never.

24,150. Never anything quite so bad as that?—No, never.

24,151. Because I have heard of cases in the past where the times were so bad and the crops had been such a failure, that the landlord was obliged to cancel the rents entirely. That has never happened with you?—No such thing ever happened on the Ulbster estate, but Sir Tollemache always in a straitened time, when crops or cattle might not be selling to advantage, was ready to consider favourably the circumstances of these small tenants, and he has from time to time given them considerable abatements of rents, averaging during the last ten years 21 per cent. Before that no abatements were required, because really agriculture was then in a flourishing condition.

24,152. You have certainly given us a very full statement, especially in regard to the matter of rents, both the rents of farms and the rents of shootings, and other rents, such as we have not always got.

24,153. *Mr Sutherland.*—First with regard to the relation between the expenditure on the estate and the rental. I think you stated that on an average, over a period of years, £3200 a year was being spent, being 25 per cent. of the rental; is that the rental all over, without distinction of the classes of the holding?—Yes, it was my son who drew up these figures, but I think they are quite correct.

24,154. What I would like to know is, what proportion of that expenditure compared with the rental from which it was drawn belonged to the small holdings? Was it in your opinion less or greater on the small holdings than on the large ones?—It would be a little less on the small holdings, because the larger farms required more money.

24,155. What does that arise from, that the larger farms required more money?—The tenants are very enterprising, and they drain large quantities of land, and require assistance for that.

24,156. Rather is it not the fact that the landlord does it entirely himself? Is that not the custom in Caithness?—Not so far as I know; the landlord has seldom or never done so except out of drainage money got from Government many years ago. In those cases the landlord got the money many years ago, and the interest was paid by the tenants, and that money I suppose, (although it was long before my time) was chiefly expended, probably upon the large farms; but it might have been as much upon the small as the large, I could not say.

24,157. But, with regard to the custom in letting large farms, is it not one of the conditions that the tenant shall get the farm in good working order, with steadings complete, fences in good repair, drains going, and everything?—They take the farms and the steadings and everything else as they find them. In other words, the incoming tenant is put into the proprietor's shoes in dealing with the outgoing tenant.

24,158. But have you never seen the condition to which I refer stated in a lease?—No, I don't think on the Ulbster estates that there was ever any such condition, for this reason that the steadings and the houses generally and other parts of the farms are in tolerably good condition.

24,159. At whose expense?—Well, the proprietor supplies, for example, all the fencing flags and building materials free of charge to the tenants.

24,160. I am speaking of large farmers?—Both to large and small farmers; Sir Tollemache treats them all very much alike. Thurso. George Logan.

24,161. But then, with regard to the steadings on the large farms, is the landlord not at considerable expense in putting these into repair and erecting and enlarging them?—The proprietor is very seldom asked to do very much in the way of repairing steadings, for this reason, that at first,—it may have been forty or fifty years ago,—the tenants got those in pretty good condition, and there is a clause in every lease under which they are bound to maintain the premises in good condition, and they do so. Then, when the lease expires the incoming tenant is put into the landlord's shoes as it were, and is entitled to ask the outgoing tenant to leave everything in good condition, and he in like manner at the expiry of his lease does the same.

24,162. In other words by the terms of the lease, the outgoing tenant is obliged to leave the whole thing in good repair?—Yes, 'in good tenantable condition' is generally the wording of the lease.

24,163. Is that a general rule on the Ulbster estate?—That is the general rule on the Ulbster estate.

24,164. Are you acquainted with rules on other estates,—did you ever know cases where by the terms of the lease the landlord undertook to put the buildings and the dwelling-house, the steadings, the fences, and the drains into proper repair before the tenant took them?—No, I cannot say I have ever known such an instance upon any estate in Caithness.

24,165. Now, with regard to the smaller tenant, do you insist upon such conditions in a change of tenancy?—The conditions are very much the same in both cases.

24,166. In no case then does the landlord bind himself or undertake to put the steadings in repair?—Not unless it be a special agreement made at the time of entering into the lease.

24,167. But I am asking about these special agreements, whether there are any such within your experience?—I cannot charge my memory with any in particular. I have a case in my view at this moment, for example Mr Morris is the tenant of the farm of Aimster, about half way between Thurso and Halkirk. When Mr Morris went into that farm, about three years ago, he asked the proprietor whether he would assist him in putting things into good condition if he did not find them in that state, and the proprietor agreed to bear half the expense.

24,168. Is that a large farm?—Yes, it is a large farm; the rent is £280 I think.

24,169. But even on the Ulbster estate, notwithstanding this rule, you admit that the expenditure in the case of the large farmers would be greater in proportion to the rental than the small tenants?—I generally find that they are more willing to enter into extensive improvements on large farms, because the most of them have capital.

24,170. What improvements do they make?—They do every kind of improvement; for example, take the farm of Skinnet, one that was brought under your notice to-day. There the tenant when he took his last lease asked Sir Tollemache if he would build for him a new dwelling-house, and Sir Tollemache said well, if you build upon that farm, that is to say if you put up a new house, I will put up one on the adjoining farm of Brawl. The proprietor fulfilled his promise by putting up the new house on Brawl, and Mr Waters, the tenant, fulfilled his by putting the new house on Skinnet.

24,171. But what had Skinnet to do with Brawl?—They were both let to the same tenant at that time.

24,172. So he got the house upon the farm?—He got the house on the one. In other words, if there had not been two houses to go up, the one house would most likely have had to go up at mutual expense, the tenant doing one half and the proprietor the other.

24,173. What improvement did the tenant make? Is it the putting up of the house?—No; when the previous lease was entered into, nineteen years before, the arrangement was precisely the same; that the proprietor would pay one half of all the expenses required

Thurso. George Logan.

to drain, enclose and put the farm generally into good condition; and under that lease, without ever a word of disagreement between the proprietor and the tenant, the whole of these improvements were carried out at mutual expense.

24,174. Why? Was that at the time the farm was being formed?—No, the farm was formed and in operation many long years before.

24,175. Why did the farm require these improvements at that time?—Because drains run out in the course of years—they don't last for ever.

24,176. Did the farmer improve or reclaim any land?—He put under the plough 200 acres that had been before at one time under the plough.

24,177. The improvement had been made before, and all that was required was the cultivation. Who made the former improvement?—It was done before my time, and the tenant then was Mr Paterson who is dead long ago.

24,178. And all the holdings we heard of to-day were upon that farm before?—I don't know of any small holdings upon that farm, and there never was any but the principal tenant since ever I had to do with the estate. Since I had to do with the estate there never was a person removed from that farm or any of the farms I have been speaking about.

24,179. I don't say that at all; but you heard the evidence that these tenants had been there?—Well, it must have been in the olden time.

24,180. And that their improvements rendered it more easy for the large tenants to make these further improvements?—I could not say anything about that.

24,181. I wish to understand, as clearly as possible, what you state, with regard to the offer of the proprietor, that land should be given in smaller holdings. You stated that he advertised first of all the farm of Rumsdale?—Yes.

24,182. How long did this advertisement continue to appear in the local papers, do you remember?—I should think it continued for at least four weeks, probably more.

24,183. What were the terms of the advertisement, do you recollect?—The terms were precisely those that I have given in my statement.

24,184. Do you quote the exact terms of advertisement?—I don't quote the exact words.

24,185. Have you any copies of these advertisements?—I have a copy in my letter book, no doubt, but you will find them in the local papers.

24,186. That is what I was going to ask you; what local papers were they in?—In all the local papers.

24,187. What is the date please?—The date was 1885, eight years ago.

24,188. About what time of the year?—About the month of September.

24,189. You said that the advertisements called upon any person who wished to take a holding or holdings there, or smaller holdings than the present ones, should apply to you I presume?—I did.

24,190. And you said that there were no applications?—I had no application, as I stated, except one, and that one was for a small portion of the farm of Bleachfield, as is stated in my paper.

24,191. Then, you said you did not consider Rumsdale a favourable subject to try such an experiment upon?—I am very glad that some of the Commissioners, yourself among the number, were there; I think you will be able to judge as I do, that it would not be suitable.

24,192. I was just going to make a remark upon that but you have anticipated me. When were you at Rumsdale yourself last?—About three weeks ago.

24,193. Did you see any crops there?—No, I did not, there are not many crops for anybody to see.

24,194. Were you in the park?—No, that is a small park that was improved by Mr Donald Horne for his own personal accommodation, and I am aware that good cabbages, good turnips, and sometimes a little patch of oats may be in the little park, or rather bit of garden.

24,195. What is the extent of the park?—I should say it is not more than 3 acres, but I am speaking from recollection merely.

24,196. The corn was not ripe when you were there three weeks ago?—I never saw corn ripe there, but I was really not at the shepherd's house at all; I was on the farm of Rumsdale. Thurso. George Logan.

24,197. Would you be surprised to know that we saw there some of the best corn we have seen in Caithness?—I would not be at all surprised, because the shepherd keeps a couple of cows, and he puts all his dung upon the bit of ground, making it like a bit of garden.

24,198. Could not other people do what the shepherd has done?—I don't think they would have so much to put on it in the shape of manure.

24,199. Shepherds are better agriculturists, in your opinion, than other people?—No, but this is restricted to an acre or two; the shepherd has nothing else to do with the manure from his byre, so he puts it upon the bit of land.

24,200. But you know that it is only a corner of the land which was formerly in cultivation that is now included in cultivation: don't you see the marks of cultivation all round the park?—There is not much. I do not think it would be a profitable occupation for any one to plant himself there.

24,201. Do you know if the shepherd at Rumsdale has cut his corn yet?—This year I don't think he will have cut it, because very few will have cut it even in the low ground.

24,202. That is what struck me, that he was as far forward as those in the low ground?—Well, I daresay you understand; you are accustomed to the north of Scotland, and I think you will have seen since you came to Caithness that this is altogether an exceptional season; I never recollect during the thirty-three years I have managed the Ulbster estates a single season when there was such an early crop.

24,203. But I am comparing it with other places which have also an early crop?—Well, this is an exceptional season altogether; you may never see anything like it during the next thirty years.

24,204. Had he a crop last year?—I don't know.

24,205. Last year was a very bad season?—It was not such an early season as this.

24,206. Exceptionally late, was it not?—I don't know that it was exceptionally late; I think it was very much like other seasons; our seasons are generally late.

24,207. But they are late here when they are late in other places, are they not?—I suppose so.

24,208. Then, with regard to the want of applications for Rumsdale, are you perfectly satisfied that there was nothing inherent in the terms on which the land was offered, to prevent applications being made?—If you would look at the advertisement you may judge for yourself.

24,209. That is what I am very sorry for,—that we have not the terms of the advertisement before us?—The editor of the *Ensign* is here, and the editor of the *Groat*; probably they may be able to tell from recollection, for I am only speaking from recollection myself.

24,210. They will be less likely to remember than yourself; you drew it up, I presume?—Well, I refer you to the advertisement, and I can assure you that Sir Tollemache was very sincere in his desire to let it if people came forward who thought it would pay to take it.

24,211. It was a *bonâ fide* offer?—A *bonâ fide* offer.

24,212. Then you said something about the conditions and of the state of public feeling at the time at which the offer was made,—in answer to a question put by the Chairman?—No, I never heard of that.

24,213. I think you said that it was stated in some quarters that Rumsdale was a suitable place; who said that?—It was the report of some of the meetings that were held about that time.

24,214. Could you give us anything definite?—I really could not give you anything definite.

24,215. You have a general impression to that effect?—I have a general impression, and it consists with my knowledge that that place was mentioned amongst others.

24,216. As being?—As being a suitable place.

24,217. The most suitable place?—Not the most suitable, but one suitable place where small holdings should be lotted off.

24,218. But why was it the only one of the places mentioned that was offered?—It was the only one that was vacant at the time.

24,219. It was vacant, was it?—It was vacant through the retiring of the previous tenant.

24,220. And it was asked for, and therefore the offer was made?—The offer was made.

24,221. And you have come to the deliberate conclusion that because these people did not consider it desirable,—that that is the reason why they did not take it?—I am quite convinced of that: I have no doubt of it; and I am quite convinced further, that it was not suitable, and could not be made suitable, except at enormous expense; an expense which would never be justified by the result.

24,222. Is that with regard to the climate,—had you the climate in view?—The climate has a good deal to do with it, but the soil as well.

24,223. The soil is not good?—The soil, generally speaking, is not at all suitable for arable land. Some patches as I stated may be suitable, but they are mere detached pieces.

24,224. But not on Rumsdale?—Oh, well, Rumsdale is one of them; there may be little patches,—you yourself spoke of an enclosed piece where there were vegetables growing,—that is one of these spots, although it is an exceedingly small one.

24,225. Would it not be a very good nucleus for a grazing farm?—It has fallen very much in value as a grazing farm; whilst the previous tenant paid £250 or £260, the present tenant pays only £130.

24,226. But that is an argument against the present use of it, is it not?—You speak of it as a grazing farm for small holdings?

24,227. Perhaps the smaller grazier could pay a bigger proportion of rent?—I would be afraid not.

24,228. Of course, you have your opinion?—Yes, I have my opinion, and it is a very decided one.

24,229. Then, with regard to the other cases you referred to, what were the other offers that were made? There was one, I think, you said with regard to Bleachfield; that was settled, was it not?—No, it was not settled, as I mention in the paper. It was given back to the persons then in possession, because no person made either inquiry or offer, except one.

24,230. What was the other place?—Glengolly was one.

24,231. That is a farm?—That is a pretty large farm.

24,232. Where is it?—About 2 miles from Thurso.

24,233. On what road?—On the Buckies road.

24,234. What were the exact negotiations that took place with regard to Glengolly?—None whatever.

24,235. Was it an advertisement also?—It was an advertisement also, which also appeared in the same papers that I have referred to.

24,236. Did you enter into any negotiations at all, either futile or otherwise?—None except as to one inquiry that was made for a part of Bleachfield, which ended in nothing.

24,237. Were there no negotiations of any kind at all about Glengolly?—Not to the best of my recollection; there was not the slightest negotiation of any description.

24,238. Did you ever hear that the people were asked £2 an acre for the land as an addition?—I did not.

24,239. Is that true?—That is not true. There is no land there let at such a price.

24,240. Then the other offer was you said with regard to allotments and feus; that is nearer the town of Thurso I presume?—It is quite near the town of Thurso.

24,241. You said there were two such applications I think?—There were two, one for a small allotment by a person who is now dead; he wanted one acre taken off the farm of Oldfield; and the other was for a small feu of half an acre.

24,242. What was the result of these applications?—The result was that I went to the ground with the person who made the application for the one acre; we looked over the ground and he said that he thought we would require to enclose it for him because he had not means of doing it himself, and I said we would require to make arrangements with the then tenant of the farm; we would require to give him notice that the acre would be taken. And he said, well, he would consider it, and see whether that would suit him, to wait for a year until we would give legal notice to the tenant. However, I heard no more about it, and shortly afterwards the applicant died.

24,243. The other case?—The other case was that of Mr Robert Syme who spoke of taking half an acre of ground, but he stated that he was not intending to build for some time, and, therefore, that he would not require the feu for some years, so the matter has remained in abeyance.

24,244. So the net result is that in the two cases where there were applications there was no transaction?—Nothing whatever resulted.

24,245. No transaction resulted from the applications that were made?—Nothing except those two inquiries.

24,246. But there were two applications made, and I suppose they would be made with a desire to come to terms, if the terms were suitable?—I believe that if Mr Syme was going to build the house, he would still be willing to take his feu.

24,247. Is it not a reasonable assumption that the other applications were made in the same way?—Yes, only as I say the person died shortly afterwards; before he decided he was out of the reckoning because he died.

24,248. Then, out of these offers that were made two applications were sent in and they came to naught?—They came to naught.

24,249. Do you know if the Small Holdings Act has had any application in Caithness?—I don't think it has.

24,250. Has the matter been considered by the County Council, do you know?—It has.

24,251. And have they determined to do anything with regard to it?—Yes, they have determined to do this. There is a place that is in the market for sale just now, and they have appointed a committee. I myself attended a meeting of the Council last Saturday, and at that meeting they appointed a committee consisting of four members to negotiate with the proprietor, Mr Heathcote Sinclair, and to ascertain on what terms he would be willing to sell a portion,—not the whole, but a portion of the place; and if they find that they can get it on reasonable terms their intention is to go over it carefully and arrive at a final decision as to what it would be worth to them.

24,252. And no doubt, as a member of that committee, you are quite prepared to justify your action to your constituents?—I am not a member of that committee, but I am a member of the County Council.

24,253. But as a member of the County Council you are so far responsible?—Well, we are responsible, so far as considering their report when they bring it in.

24,254. But is it not evidence when a representative body like the County Council would intend to take action, that there is a demand for these holdings?—Well, if you look up the *Ensign* this afternoon, or the *Groat*, you will probably find a report of the meeting that then took place. I have not seen it myself, but that will probably give you full information as to what took place at the meeting, and then you will be able to judge whether there is a prospect of its being actually carried out or not.

22,255. But you stated that there were to be negotiations for getting some land?—I did say so.

24,256. And if there were no demand, such as we have heard to-day, do you think a committee would be justified in reporting in favour of such a proposal? Does it not show the existence of a demand on the part of the people to get such holdings?—Well, no, I don't think it does, and I will tell you how. The proposal was made by Mr Wm. Keith at Castleton, who is a brother of Mr Keith, solicitor, Thurso. The latter is

Thurso. George Logan.

factor for the estate, and probably he is more anxious to sell than the others are to purchase.

24,257. But we cannot surely imagine that a large and representative body like the County Council of Caithness would give their adhesion to that unless there was a desire on the part of the people to get it done?—Well, if the report is full, you will find that is the very suggestion I made at the meeting last Saturday, viz., that if they found that the landlord was willing to sell, the committee should be authorised to advertise for candidates to come forward and say whether they were willing to take up the lots.

24,258. But is not the procedure under the Act that the Council shall ascertain whether there is any such demand,—you appoint a committee for that purpose?—And we have done so.

24,259. And have they discovered a demand?—No, they have not discovered a demand.

24,260. How then are the negotiations regarding the sale being entered into?—They are not being entered into; they are merely being inquired into.

24,261. You said some transactions were about to take place?—I did not say they were to take place at all; I said the committee was appointed to make inquiries, but it may all end in smoke.

24,262. But it is clear the demand is there?—No, I don't think the demand is there at all, and that is one of the things that the County Council wish the committee to find out,—whether there is such a demand.

24,263. And have not they appointed a committee before now?—They had a committee before, but they did not come to any conclusion.

24,264. Did they make any inquiry with regard to the matter?—Well, I believe they did.

24,265. Supposing there is no demand for small holdings, what in your opinion is the cause for that?—I think it is just simply that there is not that land hunger that is stated to exist. I have never found that myself in all my experience.

24,266. Have you not?—No; I will give you an instance. There is up in the Geise district (a place near where Mr Donald Henderson who gave evidence a little ago lives), one of the nicest little crofts in the county of Caithness probably. It has been beautifully managed by the last occupant, and by his father before him, and it was in excellent order. That man raised himself from a very small position to a position that enabled him this year to take a farm at the rent of £140, and when he left the croft at Whitsunday last it was in about the best order that a little croft could possibly be. I had it advertised in all the local papers. Sir Tollemache's object was chiefly this, that another tenant on the estate, who might have probably a smaller croft, might wish to rise up a little, to get a step up the ladder and take that croft by way of promotion, and that some other person who had not land might come forward and apply for the smaller croft. Strange to say, after that croft was advertised for several weeks, we had to let it to an outsider; one not on the estate at all.

24,267. There was no more application for it than for Rumsdale or those other places?—Yes, there were more; I think I had four candidates for it.

24,268. And that is evidence to you that the land hunger does not exist?—I have not found that it does exist.

24,269. Don't you think it exists in the case where there is a holding made up out of other holdings the size of Oldhall farm? Do you know the case of Oldhall?—I do.

24,270. It is an enormous farm, is it not?—It is a large farm.

24,271. Would you, in the face of the consolidation of that farm and of the medium sized farms, say that there is no land hunger?—I would say that if there was an earth hunger at all it was on the part of the large farmers.

24,272. But you think there is an earth hunger on their part?—Well, several of them have more than one farm, and to my knowledge they farm the land they have uncommonly well.

24,273. Do you concur then that they are letting the land out of cultivation as we heard yesterday?—Well, I think within the last eight years or thereby, it has been going out of cultivation to a considerable extent. Thurso. George Logan.

24,274. Is that, in your opinion, a sign of good farming?—I think it is under present circumstances, because owing to foreign competition it would not pay the expenses to continue to labour to the extent that they did the arable land formerly.

24,275. So then you agree with Mr Tait's evidence yesterday, that it was because they had not labour to use upon these large farms that the large farmers are allowing the land to go out of cultivation?—It is not so much that they have not labour, but they have not the means of paying for the labour.

24,276. But if the land were to go to people who had not to pay for the labour, who do the labour themselves?—Disabuse your mind of that idea; the class of people that you speak of never could labour it to advantage.

24,277. Were they not labouring it before?—Not to my knowledge.

24,278. I don't say to your knowledge and experience?—And I don't attempt to contradict what other witnesses stated; but so far as my knowledge goes it is not so.

24,279. The small holder does not farm to advantage?—Some of them are model farmers; I have given you an instance already in the case of that small crofter in the Geise district; he was a model farmer, and I am glad to say that there are other model farmers; but I cannot say the same of them all.

24,280. But suppose the process of allowing the land to go out of cultivation to continue, where is it going to stop? Would not we have the whole land waste again?—I don't think so.

24,281. You see no prospect of the foreign competition declining in any sense, do you?—Well, I think this year there is an upward tendency; but for the last seven or eight years it has been very discouraging.

24,282. But don't you think foreign competition is likely to be a permanent element in the question?—I am afraid it is, and I am afraid it will tell very much on the small crofter, because he is the one who rears the stirks. He takes them to the market, he used to sell them readily for £9 or £10, but now he cannot get more than probably £4, 10s., or half the price he got before. Therefore it tells more severely against the crofter than against the large farmer.

24,283. I rather think you do not hear anything of small crofters letting their land run out of cultivation?—They cannot afford to let it run out of cultivation, because they have only little patches of land, and must keep under the plough what they have.

24,284. Then, is waste land better than cultivated land?—It is not waste land.

24,285. Is uncultivated land more profitable to the community than cultivated land?—I think if a farmer has a suitable extent of arable land it is more profitable to him under the present state of things where prices are for cattle so low, to allow it to run into permanent pasture, for a time at least, for this reason that he is saved the expense of labouring the land.

24,286. We are back at that again. So that it is all a question of being able to pay for the labour?—Very much.

24,287. And that is the reason why the land is allowed to run out of cultivation in the county of Caithness? That is practically and substantially the evidence of Mr Tait?—To some extent it is so.

24,288. Well then, in reference to certain historical matters. When I was asking you about certain things as to the subdivision of land in Rumsdale and other places in olden times, you excused yourself from giving me any information on the ground that it was beyond your own personal experience,—a perfectly reasonable attitude for you to take up, I admit. But you went on in your statement to give us information about things that happened before you were born?—I only gave it on written evidence.

24,289. Quite so, but you had no hesitation in giving it though it was beyond your own experience?—I have no hesitation in giving it, because it is recorded in the

Thurso. George Logan.

minute books of the trustees, and if you wish to know the names of the trustees I can furnish you with them.

24,290. Quite so, I take it that it is quite correct; but is this not written on the face of the land, the signs of the old cultivation?—Well, I have not seen it myself.

24,291. Is not what is written on the face of the land as good as what is written on paper?—I have not seen it. I have seen what is written on paper, but I have not seen what is written on the land you refer to.

24,292. You have never been up Strathmore, have you?—I have been up Strathmore.

24,293. And you saw no marks of old cultivation?—Didn't I say in my statement that there were certain small patches.

24,294. And is that not then proof that there was old cultivation?—Nobody will deny that.

24,295. Then you said something about it being best that the truth should be known?—It is.

24,296. Do you think the truth has never yet been known?—I hope it is pretty well known.

24,297. Does that imply that other statements are untrue?—I imply nothing; I say it is right that the whole truth should be known.

24,298. This is your statement, not a quotation; it is your statement, that it was best that the truth should be known?—I think I could not have stated the thing more correctly.

24,299. Does that imply that the other statements are not true?—I did not refer to any particular statement at all, I merely say it is best that the truth should be known, and I have given the truth to the best of my knowledge.

24,300. That was the introductory sentence to certain statements you made,—that this was to be the truth and that everything differing from that was not true?—I did not say that at all.

24,301. But that was implied?—You may infer what you like.

24,302. You went on to quote Sir John Sinclair—did you quote Sir John Sinclair? Did you, as a matter of fact, quote Sir John Sinclair although you had promised to quote him?—I made no such promise; I said it was in the time of Sir John Sinclair.

24,303. You went on to quote Sir John Sinclair?—Would you hand me the paper so that I may read my own words. Now you will be good enough just to listen to this; I shall read the whole clause from the beginning: 'We frequently hear in those days of what 'are termed the "good old times." But those who thus 'speak, apparently,—*apparently* do not really know the 'actual circumstances. Whilst we would all sincerely 'wish to see the crofters, small tenants, and large tenants 'prospering alike, it is best that the whole truth should 'be known; and as a clear and convincing proof of the 'pecuniary difficulties in which the smaller tenants 'constantly were who occupied small holdings in the 'olden time, I append hereto several excerpts from the 'minute books of the Ulbster trustees, in the time of 'the Right Hon. Sir John Sinclair.'

24,304. Oh, I beg your pardon. Is that the whole?—That is the whole.

24,305. It was my mistake, I see. But the report, as a matter of fact, is the report of a factor?—The report is my report.

24,306. But your quotation?—Oh, my quotation is taken from the minute books of the trustees.

24,307. What is quoted in the minute book of the trustees?—I read every word.

24,308. A report by the factor, is it not?—No, it is the record of the transactions.

24,309. Would you kindly read on?—Do you wish me to read the excerpts?

24,310. No; do you not say that the quotations you gave regarding abatements of rent, and so on, were reports of a factor to the proprietor? Is that so, do you remember?—No. First of all the factor gives his report and then the trustees record their decision upon that report.

24,311. But these reports about the necessities for doing that, are the factor's reports to his superior?—That is the basis, and then the trustees proceed to dispose of the questions as laid before them. Mr Henderson, who was then factor, was the father, I think, of the present Mr Henderson of Stemster; he was a most respectable gentleman, and not likely to report anything that was not true.

Thurso. George Logan

24,312. I do not suggest that, but he was the factor on the estate of Ulbster at that time?—He was.

24,313. Then, you said that the transactions you referred to took place between the years 1816 and 1833?—I think between 1815 and 1833.

24,314. Was that the time,—I will put it as euphemistically as you like,—is that the time when changes were being made in the policy of the estates?—I could not speak as to that. I don't know of any changes taking place in the policy.

24,315. Or in the rural economy of the estate?—No, I don't know.

24,316. Or in the people being cleared off the estate?—I never knew an instance of their being cleared off; all were before my day, if there were any.

24,317. But was it during the time these changes took place; do you know of your own knowledge if that was the time between 1815 and 1833?—I could not say, but I can refer you to one of these excerpts in which it is stated that the Ulbster trustees were then not *removing* but *receiving* a large number of settlers on the Ulbster estates.

24,318. But you don't know where the former cultivators of Strathmore went to, or when they left?—No, I do not.

24,319. You don't know then whether this statement which you quote synchronised or was simultaneous with the time when these people were being removed, or shortly prior thereto?—I think the evidence is that they were leaving themselves very much.

24,320. Whatever way it was I wish simply to ascertain this fact whether these reports had any bearing on a justification of a policy that was being pursued at that time?—I am not aware of any particular policy that was being pursued; the three trustees who then acted were most respectable gentlemen.

24,321. I don't doubt their respectability?—One was the Sheriff of Haddington, another was Mr Horne of Langwell, and the third Mr James Brown, accountant, in Edinburgh, all gentlemen of the highest respectability.

24,322. We, as you know, had evidence from a gentleman in Wick, who was speaking of his own personal knowledge regarding these times, and he said something different?—I was not at Wick.

24,323. But you said that they required to get abatements of rent?—Yes.

24,324. That was an argument, I suppose, directed against putting them there again?—Well, it showed that they were really in difficulty.

24,325. I wish, then, to test to what extent it showed that. Do you give abatements of rent to large farmers now-a-days?—We do.

24,326. Is it an argument why they should be removed from their present holdings?—No.

24,327. Or why they should not be continued?—No.

24,328. Then why does it apply in this case?—I did not say it applied in that sense.

24,329. Was not it given as an argument against putting people there again?—I never expressed an opinion on that. The part that these persons referred to was away down at the lower part of Strathmore and had nothing to do with the portion I spoke of as being unadvisable to repopulate.

24,330. So then the fact that they had to receive abatements of rent is no argument?—It just showed that they were in pecuniary difficulties.

24,331. And that all farmers are in pecuniary difficulties to-day?—That arises from foreign competition to a great extent.

24,332. Every time will have its own circumstances?—No doubt.

24,333. Then, you are aware that large reductions have been given on the Ulbster estates to crofters within the last ten years?—I am aware of that.

24,334. And that the Crofters Commission reduced

Thurso. George Logan.

rent all over the country?—I am quite aware of that too.

24,335. So that their circumstances in those days were not different in that respect from the circumstances of those days?—I am making no comparison; I was merely stating facts.

24,336. I was asking you about facts?—I am answering you.

24,337. I have no fault to find with your answers; you stated that the small rents could not then be paid?—Well, the evidence is there.

24,338. And you stated, I think, that the rents were then small?—I really don't know what the rents were, but they were bound to be small; these were mere patches that they had.

24,339. Do you mean small in comparison to the amounts that are paid to-day?—I could not compare them.

24,340. Or small in comparison with the rents that were paid in larger holdings than theirs?—My impression,—it may not go for much, but from what I know of Strathmore my impression is that the rents paid in the olden time must have been almost nominal, not much more.

24,341. How do you know that?—I know from the history of the way in which the people lived. If you look at Mr Sage's book, a book which you have no doubt read, I think you will find very clear evidence of that.

24,342. That rents were low compared with rents now?—I don't know that there is any comparison with the last few years.

24,343. But have all rents not gone up, large ones as well as small ones?—Yes, there was a time when rents bounded up very quickly.

24,344. Would it not be a fair test of the rents paid at that time to compare them with the other rents paid at the same time?—I have no objection to the comparison.

24,345. And if that comparison were applied to the large farmers, it would just apply in the same way, would it not?—Very likely.

24,346. Then, you gave us some interesting information of a historical kind, regarding the purchase of the estates.—I wish to ask you a question if you can supply the information; you have got no deer forest on your estate?—We have no deer forest.

24,347. But you have a sporting rental?—We have a sporting rental.

24,348. Now, have you ever compared the grazing rental *plus* the sporting rental that you get from the estate with the rent they get for a deer forest elsewhere?—I have no doubt of the rents they get from deer forests.

24,349. You have not looked into that?—No, I have not.

24,350. Have you a general impression that land that is let as a deer forest is higher rented than land that is let for both pasture and sporting combined?—Really I have no data to go upon.

24,351. It has not come under your personal consideration?—No, it has not come under my consideration.

24,352. Does the sporting rental exceed the grazing rental per acre?—Largely.

24,353. You stated, I think, that the Dalganachan farm was let at 3d. per acre?—That was Rumsdale.

24,354. That is rather low, is it not?—Well, I don't know,—really I made no comparison; it was merely because you had walked over it that I made the calculation to see how much per acre it was. In short I wanted to give you the fullest correct information in my power.

24,355. How does that compare with Dalganachan, is it less or more?—Part of Dalganachan is let along with Rumsdale; they are let together; Glenmore and Glendhu is the upper part of Dalganachan and forms part of the farm of Rumsdale at this moment.

24,356. You said that 30½ miles of road were made by the proprietor, where were these made?—They started at Harpsdale to Westerdale, then from Westerdale to Strathmore, from Strathmore to Dalnawillan, from Dalnawillan to Glutt, from Glutt to Braemore, and then there is a branch which was formed about 10 years ago from Dalnawillan up to the railway station at Aultnabreac.

Thurso. George Log

24,357. Do you know how many of a population these roads accommodate?—Upon each farm there will not be more than perhaps half a dozen individuals.

24,358. How many householders?—Well, there are the tenants of Glutt, Rumsdale, Dalnawillan, and Dalganachan; there is a holding there, and also at Dalnaha, Achalibster and Westerdale.

24,359. Were they built primarily for the accommodation of the sporting tenants?—The roads were really made, I think in the first instance, very much for the accommodation of the grazing tenants, but the shootings were beginning to rise in value about that time, and in consequence of that Sir Tollemache was induced not only to make the road up to the very top of his own property, but he actually, with the consent of the proprietors of Braemore and of Dunbeath, made 7 miles of road on their properties, and that was in order to form a connection with the county road at Dunbeath, because there was no railway then. Now, that the railway has been formed, that portion of the road may be said to be not so much required.

24,360. I think you said also that, in regard to the employment of certain labourers by the Pavement Company, you made it a condition that they should give preference to the labour of tenants on the Ulbster estate?—That is so.

24,361. Have you ever heard any complaint about that?—No, I cannot say that I have heard any complaint at all. I have heard occasionally perhaps one or two of the tenants up in the Geise district say that they thought they might get more employment from the quarries, but you will observe that the quarry that is now being worked in that district is not on Sir Tollemache's property at all. But in Weydale they are just working as they were before.

24,362. I take it then as the general result of your evidence that you cannot show us any land on the estate under your management that is suitable for the purposes regarding which we are appointed to inquire?—I really do not think it would be advisable to take any part of it for that purpose, because I am perfectly convinced,—indeed, I quite agree with Mr Donaldson who was examined here to-day, and whom I never saw before,—but I very fully concur with the evidence that he gave where he stated that it would be utterly impossible for tenants getting new holdings to pay almost any rent for the first seven years.

24,363. Do you concur with him on any other point of his evidence?—I thought he gave very fair evidence indeed, and to a great extent I agree with what I recollect of what he said.

24,364. Do you give a general concurrence to Mr Donaldson's statement?—No, I cannot say that.

24,365. But only that point?—On that point chiefly. I thought he was an honest witness.

24,366. Oh, we are all honest witnesses.

24,367. You do not concur with the evidence of Mr Henderson and the other witnesses who had rather opposite views to those of Mr Donaldson?—No, I do not so much concur with them, but I think Mr Donaldson's evidence was very sensible and really conveyed the truth.

24,368. As he thought it. Then do you not admit that farm steadings and houses have been built without any assistance from external sources?—No, in my opinion no good or substantial houses and no good steadings have been built on small places without external assistance.

24,369. Are you prepared to affirm that as a fact?—I think I might.

24,370. Without qualification?—For example, Mr Donald Henderson here gave an instance to-day of a house that he himself——

24,371. Do you make that as a general statement, Mr Logan?—No, I am not wishing to reflect upon anybody.

Thurso.

George Logan.

24,372. I am rather referring to what my own knowledge is?—Well, I quite agree with you in thinking that if a person has any means, and any energy and if he gets a bit of land, especially if he gets a bit of good arable land to begin with, and if he happens to come under a proprietor who has either not the means to assist him or who says you can go there, but I am not going to be at any expense in connection with it, I say that if that man had a bit of good land to begin with, he might by degrees be able to put up a little hovel in which he might be able to exist; but it would not be a house that would meet the requirements of the sanitary authorities. In those times good and substantial houses must be put up.

24,373. And you do not know any case where a good and substantial house has been put up without external assistance?—No, I cannot say that I know any.

24,374. And does your knowledge extend pretty widely over Caithness?—Well, it does extend pretty widely over Caithness, but I cannot speak of all Caithness for all that.

24,375. So your opinion is that the thing cannot be done?—That is my opinion.

24,376. *Mr Gordon.*—I would like you to tell us about the farm of Rumsdale, of which you have been speaking. We have been over the farm, and have seen it, I believe, at a rather favourable time of the year, and during a very favourable year?—I think so.

24,377. None of the witnesses hitherto have spoken of its character during winter. Is it your opinion, or is it within your knowledge, whether the sheep grazed there in the summer time get wintering on the farm?—No, the sheep are generally sent down to the low grounds, to arable farms where there is an outrun.

24,378. Are the whole of the sheep sent down or only a portion?—No, generally the more tender of them; the ewes are sent down and any tender sheep.

24,379. Is it a ewe stock farm or a wedder stock farm?—A wedder stock farm.

24,380. Then, there are no ewes on it?—There are no ewes on that farm.

24,381. Then, it would be one-year olds, or wedder hoggs that would be sent down?—Yes, and some two-year olds.

24,382. Can you tell us what stock is on the farm?—I should think there would be about 1200 head altogether.

24,383. And how many classes?—Three.

24,384. That makes 400 or so of each class?—About 400 of each class.

24,385. The rent of the farm is, I understand, £130 at present?—That is the rent.

24,386. Now, when wintering is taken for hoggs or one-year old wedders down in the low part of the country here, what price does the wintering cost, as a rule?—About 8s. a head.

24,387. That would be £160, therefore, in addition to paying the rent of the land that the farmer would have to pay for the wintering of his stock?—Yes.

24,388. I suppose no provision could be made up there for the wintering of the sheep?—There is no possibility of keeping them there during the whole winter.

24,389. Take the next farm, is that Dalganachan?—Yes.

24,390. Is that a farm of a similar character to Rumsdale?—It is; it is not quite so high, but in character it is very much the same.

24,391. Could the sheep that are grazed on it during the summer be wintered there also?—No, it is almost exactly the same as Rumsdale.

24,392. Is there as much arable land or green land there as would grow hay sufficient to winter the sheep, or would you have to import it?—You would have to import it.

24,393. That is to say to keep the sheep over a storm?—You would require to send up hay every year, or take down the sheep.

24,394. Therefore, that is not apparently a place where crofters or small tenants would readily thrive?—I have said already that it is not at all a suitable place; in my opinion they could not live, they might exist, but they could not profitably live.

Thurso.

George Loga

24,395. We saw the glen further down than that. Now, there is a place opposite Loch More?—Is it Dalnaha?

24,396. Dalnaha was one of them?—It might be Ascoraclate.

24,397. Yes, that is the place. Is that a place where wintering can be done,—where sheep that are grazed can be wintered?—Well, the tenant might grow a little hay there.

24,398. There is more arable land there?—Yes, there is more green ground, and by enclosing it and keeping the sheep out from the grass he would be able to cut it at the usual cutting season, and dry it for winter use.

24,399. Well, come a little farther down the glen, we come to Dalnaha, and the next place below that is Dirlot?—Yes.

24,400. We saw that place too, and we have heard nothing about it to-day, much to my astonishment. Is it not possible to set down one or two small holdings there comfortably, do you think?—I think it is quite possible.

24,401. The character of the land, the altitude, and the fact that there are some buildings there, would seem to point to that place as being not at least unsuitable for small holdings?—Yes, but you will observe that you could not get the house that the tenant of the farm has; he needs that for himself, and he could not part with it.

24,402. That is to say that if the new holdings were to be confined to the arable land, then the tenant of the grazings would require the house for his shepherd, is that what you mean?—He would need that certainly, and what is more, he would need a very large abatement from his rent.

24,403. Oh, no doubt; I quite understand that. Well, come a little farther down now, to Skinnet. We heard to-day from the witness, Mr Henderson, that the whole of the ground which was at one time occupied by small holdings is at present in pasture; that I understood to be his statement. But in answer to a question by Mr Sutherland lately you stated that the previous tenant, who is now dead I am sorry to say, Mr Waters, improved 200 acres upon that farm; is that so?—That is so.

24,404. I think you farther stated, or at least the inference was that this land was more easily reclaimed because it had formerly been under cultivation by other small tenants?—No, I don't say it was under cultivation by small tenants.

24,405. I don't say you said so, but that was the impression on my mind?—I did not refer to small tenants; it was in the time of Mr Waters and his brother before him, I understand, that it was under the plough.

24,406. And these 200 acres which Mr Waters again reclaimed or reclaimed for the first time, for the first or second time, was not the land to which Mr Henderson referred as being now under pasture?—Really I don't know what he referred to.

24,407. Well, he referred to the land which was occupied at one time by small holdings, and said it was now all under sheep and not under arable land?—That is not my understanding at all; on the contrary, what is under pasture just now is all required in connection with the farm.

24,408. That is not exactly what I mean. Mr Henderson said, in answer to me I think it was, that the land which was formerly occupied by small tenants was now under sheep, and that the locality of that land was mainly above the road and partly below it, between the road and the river. It was not under cultivation?—It has never been under small tenants since ever I knew the property, so I cannot speak to that.

24,409. I put the question again to you. Are the 200 acres which you stated were improved by the tenant now under cultivation?—Chiefly, I think almost all of it is.

24,410. Well, there is another question and only one

Thurso. — George Logan.

that I want to put to you. We heard from Mr Henderson, in answer to Mr Keith, the amount that was expended upon the holdings of his small croft?—Yes.

24,411. He presently holds a farm of £21 rent?—Yes.

24,412. Can you tell me what was his previous rent?—Well, he added one farm to another.

24,413. But can you tell me was that the rent when he put up these houses?—Very much the same; Henderson himself paid something like £10 for his own place.

24,414. And was it upon his own place that the holdings were erected?—Yes.

24,415. Previous to the addition?—No, I think about the same time.

24,416. Now, we find here that between Sir Tollemache Sinclair, the proprietor, and Mr Henderson, the tenant, an expenditure was made on holdings of something like £90?—Yes.

24,417. That refers to holdings upon a £21 croft?—Yes.

24,418. You told us the rent of Aimster?—Yes, £240 or £280, I think.

24,419. And I want to get at the relative cost of the buildings necessary to house a farm like Aimster and a small farm like Geise. Now the one rent is about £400, is it?—The old rent was £340 or so, but I think the new rent is £280. I may be confusing the two rents.

24,420. It is £280 in the valuation roll?—Yes. It was £346 before.

24,421. £346 would be seventeen times Mr Henderson's rent, and £280 would be about fourteen times. Now, how would Sir Tollemache's expenditure in connection with each of these places compare; would it be most for the £21 or most for the £280 rent?—I think in proportion it would be less for the large farm.

24,422. That is what I would think myself, but it appeared as if it was larger, that the expenditure would be greater for the big farm than for the little?—I find, according to a hurried statement that has been made up for me just now, that the sums expended by Sir Tollemache Sinclair, within the last few years, upon Henderson's croft in Geise, are as follows:—

	£	s.	d.
Fencing flags,	13	0	11½
Dwelling-house,	50	16	0
Offices (towards the cost of the buildings),	10	0	0
Drains and ditches,	12	11	4
Paid for ridging dwelling-house,	1	3	0
Total,	87	11	3½

24,423. Now, Mr Henderson said he expended shilling about with the proprietor, that would make a total expenditure of £175?—Yes.

24,424. Can you tell us what Sir Tollemache's outlay was when Mr Morris went into Aimster?—The whole houses and steading were put up there before then, so that it was merely repairs that were needed in that case, whilst it was new houses in Henderson's.

24,425. I would not have mentioned the matter, but you brought it out yourself?—Well, that is the state of the matter.

24,426. *Mr Donald Henderson, Geise.*—You stated that Sir Tollemache proposed to divide the farm of Bleachfield and Glengolly among the crofters?—I don't say he proposes that now; I say he did eight years ago.

24,427. Was such a proposal at that time advertised in any of the local papers?—It was.

24,428. Could you mention to satisfy the Commission a single individual that ever saw such a proposal?—It was advertised in the local papers; if you don't read the local papers I cannot be accountable for that.

24,429. But, certainly, some one else might have seen it as well as you, if such an advertisement was ever made?—I think you were all reading the papers very much.

24,430. I wish to explain that I am a crofter representing the whole crofters of the district; I am simply their mouthpiece. Sir Tollemache spoke to me to convene my meeting, and that he was willing to remove any grievance as far as his ability could reach. I called that meeting, at which Sir Tollemache was present, and Mr Logan. I opened up the crofters' question under four heads. One principal question was the smallness of the holdings of the crofters. There was no proposal made at that meeting to divide the farm of Glengolly and to set it for crofters, but simply a park of 40 acres, connected with the farm paying a rent as Sir Tollemache stated of £80 or £2 per acre. The proposal, therefore, of Sir Tollemache was that the crofters should have it if they would pay the rent of £80 for it, so that Sir Tollemache would have no loss by it. Otherwise, the park was to be given by slump to the whole crofters for grazing purposes, and they were to pay £2 for each head for the six months' grazing. That I hold as I would have the truth and that alone to be the proposal of Sir Tollemache. Now, I called meeting after meeting of the crofters to see if by an arrangement we might have the tenants to offer any rent at all. The tenants absolutely refuse to offer any rent as they viewed Sir Tollemache's proposal of £2 an acre, while they, the crofters themselves, were only paying for their lands 2s. 6d., a mere sham, and that he really did not mean it. [*Witness*].—My lord, I may just mention by way of explanation of this statement of Henderson's that the matter is in this position:—The farms of Beachfield and Glengolly were both advertised, as I have stated, in the local papers, the whole farms. But this, I suppose, is a more recent thing; and since nobody came forward to take up the whole farms, Sir Tollemache, still willing to accommodate them, stated that he would endeavour to make arrangements with Dr Mill's trustees who were tenants of a different farm altogether, to give up a large part of that farm for grazing purposes as accommodation land, the same as we have in the parish of Halkirk, and the same as we have at Thurso Castle. For example, in the parish of Halkirk, Sir Tollemache always keeps what is termed the village park under grass, permanent grass for the accommodation of the feuars' cows. They pay £2, 5s. per head for the grazing during the summer.

24,431. I flatly deny that even such a proposal was made either by Mr Logan or by Sir Tollemache.

24,432. *The Chairman.*—Is it a fact that this park, when it was proposed to be offered to crofters, was to be at the rate of £2 an acre?—Not at £2 an acre, but it was to be let at the rate of £2 per cow.

24,433. For six months?—For the whole summer grazing, and that is 5s. per head less than they pay in Halkirk, and £1, 5s. less than they pay in the neighbourhood of Thurso.

23,434. I am right in taking it that your answer is that it was to be £2 per cow for six months' grazing?—That is so.

24,435. I am sorry you have not put in the advertisement, as it would have saved us some time; have you got a copy?—I generally retain copies of those advertisements in my letter book, and probably I may have this one.

24,436. Would you kindly look up to see if you have the newspaper or the letter book; and if you have the newspaper put it in, if not put in a copy from the letter book?—I will be very happy.*

24,437. *Mr Sutherland.*—There is one question I forgot to ask. As a matter of fact, who is the tenant of Rumsdale grazing?—Mr James Macbeath.

24,438. Where does he transfer his sheep to in winter?—To his farm of Gerston.

24,439. He does not put them off his own farm?—He does not need to do that, because he has the other farm.

24,440. *Mr Peter Keith,* Agent for Sir Tollemache Sinclair.—About the acreage of Achalibster, I think when you were asked about that this morning, you made a mistake as to the extent of the ground?—Then it was a mere verbal error. I recollect the extent of it perfectly; it is 2130 acres.

24,441. I think you mentioned about 5000 acres?—Oh, that is a mistake then.

24,442. About the application to the County

* See after question 24452.

Thurso. George Logan.

Council, with regard to the purchase of land for small holdings, there was a petition, I think, lodged with the County Council to put the act into active operation, was there not?—Yes.

24,443. And how many signed the petition, do you think?—I think there would be about 15 altogether probably, and they were all tenants in the Murkle district.

24,444. I refer to this property of Durran that you spoke about; is it not the case that there were only two or three names to the petition altogether?—Oh, no, there was a petition, or at least there was a statement made that about 15 had signed.

24,445. But the question is as to the petition; is it not the case that there were only two or else three names to the petition?—I am under the impression that they had all signed it.

24,446. Did you know that one of those who had signed the petition was Mr Oliver, who is the tenant of Sybmister and Stanstill?—I really don't know except that it was stated that there had been a petition sent in.

24,447. What is the custom on your estate with regard to the erection of houses on small farms? What contribution does the proprietor give?—The contribution that the proprietor has hitherto been in the habit of giving has been £10 for the dwelling-house, with all the timber, slates, lime, ridging, and flooring.

24,448. Is it the case that those tenants or several tenants with that assistance have erected houses, which they have been enabled to do from the result of their cartages or other labour at the quarries, or by the result of their earnings at the fishing?—Well, we have been advertising lately; Sir Tollemache caused advertisements to be inserted repeatedly within the present year, to the effect that he was willing to build, at his own sole expense, twenty new houses for small tenants upon the estate; and it is with the greatest difficulty that we can get those small tenants to come forward and say that they will even perform the cartages; for this reason that they say they are generally otherwise employed, and they say besides that the houses they have are tolerably comfortable, and, therefore, they feel content with them as they are.

24,449. But about Forss, there for instance, is it from the produce of the crofts that they have been enabled to build their holdings, or from the earnings outside their crofts?—It is chiefly from their earnings at the quarries, and that is the reason why many of the smaller tenants are unable to perform the cartages, their time is taken up either at the quarries or in carting.

24,450. The houses and steadings are erected by them, not only for their farms but to enable them to carry out their work at the quarries or at carting?—Well, they live there, and their families with them; they cultivate their bits of land, and most of them have, I suppose, 15 or 20 acres.

24,451. Then, with reference to the farms of Brawl and Skinnet, they are arable farms?—Yes.

24,452. And in so far as they have common pasture attached, is not that required for the profitable use of the arable portion of the farm?—It is absolutely required.

[After the sitting, Mr Logan lodged a printed copy from a newspaper of the two advertisements referred to in his evidence. These advertisements were in the following terms :—

ULBSTER ESTATES.

Excellent Arable and Pasture Farms near Thurso.

TO BE LET OR SOLD AS FEUS OF SUCH SIZE AS MAY BE AGREED UPON.

With Entry at Whitsunday First, 1886.

SIR TOLLEMACHE SINCLAIR, having been informed that there is a strong desire on the part of crofters and others to obtain an interest in Co-operative or Club Farms, or to obtain leases or feus of arable or pasture farms of moderate extent, and being desirous to meet their wishes as far as possible, has just succeeded in provisionally arranging with the present tenants of the farms of Glengolly and Bleachfield, on the west side of the river of Thurso, and also with the present tenants of the farms of Geiselittle and Todholes, on the east side of the river, so as to enable him now to let these farms in such lots as may be mutually arranged, with entry thereto at the term of Whitsunday first. Thurso. George Logan

1. The farm of Glengolly extends to 248 acres or thereby, of which 234 acres or thereby are arable, and 14 acres pasture.

2. The farm of Bleachfield consists of 88 acres or thereby, of which about 80 acres are arable, and 8 acres or thereby pasture.

3. The farm of Geiselittle extends to 366 acres or thereby, of which about 256 acres are arable, and 110 acres or thereby pasture; also—

4. The farm of Todholes, with outlying pasture, extends to 475 acres or thereby, of which about 225 acres are arable, and 250 acres of pasture.

Offers will be received by George Logan, factor for the proprietor, on or before Tuesday, the 4th day of December next, at 12 o'clock noon, when the proprietor and factor will be prepared to meet intending offerers with a view to arrange the terms on which leases or feus will be granted for such period as may be mutually arranged.

NOTE.—The proprietor cannot sell or let portions of these farms unless he receives suitable offers for all of them.

THURSO, 21*st September* 1885.

PROPOSED CO-OPERATIVE OR CLUB FARM IN CAITHNESS.

SIR TOLLEMACHE SINCLAIR having been informed that there is a strong desire on the part of crofters and others to obtain an interest in a Co-operative or Club Farm, is prepared to let the farms of Rumsdale, Glenmore and Glendhu, in the parish of Halkirk, at the term of Martinmas or Whitsunday next, on conditions similar to those recently granted by the Duke of Sutherland, or on such other terms as may be agreed on.

These farms consist of 11,937 acres, of which a small portion is arable pasture, and the remainder moor of excellent quality.

Intending offerers to state in what mode they would wish the shares to be divided.

The rent paid prior to Whitsunday 1884 was £335, and that offered them by a grazing tenant was £250. The ground carries about 1200 to 1300 sheep, and the stock will be handed over at valuation at the term of entry.

Offers will be received by George Logan, factor for the proprietor, up to 4th December next, at twelve o'clock noon, on which day the proprietor and factor will be prepared to meet intending shareholders, with a view to adjust the terms on which a lease will be granted for such period as may be mutually arranged.

THURSO CASTLE, 21*st September* 1885.]

PETER KEITH, Solicitor, Thurso (44)—*examined*. Peter Keith.

24,453.—*The Chairman.*—You appear for the Ulbster estate?—The Mey estate.

24,454. How long have you been factor?—Two years.

24,455. Who was the previous factor?—My cousin, the late Mr Keith. I have been for about twenty years law agent on the estate, and during the factorship of the previous factor I assisted him frequently in the management of the estate, and I know it pretty well.

24,456. Kindly read your statement.—The gross rental of the properties is £3294, 18s., including the rental of the shootings, and there are altogether 192 tenants on the estates, while two farms are at present in the proprietor's hands. Both these farms were advertised to be let last year, but no let was arranged. One of them is likely now to be let. The rental is made up as follows :—

	£	s.	d.
Parish of Bower, . . .	149	5	0
Canisbay, ...	2752	3	0
Olrig, ...	393	10	0
Total, . .	£3294	18	0

Thurso. Peter Keith.

The following is a classified list showing the graduated rentals of the various holdings on the estates :—

I. *Canisbay.*

No. of tenants with rents not exceeding				£5	86
Do. with rents above £5 and not exceeding				10	44
Do.	do.	10	do.	15	21
Do.	do.	15	do.	20	8
Do.	do.	20	do.	25	3
Do.	do.	25	do.	30	5
Do.	do.	30	do.	40	2
Do.	do.	40	do.	50	8
Do.	do.	50	do.	60	2
Do.	do.	60	do.	90	2
Do.	do.	90	do.	120	2
Do.	do.	120	do.	125	1
Do.	do.	125	do.	200	1
					185

II. *Olrig.*

No. of tenants with rents not exceeding				£30	2
Do. with rents above £30 and not exceeding				35	1
Do.	do.	35	do.	70	2
Do.	do.	70	do.	90	1
Do.	do.	90	do.	100	1
					7

III. *Bower.*

No. of tenants with rents not exceeding £5			1
Do.	do.	above £5 and exceeding £140	1
			2

From the above list it will be seen that while there are 170 tenants paying a rental of under £30 there are only 22 whose rental exceeds that sum, and the rent of the largest farm held by a tenant on the Mey and Canisbay property is only £125, viz., for Hollandmey.

Fifty-five tenants had their rents fixed by the Crofters Commission. Most of the others who were paying rents of under £30 were on lease, and the remainder would not apply to the Commission to have their rent adjusted, although it was the wish of the then proprietor and factor that they should do so. Immediately after the fair rents were fixed by the Commission, the landlord voluntarily granted a reduction of 25 per cent. per annum for a period of five years to all his other tenants, including those under lease.

I notice that some statements were made to your honours regarding the farm of Brabster or Brabstermyre. This property was acquired by the late Lord Caithness only about thirty years ago, and I am unable to give evidence regarding the evictions therefrom alleged to have taken place when the property was in the hands of the former proprietor. It is presently held under lease for fourteen years from 1890 at a rental of £112 by two tenants, Alexander Murray and John Angus, both of whom have been for many years tenants on the Mey estates. Mr Murray was born on his present farm of Brabster, and I think Mr Angus was also born there. Mr Murray was a crofter paying a rent of £13 when he took this farm, and his joint-tenant, John Angus, has still his croft adjoining the farm of Brabster, for which he pays a rent of £7, 10s. This grazing is practically in the occupation of crofters and seems outwith the scope of the remit to your honours.

Their lease provides for suitable land on the farm being brought under cultivation by them, and they are entitled at their outgoing to certain compensation for land so brought under cultivation. They are industrious and hard-working tenants, and will certainly cultivate all that is capable of cultivation to profit. I am satisfied that it would never pay smaller tenants to have patches of this farm given out to them to be brought under cultivation, and would simply render useless the remainder of the farm. The farm is well adapted for its present purpose, and it would not pay either proprietor or tenant to have it let otherwise. Thurso.

There are some small farms and crofts on Brabster held by crofters and other tenants. George Bruce, who held a croft there, had his rent fixed by the Crofters Commission in 1890 at £3, 10s. He had 8 acres arable, 3 roods and 33 poles pasture, besides the right of grazing in Brabster moss to an extent of 107 acres. He voluntarily renounced his croft at Whitsunday 1892, as he found he could make a more comfortable and much better livelihood by himself and his family working as servants on a large farm. The croft was at his request taken off his hands, and he was paid compensation for any improvements he had executed on the holding, and he and his family are now employed on the farm of Reaster. This croft adjoins the holding of David Angus, the total extent of which is about 86 acres, whereof 38 acres are arable, and the rent of which is £22, 10s. It was offered to him as an extension of his holding at the rent fixed by the Crofter Commission, £3, 10s., but he would not take it at all. It was then offered to John Angus whose croft is close to it, and is about 25 acres in extent, and the rent of which is £7, 10s., but neither would he have it. It cannot be let as a separate holding, because it is too small, and the houses will not meet present sanitary requirements. It is therefore still unlet. Peter Keith

In 1868 the late Lord Caithness paid for the construction of the road running through Brabster the sum of £1665, 10s. To account of this sum he received from the County Road Trustees £750, and from Sir John Sinclair £105, and the whole balance of £810, 10s. was paid by his lordship out of his own pocket.

Mr Reid is reported to have said at your honours' sitting in Wick that a deputation waited on the late factor with a view to obtaining the grazing farm of Brabstermyre. It is the case that a deputation did wait on him for this purpose, and he offered to give them the farm at a reasonable rent provided they could satisfy him that they had means to stock it and pay the rent, or provided one of their number—whom he named —would become security for the proper occupation of the farm and the payment of the rent. He gave them a fortnight to arrange this matter, and it was only after they failed that it was let to the present tenants.

With regard to the farm of Hollandmey, it extends to over 2000 acres, whereof 65 are arable. It was let with entry at Whitsunday last at a rent of £125 to Messrs Finlayson, who are industrious, hardworking farmers, and so far as that farm is capable of being profitably brought under cultivation the tenants intend to cultivate it.

I have examined the estate rent ledgers at the beginning of this century, and I find that the larger part of that farm was then in the proprietor's hands ; that there were only three crofters and three or four cottars on the farm, the latter paying a rent of only 2s. 6d. each per annum. I find that one of these crofters, John Coghill is entered as having "given up his tack." Mr Reid states that about fifty years ago some people whom he names lost their holdings at Hollandmey, and he also speaks of them as being put out against their will and settling down in any hole they could find. The first he names as having been evicted is Adam Barnie, whose son, Joseph Barnie, informs me that he (Adam Barnie) left his small holding in Hollandmey about sixty years ago for the very much better and larger farm of Longgoe, on the Mey estate, which farm is till this day occupied by his son, the said Joseph Barnie. The next he names as having been evicted is Peter Nicolson. He left his small holding in Hollandmey for the comparatively large farm of Towerhill, on the Ulbster estate. Another who was said to have been evicted is David Nicolson. He went from Hollandmey and became tenant of the large farm of Ha' of Duncansbay, thereafter becoming tenant of Stemster, on the Mey estates, where he died. Another not named by Mr Reid, John Nicolson, son of David Nicolson, left his small holding in Hollandmey and became tenant of a larger and better farm in Auckingill. The three Nicolsons were the last small tenants on Hollandmey besides the three cottars.

Thurso. Peter Keith.

When the tenants left Hollandmey and Crackersfield others could not be got to take their places and pay the outgoing tenants' valuations, hence the farm was let as a sheep grazing farm.

It would not be practicable to divide this farm up into small holdings to be cultivated to profit. I do not believe that any tenant in such a holding would be able to pay a reasonable amount of interest on the outlay on buildings, &c.

Scriam Hill Park was also spoken of by Mr Reid. This is part of the home farm of Barrogill Mains, and is the only natural pasture of the farm (which extends to about 250 acres arable), and is required for grazing the stock of that arable farm. It is very poor quality of land and not at all suitable for regular cultivation. Rigifa, which was also spoken to, is simply a peat moss, and as the present peat banks are getting exhausted, it is required for peats for the estate.

I see it has been stated that all the houses and offices recently built on the Mey estates were put up by tenants, the proprietor supplying only lime and slates. This is not the case. The proprietor in addition supplied them with flooring, tabling, and ridging, and is to pay them at removal full compensation for the wood, including joiner work.

24,457. *Mr Sutherland.*—Who, the crofters?—Yes, all the tenants. To all tenants the proprietor, in addition to supplying lime and slates, provided them with flooring, tabling, and ridging, and is to pay them compensation at removal for the wood work.

24,458. Is that the ordinary tenants?—Yes, all the tenants. The crofters will get their compensation fixed under the Crofters Act.

24,459. *The Chairman.*—What would you estimate the cash value of the flooring, and so on, that the proprietor gives in an ordinary case to be?—I have an estimate here, made up by the previous factor, in which he states distinctly the joiner work of the dwelling-house and offices on a small farm; and for the joiner work of the dwelling-house, including wood and workmanship, but exclusive of cartages, the cost is £33. For the offices the joiner work, exclusive of cartages, is £57, 9s. 6d.

24,460. And may we take these figures as typical?—This estimate was made up some considerable time ago, when perhaps joiner work was very much cheaper than it is at the present moment.

24,461. When was it made up?—It was made up at least twenty years ago.

24,462. Just continue your statement, if you please.—Besides, in most cases he gave them a sum of money, and in several cases helped them with the cartages. He also helped them materially in improving any new land, and did the first ploughing thereof, and in some cases supplied them with tiles for drains and flags for fencing. He had two home farms in his own hands, one on each side of the property, and he assisted crofters and small tenants largely from them. But besides the general assistance he rendered to almost all, some of the cottages and steadings—including the cartages therefor, he wholly erected at his own expense, such as that occupied by Hugh Fraser, Gills, which cost nearly £300, and for interest for this outlay and the rental of the whole croft he gets only £7, 10s. a year. Surely a proprietor may expect 5 per cent. on buildings—a decaying property, but here the proprietor did not get even that, and besides gave his land for absolutely nothing.

In the case of John Wares, Canisbay, the proprietor paid £134 for building the dwelling-house in 1868, and the rental he receives for the house and five acres of land is £8.

The proprietors of the Mey estates have all along acted in a liberal spirit towards their smaller tenants, and instead of carrying out any scheme of eviction, they have always held out inducements to the tenants to remain on the estates. At Whitsunday 1892, the grazings of St. John's Head, extending to 338 acres, were taken from the farm of Barrogill Mains and let to the adjoining crofters, although they were of great value as an outrun to the arable farm of Barrogill Mains. (Signed) PETER KEITH.

Thurso. Peter Keith.

The Durran property belongs also to the same proprietor who is at present prepared to dispose of it, but I think I am right in saying that the petition which was sent to the County Council with a view to test whether or not there was any demand in the County for small holdings was signed by only three people, one of whom was Mr Oliver, one of the largest farmers in the county.

24,463. There is one matter I wish to mention to you. It would be a great convenience to us if you would give us a sight of the estate plans on the estate you represent?—Yes, I will do so. There was a farm on the Mey estate wholly improved by the proprietor out of the heather; a farm of considerable size now.

24,464. What is the name of it?—Phillips Mains.

24,465. Is that the home farm?—It was the home farm for some time; it is likely to be let now. Its extent is 318 acres arable with 45 of pasture. There was a good steading put up on the place and it was well enclosed and well drained, and the rent we can get for it now will not pay interest on the expenditure on buildings and steading alone.

24,466. *Mr Sutherland.*—You accounted for certain of the tenants who Mr Reid stated were upon the Holland-Mey farm; how many did you account for?—I accounted for those who left last, as I assumed that it was those he referred to.

24,467. He mentioned eight; how many of the eight did you account for?—There were three of them cottars paying only 2s. 6d. a piece, and I accounted for I think the four others.

24,468. And how do you account for the cottars?—I have no record of what became of them excepting that they paid 2s. 6d. of rent, and their rent stops in the rent ledger.

24,469. You do not know what became of them?—No, I do not, but I know that they had nothing but just simply their houses; they had no land. They are simply called cottars.

24,470. I am not talking of them as cottars or as called by any other name; I am talking of them simply as human beings. How many of those in Holland-Mey had actually secured places before they left?—Every-one of those I have mentioned.

24,471. Does it consist with your knowledge that before they left Holland-Mey they made arrangements to go into these better places?—It consists with the information I have got from one of those who left Holland-Mey, Mr Adam Barnie's son, Joseph Barnie.

24,472. You speak with confidence regarding Barnie's case; do you speak with equal confidence regarding the others?—I do, from the information he supplied to me, he himself being sixteen years of age when he left the place, and it was four years after when the others left. The places were then offered to any one who would take them, but no tenants could be found who were willing to pay the valuations due to the outgoing tenants.

24,473. Did they get these from the landlord?—Doubtless they did, as was the custom.

24,474. Did that custom apply to this period, or only to a more recent period?—It applied then, at all times. There are papers by the factor at a very old date showing that the tenants are entitled to meliorations for the woodwork of their houses.

24,475. Can you say with any reasonable degree of confidence that you are of opinion that they did receive such meliorations?—I do. I say they were entitled to receive them, and as no incoming tenant could be found to pay them, the proprietor had to give them compensation for these.

24,476. But you assert that they received such compensation?—Such compensation as they were entitled to.

24,477. Of the nature you state?—Yes, of the nature I state. I don't know the amount.

24,478. Have you any reasonable theory to suggest with regard to this exodus on the part of the Holland-Mey tenants?—Yes, I think probably their houses would be very much decayed and possibly no tenant would care to give them valuation for the timber, and

Thurso. Peter Keith.

the work on the new houses, and the land was not worth very much for cultivation, and as they were offered very much better land elsewhere, in good arable farms they naturally preferred that.

24,479. They were very substantial men?—They must have been before they could have taken these places.

24,480. And also judging from the nature of the ruins we see on the farms?—Judging from the farms which they took after they left this place, one would consider that they were men of some means.

24,481. You said that Holland-Mey was the biggest farm on the Mey estate; is that the farm rented at £125?—Yes. I should perhaps say regarding their having means, of course the conditions of living then were very different from what they are now. They would probably save a great deal of money now spent on ordinary maintenance, food, and clothing; and there was probably a great deal less artificial manure and feeding stuffs used in these days.

24,482. That makes it all the more difficult to understand why they left?—They left for better places.

24,483. How do you account for the fact that there is no such desire on the part of the people now-a-days to leave the place?—I believe there is the same desire yet, where they can get bigger or better places. The matter was put to the test in the case of Brabster where they were offered this farm not at the highest rent nor the lowest, but at a medium rent provided they would satisfy the factor that they could stock the place and use it properly; and he agreed to accept one of their own number as security and gave them a fortnight to consider it; and yet they refused to comply with the conditions.

24,484. It would altogether depend on the conditions?—The only conditions were that they would give security for the proper use of the farm and the payment of the rent.

24,485. Those are all the conditions that, in your opinion, weighed with them in not making the application?—They either could not or would not satisfy the factor that they could pay the rent and properly use the place; and this tenant whom he named refused to become cautioner for his neighbouring tenants.

24,486. That depends, I am sure you will be prepared to admit, on the nature of the satisfaction wanted by the factor?—I don't think he would be difficult to satisfy, especially seeing he was perfectly willing to accept one of themselves as cautioner. It is the case also that this man whom he wished to accept as cautioner came afterwards and said he would take the farm himself if he would get it excluding the others, but he was not willing to become security for the others.

24,487. It is adjoining, I suppose, the smallest holders on the estate?—No, the Slickly holders have pretty extensive crofts. I can give you the acreage of their crofts if you like.

24,488. What I wanted more was the boundary between the Slickly people and the Holland-Mey farm. I think if you can give that to our Surveyor it will be useful?—Yes, I can do so, the smallest holdings are on the island of Stroma, chiefly fishermen paying £1 or £2 for the crofts.

24,489. In your opinion is not part of the farm of Holland-Mey, beyond what is actually under crop, fit for cultivation?—Yes, there are only three fields in cultivation at the present moment, but there are other three which are to be cultivated just now, and the arrangement with the incoming tenants is that they will cultivate these three fields, and more if they find it profitable.

24,490. Would you kindly tell us whether these fields were cultivated before?—They were not cultivated during Mr Purves's tenure of the farm, and he was twenty-one years there.

24,491. And is it a condition of the new lease that the incoming tenant shall keep these under rotation?—It is a condition that he shall cultivate them.

24,492. Or is it limited merely to his outgoing crops?—No, he has to keep them in regular cultivation.

24,493. Is it a fact that it was a condition in the old lease that the tenant should leave so much in cultivation?—It was a condition that if the tenant would find it more profitable to leave it in pasture as he got it he would be at liberty to do so, but during the last five years of his lease he was unconditionally bound to cultivate the whole of these six fields which were previously uncultivated. Thurso. Peter Keith

24,494. In order to give them to the succeeding tenant in rotation, I presume?—Yes, that would be the reason, no doubt. But he afterwards asked permission to depart from this condition. He was a very experienced farmer, and found it would not in his view be profitable to cultivate those fields, and that they would be of infinitely more value to him as good pasture land in connection with the farm then under cultivation. He, therefore, asked permission to depart from that condition of his lease; and he was allowed to depart from it until the last year.

24,495. In fact if he let it run out he would not have to pay any labour for the cultivation of it?—That may have been one of the circumstances, but that could not have been the chief object. The chief reason was that the land was very valuable ground as a sheep run for the remainder of the farm.

24,496. Is the condition in the new tenant's lease the same?—No, there is no such condition, his condition is to cultivate all those six fields, and as much more as he may find it profitable to cultivate. Of course, if he were to ask permission, if he found it was not profitable to cultivate any one field he might get permission so to do, but at the present moment he is bound to cultivate the whole.

JAMES MACKIDD, Farmer, Thurso East (67)—*examined*. James Mackidd.

24,497. *The Chairman.*—You are a farmer?—Yes.

24,498. And your farm is Thurso East farm?—Yes.

24,499. What statement do you desire to make?—I have no statement to make.

24,500. Your name is given up to me as that of one wishing to make a short statement; is that not correct?—Well, I have no particular statement to make, but that I am the tenant of that farm, and I am ready to answer any questions that may be asked of me.

24,501. *Mr Gordon.*—Are you not tenant of some of the hill farms?—I am joint-tenant of Dalnaglaton.

24,502. We were over that place. Is it a ewe stock farm?—Yes.

24,503. And do you winter your ewes up there?—Some of them.

24,504. What is your rent?—£155.

24,505. How many ewes have you?—About 700 in the summer time, and about 400 or 500 in the winter time.

24,506. In keeping up your stock, how many gimmers or ewe hoggs have you?—140 to 150.

24,507. Where do you winter them?—In the low ground. We let them out to wintering.

24,508. Have you two shepherds at Dalnaglaton?—Yes, two hirsels.

24,509. Now, as to your ewes there, do you find it necessary to feed them at any time during the winter, to hand feed them?—I am sorry to say too often.

24,510. Are you the highest up tenant in the glen of Strathmore, who keeps a ewe stock?—I am.

24,511. And at your place you find it necessary to hand feed them?—Yes.

24,512. Is that usual or only occasional?—Well, two years ago I had to send up, I suppose, about 600 or 800 stones of hay to feed them during the storm. I could not get them taken down. As a usual thing they have to be hand fed every year; we send up oats and oilcake for that.

24,513. Do you winter the hoggs upon Thurso East farm?—No, I let them out to wintering.

24,514. What do you pay for the wintering?—7s. 6d. last year, and 7s. this year.

24,515. That would be from £50 to £60?—Yes,

Thurso. James Mackidd.

about £60. This year I have about 180 out at wintering.

24,516. Fully £60 has thus to be added to your rent?—Yes.

24,417. The main thing for me to know is as to the wintering up there. You say, as a rule, the stock has to be hand fed?—Yes.

24,518. Have you not enough of hay ground on the farm to keep the sheep,—within the farm?—No, and you cannot depend on getting a good crop out of the ground up there.

24,519. Do you mean a crop of oats, or a crop of hay?—A crop of oats, or a green crop either.

24,520. Is it liable to frost?—It is liable to mildew and frost.

24,521. Do the shepherds cultivate at all?—Not an acre; not an inch.

24,522. In point fact, they do not?—They do not.

24,523. And is the reason why they do not cultivate their fear lest it should be frosted, and they would not get the good of the crop?—It is perhaps not once in twenty years that they could get anything out of it that would be worth cutting.

24,524. It is no doubt a fact that we saw very good crop in Rumsdale?—This is an exceptional year; I have not seen the like of it for twenty years.

24,525. Very good corn, turnips, and potatoes?—But if it was last year or the year before, or the year before that, it would have gone all to rot.

24,526. And, as a matter of fact, your shepherds do not cultivate?—They do not. All the food they get to live on is sent up to them.

24,527. *Mr Sutherland.*—Why is it that you do not winter the sheep on your own low ground farm?—I am only the joint-tenant of this other farm, and I don't want to interfere with my own farm, which is a different concern altogether; I don't want to mix up the two together, because the farm I have at Thurso East is solely my own.

24,528. But that is the sole reason why you have to pay for the wintering of your sheep?—Well, it is not the sole reason; it might be more profitable for me to pay for them out at the wintering than even to winter them on my own farm.

24,529. But you could if you wished make an arrangement to winter them on your own farm?—I could by charging the other tenant with an account of that.

24,530. You don't want to mix up the accounting of the farms?—No. [*Mr Gordon.*—I think you are getting them wintered more cheaply than you could at home?—That is my opinion.]

24,531. What is the general elevation of the land up there?—I think about 500 or 600 feet above sea level.

24,532. That is the house of Dalnaglaton?—Yes.

24,533. It is not so high up then as Dalganachan?—Well, there is only two miles of difference between the two places.

24,534. The house at Dalganachan is in the hollow, is it?—Yes, but some of the farm is on the high ground.

24,535. It is above the level of the river, is it?—It is a little above the level, but some of the low ground is liable to be covered with water from the river.

24,536. You stated also in reply to a question by Mr Gordon, a fact of which we have some general knowledge, viz., that this is an exceptional year?—I did.

24,537. And then that was the reason why there were such good crops at Rumsdale?—Assuredly; if you had gone there last year you would have seen a different state of matters.

24,538. Two years ago, you said you had to send up hay?—Two years ago I had to send it up to Altnabreac.

24,539. Was not the winter two years ago an exceptional winter?—No, it was not, it was just as bad last year, or nearly so, but I made other provision.

24,540. That was an exceptional winter too?—No, it was not an exceptional winter.

24,541. Have you more severe weather in winter there than in any other place?—Yes, I suppose we have, because it stands so high; the snow lies there weeks after it is away from here altogether.

Thurso. James Mackidd.

24,542. Naturally, because it is 600 feet while this is at sea level. But do you know of severe weather there when there is no severe weather elsewhere?—Often; I have often been up there when it was torrents of rain and very windy weather, and down here it was beautiful sunshine.

24,543. Do you know of any place, in your experience, where sheep are wintered at a higher elevation than Dalganachan?—There may be sheep wintered at a higher elevation, but they must take a part of them away to the wintering in the low ground; they cannot winter the same number as they graze in summer.

24,544. The pasture is wetter, of course, in winter. Then, with regard to your statement that you could not raise hay, you see the marks of the old cultivation along the river, don't you?—I have often walked over it.

24,545. Have you seen the plough ridges?—I have seen a lot of sheep drains.

24,546. And plough ridges?—I cannot say I have ever seen plough ridges, but I have seen a lot of sheep drains grown up and filled up again.

24,547. You saw no evidence of old cultivation along the river?—I could not say; I did not look for it, but I saw plenty evidence of sheep drains.

24,548. Are you prepared to deny that there was cultivation?—No, I am not, because I have heard of cultivation there, and I have heard of the people there being obliged to bleed the cattle for blood to keep themselves alive during the winter many times.

24,549. When did that happen?—It might be perhaps half a century, or maybe three quarters of a century ago.

24,550. But you believe hearsay rather than eyesight, do you?—It is not eyesight.

24,551. I am referring to what is visible to the eye, what we see?—What about?

24,552. The marks of old cultivation along the river?—The cultivation along the river side is principally, in my opinion, old sheep drains.

24,553. You did not see any marks of field cultivation?—I could not see a mark of field, but I saw the mark of old houses.

24,554. What had these houses been do you think?—I cannot tell you.

24,555. *Mr Peter Keith.*—If there had been cultivation there, is it not likely that that cultivation had not been to profit?—Most assuredly it was not to profit, seeing it was abandoned. [*The Chairman.*—Does that follow?—If there had been cultivation.]

24,556. Is it not the case that supposing there was cultivation there, the spring frosts are very much later there than here?—Maybe from a fortnight to three weeks or a month later than they would be here, in consequence of the severity of the weather and the quantity of snow lying on the ground.

24,557. And would the young crop not be very likely to be killed by the frosts in spring?—I have no doubt it would.

24,558. Assuming that they survived that and came to harvest, is it not the case that the crops would be very much later in ripening up there than here?—There is no doubt about that. Look at the reclamations made by the Duke of Sutherland.

24,559. *Mr Sutherland.*—What do you wish to say about these reclamations?—They are going all to waste again.

24,560. Did you see the crops that were raised there?—Many a time, and I was there when the reclamations were going on.

24,561. Do you know the Achintoul farm?—Yes.

24,562. Do you see the crops they raise there? Is there better in Caithness?—I know that: I am referring more particularly to Kinbrace. I was one of the party invited by the late Duke of Sutherland to come up there and see the reclamations when they were going on.

24,563. Have you seen the crops growing there?—I have seen the crops two or three times a season.

Thurso. James Mackidd.

24,564. Is there a better crop in Caithness than grows there?—Oh, well, I pity Caithness if not.

24,565. *Mr Keith.*—Then, at the low ground there beside the river, is it not the case that the river very frequently overflows its banks?—Very frequently.

24,566. And spreads over the clean ground beside the river?—Yes.

24,567. You are tenant of Thurso East farm? What is the acreage of it?—About 510 acres I think.

24,568. You entered it in 1874 on a nineteen years' lease?—Yes. I entered into a new lease last Whitsunday.

24,569. And at the time you entered the great part of it, almost the whole of it was under cultivation?—All except about 60 acres or thereby of hill pasture.

24,570. And did you continue to cultivate it?—Yes.

24,571. On what shift?—On the fifth shift.

24,571. And have you stopped cultivating a portion of it at present?—I have thrown about 250 acres of it out into permanent pasture, with the consent and approval of my proprietor.

24,573. That was recently done?—It was done, some eight years ago and some six years ago.

24,574. What was the cause of your doing that?—Because it was not paying me. The amount of expenses incurred for manures and labour and every other expense connected with it was so heavy that I was losing money yearly.

24,575. And you consider it was better to give the land a rest?—I asked my proprietor if he would allow me to throw it out to grass, and I got his consent at once. I told him I was losing money by it.

24,576. And you considered also probably that a rest would improve it?—Yes; it might improve it, and that was one of the reasons I stated; I thought if it was put out in permanent pasture it might improve the value of the land, and so it has.

24,577. *The Chairman.*—But your main motive was because you could not cultivate the land to profit?—That is so.

24,578. *Mr Keith.*—And is it the case that it is possible to cultivate only the best arable land of the county to profit?—I say that one third of the land in cultivation in this county just now should be out in pasture. I distinctly say that: it is my experience in regard to the farm of Thurso East. When I cultivated the whole of it, I could only keep about 300 sheep and about 60 head of cattle; now when I have thrown it out to pasture I have concentrated my efforts upon the good land, and am able to carry about 450 sheep on the same farm and about 80 to 90 head of cattle, with one half of the turnips I raised before.

24,579. *Mr Sutherland.*—What proportion do you say should be let out?—I say one-third of land in permanent cultivation should be in pasture, because it will not pay.

42,580. *The Chairman.*—You mean in view of the present prices and in present circumstances?—And having regard to the seasons. Our climate here is very variable.

24,581. *Mr Keith.*—It is not the case that two years ago the turnip crop for instance, in this county, was a complete failure?—Two years ago the turnip crop, part of my own and I may say of all in the county, was a complete failure.

24,582. And the only profitable way of occupying the arable farm is to throw some of it into pasture?—Just so. By throwing mine into pasture I was enabled to dispense with two pairs of horses, which was a saving of £150 to £160 a year to me.

24,583. Supposing you lost the 250 acres of this common pasture, what reduction of rent would you expect for that pasture ground taken off?—I could hardly ask my proprietor to divide my rent in two.

24,584. What do you consider an expert would award?—I should say I would get a reduction of, at least, £100.

24,585. Have you an idea of the cost of forming a farm out of hill ground, *i.e.*, to reclaim it, trench it, and drain it, and to erect the houses and necessary buildings?—It depends on what sort of ground it is.

24,586. *The Chairman.*—Have you ever sat down to make an estimate of that on paper?—No. Thurso. James Mackidd.

24,587. Have you ever sat down to consider it with paper and pencil?—I could do it; it would depend very much on the nature of the ground

24,588. But you have not considered the problem on paper?—Well, I have considered it so far, but as I said before very much depends on the nature of the ground.

24,589. *Mr Sutherland.*—And have you ever actually reclaimed any land?—I have not, but I know what the cost of reclaiming ground is pretty well.

24,590. *Mr Keith.*—If this particular portion of your farm was divided off into lots, have you any notion as to what the necessary work would cost?

24,591. *The Chairman.*—The question is of great importance, and if the witness was able to say that he had sat down and considered the thing, making up a debit and credit side and bringing out the result it would have been important; but I rather gather from him that he has not done so?—I have not, because I require to be told what ground it is that is to be improved.

24,592. And the kind of building and steading wanted, and then you would require to be asked as a skilled man to make up a statement and account showing debit and credit and bringing out the result?—Yes, that is so.

24,593. *Mr Sutherland.*—Have you formed any idea in your own mind as to how long the circumstances that will operate in the way you suggested (throwing land out of cultivation) is likely to go on? Do you see any hope of any change?—I do not expect they will get better; my opinion is that they are going to get worse.

24,594. That would, therefore, necessitate the throwing of more land out of cultivation?—Certainly, and I say it is the only profitable way you can use it. This county is what we call a rearing county, that is to say you *rear* cattle; it is not a county adapted for *fattening* cattle, as it is too cold for that.

24,595. Would the operation stop anywhere provided the tendency was that way; or would you put all land out of cultivation?—No, but I would only cultivate the very best land.

24,596. Where would the necessity for the operation cease?—I have given you an example of that in my own case. I had 500 acres under the plough when I cultivated, and I wrought away at it for ten or twelve years, and found I was losing money upon the thin ground. I, therefore, asked permission from my landlord, and he allowed me to throw so much out, and I am able to carry more stock now when I am only cultivating one half than I was before.

24,597. How far would that tendency go on in your opinion? Would it go on until the land went out of cultivation altogether?—I don't think it should do that, because I think really good land from which you can depend upon getting a crop ought to be kept in cultivation; but where you have to cultivate thin land, and have no certainty in our variable seasons of getting a crop out of it, then I think it is time to throw it out.

24,598. How much, in your opinion, of land that is really fit for cultivation is in Caithness?—I know a great extent of Caithness for I have had a long experience, and I believe that fully a third of it now under the plough should be thrown out into permanent pasture.

24,599. That is under the circumstances which exist to-day; but suppose matters get worse, would not you put more out of cultivation?—I would put all the bad land out that is not worth cultivating; I certainly would.

[ADJOURNED.]

Helmsdale, Sutherlandshire.

TWENTY-FOURTH SITTING.

HELMSDALE, SUTHERLANDSHIRE,

September 11, 1893.

Present :—

DAVID BRAND, Esq., Advocate, Sheriff of Ayr, and Chairman of the Crofters Commission, *Chairman.*
ANGUS SUTHERLAND, Esq., M.P.
JAMES NOEL MULLER FORSYTH, Esq.
GEORGE GORDON, Esq.
WILLIAM MACKENZIE, Esq., *Secretary.*

William Macdonald.

WILLIAM MACDONALD, Crofter, Navidale (56) —*examined.*

24,600. *The Chairman.*—You are a crofter in Navidale?—Yes.

24,601. Was your case dealt with by the Crofters Commission?—No.

24,602. Have you a written statement?—Yes.

24,603. Just read it if you please.—We would beg to submit the following statement in respect to the parish of Kildonan. It may be said to contain about 210 square miles of land, comprising mountain, heath, hill pasture, arable, and rocky ground. Excepting the village of Helmsdale and the adjacent townships of Navidale, East and West Helmsdale, Gartymore, and Marrel, there are comparatively few people living beyond these places. It may be described as a wilderness, unless a shepherd or gamekeeper's house may crop up at intervals of miles. Shooting lodges have appeared more frequently within the last few years. At Badanloch there is a large establishment with the usual dependents nestling around, standing in bold relief amongst a vast tract of country wholly devoted to sport. A few hundreds of sheep are now kept where thousands were reared annually since the clearances. In the beginning of the century the following places were occupied by prosperous and comfortable tenants and sub-tenants in that and the surrounding districts, viz.:—Rumsdale, five tenants; Garvault, two tenants; Truderscaig, twenty tenants; Halamdary, six tenants. In this place there was a tacksman of the name of Macleod who rented the township for £5 sterling, and sub-let part of it to other five tenants at £1 each. Gearnsary was on the same footing; the tacksman was Macpherson, and it was sub-let to other four tenants. Breackachu had also five tenants; the tacksman was Gordon. In Fenafall [Fe-na-fola] there were two tenants, Andrew Gordon and John Grant. In Dalcharn, two tenants, Alexander and Robert Gordon. A number of tenants occupied the following places:—Borrabol, Altandoun, Askaig, Brenakyle, Reisg, three tenants, Tomich, Achrimsdale, Achin, Fairanich, Ceanna-bhaithe, Leiribol, Langal Park and Loiste.

In West Badanloch, the following tenants were burnt out in one day by Donald Bannerman *alias* 'Sgrios' and his fire brigade, under the command of the notorious Patrick Sellar:—Donald Gunn, William Macbeath, Adam Gordon, Angus Gunn, John Gunn, Donald Macdonald, Benjie Sutherland, James Gordon, Hugh Matheson, John Sutherland, and Widow Matheson.

In Badanloch there were also Murdoch Mackenzie, Donald Mackay, Alexander Mackay, Neil Mackay, John Gordon, Samuel Matheson, John Mackay, and Mr Macpherson, Schoolmaster.

In Badaclamhan, William Gunn, Robert Gordon, Hugh Gordon, and Kenneth Macleod. In Achnahuaigh, Lieutenant Gunn and Robert Gunn, brothers, Robert Mackay and Widow Matheson. In Claggan, David Ross, Miller, and Robert Macdonald. In Torrogordston two tenants; in Ellich, two; in Corrish, three; in Airidh-Chlinidh, two (Mackays); in Griamacharry, four (Gordon, tacksman, John Mackay, Alexander Grant, and Joseph Mackay, the last two were officers in the British army, along with four sons). Cnocfinn is a large place and had a considerable number of well-to-do people living in it. Achintoul had six tenants; Reannacknarach, two; Achenaiken, two (Alexander Gunn and David Gunn); Kinbrace, five; Suisgill, four; Dalbuie, one; Achnanrinnan, two; Kildonan, five; Dieble, Dalhalomey, Balvalliach, Bady, Costelli, Canikyle, Skalapsdale, Preseneim, Achanacunaig, Coolen, Torrish, Kil-Pheadair, Corrag, Saliscraggy, Daliel, Caen, Balnakyle, Brecken, Killearnan, Ullipsdale, Guillable, Craggy, Eldrable, Connachie, Crotch, and Gruidstary had also their respective quota of tenants allotted to them. Between Caen and Kildonan there were about eighty-two families. Cill-Pheadair and Caen, which are parts of Navidale, have an area of 3200 acres. Twenty-one families originally occupied land in this district and lived in comparative comfort, each one possessing four horses, six cattle and fifty sheep on an average. The following are the names of tenants:—John Macpherson, Widow Polson, William Polson 'Bain,' George Bruce, Alexander Ross, John Gordon, Donald Mackay, John Mackay, Charles Polson, John Polson, Widow Fraser, John Gilchrist, William Polson, Alexander Polson, George Gunn, Angus Macleod, Donald Sutherland, William Gordon, George Munro, Alexander Murray, Donald Ross, Miller, Cill-Pheadair, and John Gordon, tenant. The farm of Kildonan comprises an area of 8960 acres of pasture and arable land. There are only about 30 acres under crop there, and in Torrish two. The farm of Suisgill has 5987 acres hill pasture; the farm of Kinbrace, 4665 acres, and is divided into two farms, Kinbrace and Burnfoot, with 71 acres under crop, 36 and 35 respectively. The farm of Achintoul has 14,894 acres, of which 513 have been reclaimed, and is divided into two farms, Achintoul and Blarmhor, 410 acres belong to Achintoul and 93 to Blarmor. The 93 acres are nearly all cultivated, except a few acres of deep moss, and out of the 410 acres about 30 only are cultivated, the rest being under sheep, cattle and horses. A great part of it is deep moss and cannot be ploughed by horses. Tordu and Claggan have 7385 acres, divided into two farms, Harvieston and Claggan. Harvieston has 200 acres of reclaimed land, 50 acres of which are under crop, including meadow hay, the rest under sheep, cattle and horses. Claggan has 55 acres of reclaimed land, of which two or three acres only are under crop, the rest being under sheep, cattle and horses. Badanloch has 6570 acres, of which 153 acres are reclaimed land; about one-half is under meadow hay, the rest being under sheep and horses. Bannockburn, Lochside and Cnocfionn have 4890 acres, of which 325 are reclaimed land, only 3½ acres being cultivated, and about 20 acres used for meadow hay. There are three dwelling-houses with steadings attached, all of which form one farm in the hands of Mr John Gunn of Aldie: all under sheep.

24,604. Are any of the dwelling-houses occupied?—Not that I am aware of, with the exception of one that the shepherd lives in. Halamdary is now in the hands of the proprietor as a shooting. It carried 1000 sheep (all cleared away).

24,604*a*. Is it part of a forest?—It is a deer forest as far as I understand.

24,604*b*. Are there no sheep on it?—No.

24,605. Then, is there old arable there?—Yes, there is arable land which had tenants at one time. The following places which are now occupied by J. G. Muir, Esq., the shooting tenant at Badanloch, carried sheep stock as follows:—Achnamoine, 400; Breackachu, 600; Badanloch, 700; Garvault, 700; Gearnsary, 400; Griamachany, 500; and Airidh-Chlinidh, 300; total 3600. On the same ground there are only 700 sheep at present. The above figures show the winter stock only; it was nearly double during the summer months, and these few sheep are only kept to show that nominally it is a sheep farm, whereas it is actually a deer forest.

24,605*a*. Is there a stock of deer on it at present?—Yes.

Helmsdale, Sutherlandshire.

William Macdonald.

24,605*b*. And is deer stalking being carried on at present on this ground?—Oh, yes. The following places now tenanted by E. Sykes, and Sykes and Pilkington had also sheep stock amounting to 3000. Altandoun, 2000; Borrobol, 500; Dalcharn, 500. At present there are only about 1500 on the same ground, and it is actually a deer forest. The rents paid by J. G. Muir are:—Badanloch sheep farm, £500; shooting and angling, £1290; Edmund Sykes, Altandoun, sheep farm, £300; shooting and angling, Borrobol, £535; Frank Sykes and Edward Pilkington, Borrobol, and Dalcharn sheep farm, £350. Proprietor, Halamdary shootings, £90. Frank Hardcastle, Suisgill, shooting and angling, £870. A. H. J. Bruce, Killearnan and Suisgill, grazing farms, £595; shooting and angling, £425. Thomas Scott, Garvault, grazing, £70; shooting, £70. John Hick, Achintoul shootings, £317, 10s. Alex. Macfarlane, Torrish and Navidale, shootings and angling, £725 (Navidale is disjoined for the shooting now, we have not got the new valuation roll and cannot find out the exact rent, but so far as our information goes it is £725). John Gunn of Aldie, Bannockburn, Knockfinn and Lochside, sheep farm, £140. Craggy, which forms part of the grazing farm of Killearnan, had alone 1800 sheep which have been reduced to 850 or thereabout. The townships of Achrantal, Tuarrie, and Halgarry are situated in this district and have been omitted from those referred to above. They are on the farms of Killournan and Suisgill. The rental of crofts in the several townships along the seaboard of the parish amounts to £439, and these formerly belonged to the parish of Loth but have been added to Kildonan after the clearances for the semblance of population. The parish church which is situated at Kildonan had to be vacated, and a church manse and glebe erected at Helmsdale. The making of the glebe also disturbed a tenant whose entire improvements were confiscated for that purpose. The farm of Navidale is bounded by a dyke which separates it from the common grazing of the crofters. It can easily be seen that where the dyke begins at Alt Scriegle the old parish boundary, the burn, with all its grazing advantages, was taken into the farm. And very recently a large piece of the best ground was cut off from the common pasture and enclosed for the erection of a gamekeeper's house and garden.

As an illustration of the prohibitive measures adopted by sportsmen, a young woman of eighteen years of age was crossing a moor about the end of last August carrying a bundle of clothes to her sister, who was in service with a forester. When she was sighted by the sportsman he ordered one of his gamekeepers to order her off the ground, and she was told most emphatically to never come that way again. The route the young woman was taking was a well known old drove road, and instead of her being permitted to walk a distance of four miles, she was compelled to travel fifteen miles by the highway. Another is that the freshwater lochs which have been open to the public since the creation of the world or time immemorial, have been lately closed against fishing, and anyone who does not pay fabulous rents to his Grace for permission to do so, cannot entertain such an idea.

(Signed) Wm. Macdonald, Alex. Gunn, Donald Watson, William Matheson.

24,606. I take it you are a native of this district?—Yes.

24,606*a*. Where were you born?—I was born in Caithness, in Strathmore, but I was brought up in the parish of Kildonan here.

24,607. And have lived here all your life?—All my life.

24,607*a*. You have given us a great deal of information in that paper, going back to the commencement of the earlier years of this century?—Yes.

24,608. May I ask you where did you derive that information?—We had a committee who gathered this from a few old people living still, a very few, who are able to give this information.

24,609. The information as to the past was obtained from them?—Yes.

24,610. How many of these people are there?—There are not very many now; I suppose nine or ten would be about the outside of the number.

Helmsdale Sutherlandshire.

William Macdonald.

24,611. Who did the committee get the information from principally?—There are one or two people on the Strath of Kildonan here, natives of the Strath, who had lived there without being removed from it; that is at the top of the parish. One of the delegates is here present, William Matheson by name. We have got a good deal of information from him, and from an old woman there called Isabella Elder, I think.

24,612. What is her age?—I am not exactly sure, but she will be about eighty.

24,613. Between eighty and ninety years of age?—I am told not more than fifty or sixty, but I think she is an older woman. Her father lived in Badanloch, and they were never removed.

24,614. But you got your information mainly from old witnesses who can remember the clearances, some of them at least?—Oh, yes, some of them, but others again had it from their fathers or predecessors.

24,615. And were all these people that you got information from people of the district?—Yes.

24,616. Whose parents if not they themselves were witnesses of the clearances?—Yes. Most of the people who live here now are the descendants of the people here on the Strath.

24,617. The statements made in that paper so far as not dependent on your own knowledge are, I take it, correct to the best of your belief?—Yes, from the best information we could get about the state of matters in those times.

24,618. And your paper deals with matters from about the commencement of the century to the present time?—To the present time.

24,619. Is it the fact that the modern part of your paper is within your own knowledge?—So much of it; other parts have been got from people who are more intimately acquainted with these matters and have been witnesses of what had taken place.

24,620. Now, may we gather from your paper that in your judgment there is a considerable area of land which we ought to inspect and consider with a view to the purpose of this remit?—Yes.

24,621. To what particular purpose is such land suited?—In my opinion it is suitable both for agriculture and for grazing as well, as it had been formerly.

24,622. Both for rotation of crop and for extension of grazings?—Exactly.

24,623. Is some of the land suitable for new settlements?—Yes.

24,624. Where would you direct our attention particularly to land suitable for that purpose?—The principal part of the land, the old arable and a great deal of the land that could be reclaimed, is not on the strath proper but on the branches that lead off from the strath, for instance on the Badanloch side and Altandoun; there is a good deal more arable land in that direction than on the main river.

24,625. That is in the valley of the river Helmsdale?—Yes.

24,625*a*. You invite our attention then to smaller glens running up from glen Helmsdale?—Yes.

24,626. And you mention particularly Allt-an-duin and Badanloch?—Yes, but there are several places on the river Helmsdale itself which could be very easily reclaimed that had been reclaimed before; and then there is a good deal of reclaimed land which cannot be distinctly made out now as it has gone under heather and rush now.

24,627. Then, you say there is both land which has been reclaimed but now run out that could be restored, and also land not yet reclaimed which could be reclaimed to profit?—Yes.

24,628. And you and those who act with you can show us both, I suppose?—Oh, yes.

24,629. You mentioned the farm of Kildonan with 8900 acres, of which 30 acres are arable, and 2 other arable at Torrish. Is that arable land of 30 acres all under crop now?—Yes, but that does not include all the old arable land in the district.

Helmsdale, Sutherland-shire. William Macdonald.

24,630. As to the old arable land, can we still see traces of the cultivation on it?—Yes.

24,631. Then, you mentioned the farms of Achintoul and Tordu and Claggan; also Harveston and Claggan. You said there were 200 acres reclaimed, 50 of which are under crop?—That includes meadow hay.

24,632. The remainder is under permanent grazing?—Yes, under sheep and cattle and horses.

24,633. And is it land suitable for the purposes of the remit?—Well, it had been reclaimed for the purpose of cultivating it.

24,634. Reclaimed by whom?—By the Duke of Sutherland.

24,635. Was it part of his well known reclamations?—Yes, on the Strath of Kildonan.

24,636. Part of what are known as the Kildonan reclamations, but now run into grass?—Yes.

24,637. Why has it been allowed to run into grass do you think? Is it because it could not be used as arable to profit, or for what reason?—I think there could have been very much better land reclaimed on the Strath of Kildonan than the lands that had been reclaimed by the Duke. I do not believe that most of the land that had been reclaimed by his Grace the Duke of Sutherland is the most profitable for cultivation.

24,638. You think there is other land that could have been more profitably reclaimed?—Yes.

24,639. Is it your view that a large part of the land that was reclaimed should have been let alone?—I think so.

24,640. Then, would you touch it now?—I think it would be more profitable just to leave it in grass.

24,641. Can you point us to the land that you think might have been more advantageously reclaimed by the late Duke than the land what was reclaimed?—Oh, yes.

24,642. Where is it?—There is better land on the Badanloch side.

24,643. In what farm is the Badanloch land?—Alltandoun and Fearnaich, and several other small places that I have not got the names of. I know the places because I have travelled the ground. Then there are several parts of ground attached to these places that have never been reclaimed and could easily be reclaimed; they do not require anything, but just to drain and plough it.

24,644. You think that land might profitably be reclaimed now?—I think so.

24,645. Either by proprietor or by tenants?—Or by tenants.

24,646. Have you made any estimate of the total area of land in this district, and of what you have been speaking in this document, that we ought to consider and inspect?—About the area I am not clear; I could not distinctly say the number of acres as I am not clear about that.

24,647. But are there considerable tracts of ground?—Yes, there are.

24,648 Is there a demand in this quarter among crofters and small tenants here for additional land?—Yes, if they can get it on advantageous terms.

24,649. You mean by advantageous terms, at a fair rent?—Yes.

24,650. And do you also include under that expression assistance, or do you not?—In some cases, no doubt assistance would be required; in other cases it would not.

24,651. Take the majority, what would the prevailing rule be?—I think in the majority of cases there would be assistance required; but in a great many cases men with rising families would be able to take places without any assistance at all.

24,652. Do you think, having regard to the effects of the Education Act of 1872, young men would be willing to take crofts and endeavour to make them profitable, rather than push their way elsewhere?—I think it would be quite as safe for them to take crofts as to try and make a living otherwise, seeing that the competition for every position in life is so very keen.

24,653. I quite follow that, but what do you think is the prevailing feeling among the young men of the district?—I think they would take good crofts.

24,654. They would be quite ready to take good crofts and endeavour to work them to a profit rather than look to pushing their fortunes elsewhere?—Exactly.

Helmsdale, Sutherland-shire. William Macdonald.

24,655. You think that feeling is as strong in the breasts of the younger generation as it undoubtedly is in the minds of older men?—Yes.

24,656. You mentioned a number of sporting subjects which formerly carried a much larger number of sheep than they do now?—Yes.

24,657. Are you of opinion that such a number of sheep as these lands carried in former times, they could carry still if the sheep were put upon them?—No, I do not think so. I believe that the ground has deteriorated in such a manner that it would not carry the same stock now, because in a great many cases as I have before stated where the land was once green it has now grown under heather and rushes, and a great part of it has grown under fog. So that it is of no use as aliment.

24,658. Then, what would you propose with regard to these lands?—What I would propose is that these lands be reclaimed again and put into rotation, and I have no doubt they would grow both grass and corn. I may state that there are crops growing 600 or 700 feet above sea level as good as are in the county of Sutherland to-day. The railway at the county boundary between Caithness and Inverness is, I understand, 700 feet above sea level, and between four and five miles from the side of this, that is at Achintoul and Blairmore, Burnfoot and Kinbrace, there are lands that grow as good crops as can be got upon the coast side.

24,659. In short, is this your view that the height above sea level is of less consequence than the situation of the ground where the crops are grown, protected from particular winds; that is to say, that you may have ground at a very high level which will grow good crops, because it lies behind hills or high grounds that protect it from prevailing winds?—Well, of course, these places, I have no doubt, are more subject to adverse climate than the low lying ground on the coast side; but at the same time these places have been giving good crops in the past, and I have no doubt that, with the great difference in cultivation now and the increase of knowledge about cultivation, it could be cultivated at the present time to great advantage.

24,660. In short, you think the mere fact that particular land is very high above sea level, is not necessarily against it yielding a good average crop if it gets a fair chance?—No.

24,661. Are the people for whom you speak well acquainted with the system of rotation?—Yes, and they state that the whole of the small crofters along the seaboard here at the present time try as far as their crofts permit to cultivate on the five shift system.

24,662. They carry that rule as far as the size of the crofts will allow them?—Exactly.

24,663. Is that system pursued even upon small holdings?—Yes. In former times they cultivated the whole of their crofts; but the land came to be so very unprofitable that it did not in some cases return the seed that was put into it. The people saw the advantage of sowing crops and then leaving it out in grass for two or three years.

24,664. And that has been more extensively followed of late years?—Yes.

24,665. Is there much land within the area now under forest suitable for cultivation?—Yes, as I mentioned the heights above Badanloch, Allt-an-duin and these places had all been tenanted, *e.g.*, Truderscaig, where there were twenty tenants near the loch, is as good a place for crofters I suppose as on the whole Strath.

24,666. What are the names of the deer forests you have been alluding to?—I am not aware that they have any particular names farther than I have mentioned in the paper.

24,667. How many deer forests have you been dealing with in that paper?—In this statement there are no deer forests that have not a few sheep upon them, with the exception of Griamacharry, Halamdary, and Gearnsary.

24,668. You think there are not nearly so many sheep there as there might be?—Not nearly.

Helmsdale, Sutherlandshire.

William Macdonald.

24,669. And I understand these forest lands are almost exclusively used for deer, and that the sheep are a comparative trifle in point of number, and of the use they make of the ground?—Exactly.

24,670. May I ask, where did you get these rents? Are they taken from the valuation roll?—From the valuation roll for 1892–93; the new roll has not been issued yet.

24,671. You gave us the names of a great number of townships and of persons. Were all these you mentioned occupied towards the beginning of this century?—Yes, I believe the evictions commenced about the year 1812, but there were three distinct evictions upon the Strath of Kildonan.

24,672. And you think the lands which were occupied by these townships and the inhabitants might be again occupied to a profit?—I do.

24,673. *Mr Gordon.*—What sort of holdings would you propose to make up there?—It depends very much upon the quality of the land, because the quality of the land is not the same in all parts of the strath. Another thing which would have to be taken into consideration is, that where land suitable for reclaiming would be put into crofts, the crofts would require to be made larger; but in good land I think from 25 to 30 acres or say 30 acres would be a good sized croft.

24,674. Thirty acres of arable?—Arable land; I think that would be better than less; because it could be worked upon the six shift system.

24,675. Now, along with that would you propose to have pasture?—Yes, by all means.

24,676. So many sheep?—Yes, and cattle and horses.

24,677. Your proposal would be to have a small farm of about 30 acres that would keep a pair of ponies or small horses?—Yes.

24,678. And how many sheep would you have?—I think before it would pay a man to keep sheep he would require from 80 to 100.

24,679. That is small enough I think. Have you any idea here of working a club farm?—Well, it might be tried here.

24,680. Eighty or 100 sheep give the same work in looking after them as 300 or 400 sheep?—Yes, but if the land was made into small crofts they could not give 400 or 500 sheep to each tenant.

24,681. The difficulty arising out of small tenants on the hill is the fencing if you keep your sheep separate?—It would not be necessary to fence on the hills for tenants; they might have it in common.

24,682. That is a qualified kind of club farm. Supposing you had four or five of these tenants, their sheep could make a hirsel, with a single shepherd for the lot; but it is an expensive and troublesome way of keeping sheep, to have 80 sheep attached to a small holding with so much hill pasture, because there is the continual difficulty of herding them and keeping them on the hill?—There is that difficulty, no doubt; but fencing would incur a great deal of expense.

24,683. It would be beyond their power to raise the money to fence for 80 sheep. You would require to formulate some idea in your own mind so as to work it on a larger scale than 80. If you could work it either as a club farm or a common in which six 80's would be under one man, that would be better. Have you any idea how that land was occupied formerly?—A good deal of it was occupied on the runrig system.

24,684. It would be mostly cattle in those days?—They had all sheep, more or less.

24,685. It is a fact that you must know if you travelled over the country that the crofter's sheep are never so good as the tacksman's sheep?—For a very good reason, because they have not such good ground to feed on.

24,686. They are not so particular as to taking the breeding of the sheep, and at that season of the year it is almost an essential requisite that the sheep should be in the form of one flock as much as possible, because when they take down the ewes in the autumn it is a very difficult thing to keep them separate, and every man has not as good a tup as his neighbour, and the consequence is that, as a rule, the stock deteriorates from that cause alone?—They could keep these sheep on their own farm the time the tups were out.

Helmsdale Sutherlandshire.

William Macdonald.

24,687. That would involve care and knowledge, whereas if you went into the club system you would find it would pay them better, because they would be able to farm their grazings exactly as a tacksman would do?—Yes, I have no doubt of that.

24,688. Another difficulty I see from the map is that there is no road up to the townships you have mentioned up at Badanloch?—There is a road that goes to Badanloch by Garnsary and Halamdary on to Strathnaver.

24,689. Is there a new road?—Yes, and those places are not so very far distant.

24,690. They are about eight miles from the main track?—Possibly this time their could be roads made to these places if they were tenanted.

24,691. The farthest west ground you speak of is Truiderscaig?—Yes, nearest the march of Strathnaver.

24,692. You say there were twenty tenants there; they must have had very small holdings?—About the size of their holdings I cannot speak, but I have heard from old people that it was one of the best places, and that the people there were as well-to-do as in any part of the heights of Kildonan. A good deal of the ground that had been reclaimed was under crofters a century ago, but has now gone under heather and rushes in such a manner that it cannot be made out now. Of course, there are some places where it can be made out, even among the heather.

24,693. It has gone back to a condition of nature?—Yes.

24,694. Well, the first thing to help that would be to stock it with cattle, more or less, and, of course, renewing the grass to begin with. But I have no doubt, from what we have seen of the country that land under sheep has deteriorated?—Yes, it has very much.

24,695. And it would not now keep so many sheep as it did when these people were turned out?—Not nearly so many.

24,696. Are you aware from your own knowledge or from the knowledge referred to in your paper whether these places were under a tacksman?—The whole of them on the upper part of the strath were, but farther down they were sub-tenants. From the height to the strath there were tacksmen who lived there; lower down a few of them lived at the seaside, but had farms there. But there were parts of the strath which had tenants, *e.g.*, two places followed Netherdale; they were sub-tenants of the tenant who held the farm of Netherdale. He had some tenants on the farm of Netherdale itself, on the home farm; five sub-tenants who were evicted in the same year as those people from Caen and Cill-Pheadair were; that is, as far as I can learn, in the year 1826.

24,697. Is the part of Navidale from which the tenants were evicted, arable or grazing?—Part arable and part grazing.

24,698. Did any evictions from Navidale take place in the valley of the Helmsdale river?—They were both in the valley, Caen and Cill-Pheadair that is the two grazing parts.

24,699. And the others were round on the arable side?—Exactly so.

24,700. You have given us an idea of what you think would be the size of the croft out at the upper end of the country; would it not be advisable to have smaller crofts near the sea here?—Small crofts might do, but I think any man who is following land would require from 25 to 30 acres if he was wholly dependent on the land.

24,701. I quite agree with you, but is there any demand for small crofts by labouring men round about the parish?—Yes, there are plenty young men who would take land on advantageous terms if they could get it.

24,702. Is there any fishing population?—Yes.

24,703. In my part of the country the fishermen don't care for land, but in this part of the country I

think they do?—As far as I know, at the present time I don't believe any of the fishermen here are in any way connected with crofts. At one time, thirty years ago or more, all the crofters in the townships hereabouts with very few exceptions were fishermen and had boats of their own; but these old people died out, and the young people did not take any interest in the fishing at all.

24,704. And, in point of fact, at the present time the crofters and the fishermen are two distinct bodies?—Two distinct classes.

24,705. *Mr Forsyth.*—You have mentioned the size of holding that you think would be desirable,—25 to 30 acres arable, with a pair of horses, and 80 to 100 sheep. Would you also include some cattle?—Yes.

24,706. Are there many people in this district who you think would be willing to take up holdings of that kind on fair terms?—There are.

24,707. And could you get many holdings of that kind in the Kildonan district without touching these reclamations at Auchintoul?—Oh, yes.

24,708. All on better land?—Better land.

24,709. What capital do you think would be necessary to start a farm of that kind on the hill, from the beginning with reclamations? Have you given any consideration to that?—I don't know, in some places more capital would be required than in other places; a great deal would depend on the amount of arable land that would fall to the croft that a man might get.

24,710. By that you mean land ready for the plough? Exactly. In other cases, with land to be reclaimed they would require more capital.

24,711. Then as to the fencing of arable and the buildings (we will come to the stock afterwards), what would you put down for that?—A man would require from £150 to £200 to begin with.

24,712. For buildings?—There are plenty men who would take land and who would be able to do a great deal of the necessary work themselves so as to save money. At the same time I believe that if crofters who would be willing to take holdings on the strath were allowed to remain where they are until such time as they get provision made for themselves on these new crofts, it would be far cheaper for them.

24,713. Then as to stock?—In a good many cases people who have had crofts before going there would have part of the stock already. Then, of course, they would just have to lay out so much capital in buying the remainder; they could not get the stock for such a place all at once; it would be put on by degrees.

24,714. It would be a question of a considerable amount of capital, and do you think that in some cases they could provide that themselves?—In some cases.

24,715. And in others they would require assistance?—Yes.

24,716. Have you considered how the assistance might be procured? Have you contemplated Government loans?—Yes, I have; I think that Government ought to give loans to people if these places were given as crofts.

24,717. Then, there would be, of course, even from the first some rent for the land, and in some shape or other there would be interest on the stock, so that I take it it would be rather a hard pull at first. You have considered the difficulties for the first few years carefully, have you?—Yes, I have no doubt there are difficulties, but with industry I have no doubt the people would come to be well enough in a few years,—better than they are now.

24,718. But at the first, I think you will admit, it would require a good deal of hard work and a good deal of skill and energy to pull through?—It would, certainly.

24,719. But still, you think there are people who would face these difficulties?—Yes, I do.

24,720. Then, as to the Sutherland reclamations at Auchintoul. You stated, I think, that they were made upon land which you think it will not pay to cultivate?—Yes, a good deal of it.

24,721. You would not be prepared even at a fair rent, supposing these lands were in the market and available, to touch a portion of them yourself, you or any other?—Not a good part of them for cultivation.

24,722. But only for grazing?—Yes.

24,723. You are persuaded that the land was badly chosen and that better is to be found?—Yes.

24,724. Of course, we are naturally rather surprised to hear that; we had thought that the best experience and skill would have directed the reclamation to the best places?—I don't know, but a part of this land would be profitable for crofts, but then it was never properly reclaimed, because the stones were never taken out of it; I believe that although the surface has been made even, underneath the surface it is just very much like what it was in a state of nature.

24,725. Then, as to smaller holdings, that is to say the holding which a man would not live by, but which he would have as an assistance while he laboured elsewhere; is there a fair demand for labour here?—No, labour is only to be had here maybe for a few weeks during the fishing time; there is no permanent labour to be got in this county, and I think for any man who is taking land, it would not be profitable for him to depend partly on his croft and partly by labour otherwise.

24,726. That is to say, you think the demand for labour not being large it would not be advantageous in many cases to take a small croft and trust to getting labour elsewhere?—No.

24,727. You mean that the man would probably have to go far away, perhaps entirely south, to get work?—Exactly.

24,728. Therefore, you favour a holding more of the nature of a small farm, a self-sustaining croft? Certainly.

24,729. And you think a good many such could be laid out in the Kildonan district?—I think so.

24,730. And that inhabitants would face the difficulties?—I think a good many would.

24,731. *Mr Sutherland.*—Will you look at this map (shows coloured map). The blue on the north side is the crofters in Navidale, and this is Kildonan parish. Is that, in your opinion, an accurate description of the distribution of the population in the parish?—That is quite accurate as regards Navidale.

24,732. How many families are in Navidale?—Twenty-two.

24,733. Can you give me the acreage of the whole of their holdings, common and all?—Not exactly, but I can give you a rough idea of what was laid out as crofts for the tenants at the time of the eviction.

24,734. No, but I wish to know the present area of the whole of these families?—In the most of cases I should think from two to three or three-and-a-half acres.

24,735. Is it a square mile?—Less than that.

24,736. It is less than 600 acres?—Less than 600 acres.

24,737. And what is the area of the Navidale farm?—I think there are about 90 acres of arable.

24,738. But the whole farm, grazing and all?—I cannot be sure; I have not got the area of it.

24,739. Is it 10,000 acres?—Well, I should think so, but I cannot be certain.

24,740. How many families occupy that?—The 10,000 acres do you mean?

24,741. Yes?—Only the one.

24,742. And the twenty-two families have less than 600 acres among them?—Exactly.

24,743. That is a correct statement of the distribution of population in the Navidale district?—As far as I know.

24,744. An approximate estimate?—An approximate idea.

24,745. It is not very far wrong, is it?—I think not.

24,746. You referred to places where there were people before but where there are none now? I presume it is to give us an idea of places where people could be reasonably expected to live again?—Exactly.

24,747. Then, with regard to the information, I

Helmsdale, Sutherlandshire.

William Macdonald.

think you stated that the Sutherland clearances were from the year 1812?—Yes, to 1826. 1812, 1815 and 1819 were the dates I think.

24,748. So that they will be within the memory of people who are between seventy and eighty years of age?—Yes.

24,749. And you have a great many of these in the parish?—Not a great many.

24,750. Between seventy and eighty years old?—There are a good few.

24,751. Don't you know a person who can tell you the name of every family that was up in Kildonan strath?—Yes.

24,752. And you have conversed with such often?—Yes, but there are not many of them left now.

24,753. But, as a matter of fact, you have seen and conversed with people who were eye witnesses of the whole thing and who were put out?—Yes, the statement I got as to the eighty families was from an old schoolmaster, John Ross, in Navidale, who died three years ago.

24,754. Your opinion then is that there is plenty land for the purpose that we have been appointed to inquire into, and that there is plenty demand for it?—Yes.

24,755. Then, with regard to the fitness of the land for the purpose concerning which we are inquiring, do you think there is any very great doubt about that?—No doubt at all.

24,756. What makes it less doubtful in this neighbourhood than anywhere else do you think?—Because the old people who are living now have given a distinct description to their children of the land and of what it was able to produce, so that even the young generation knows the history of the strath in great measure as well as those who have been before them.

24,757. That would be an argument no doubt with regard to the old distribution; but, with regard to a new distribution, what makes it perfectly plain in this neighbourhood that it would be a success? Has it not actually been tried?—It has been tried; as I said already there are some of the finest crops growing at the height of Kildonan that are to be seen in the strath to-day, and I have no doubt that if the whole strath had been cultivated there would have been just such crops on the other parts.

24,758. Were you acquainted with the land up there where the corn is growing now, before it was reclaimed?—Yes.

24,759. What was it like,—take Auchintoul?—It was a piece of barren moor, except what was reclaimed or part it that is within the farm of Auchintoul proper; but what was reclaimed was only a black barren moor, with stones upon the surface here and there, only it was not steep. It was going to the foot of the hill, but it was not high. But for all this land you would not give 2d. an acre if you had seen it.

24,760. What can we see there now if we go?—Very good crops.

24,761. As good as you can see at the coast?—Yes.

24,762. Good and ripe?—Yes, and in good condition.

24,763. So that is conclusive is it not in your mind that there is every possibility of crops being raised in these places you referred to?—Quite so.

24,764. And you stated that these were, in your opinion, not at all the best places to make the experiment?—I think so. I think there are a great many places in the Strath of Kildonan, that could have been cultivated to a far greater advantage than these places.

24,765. You have heard no doubt about the expense at which these reclamations were carried on?—Yes, I have heard a good deal about it.

24,766. Have you heard what it cost per acre?—I am not prepared to say exactly what it did cost, but I know it cost a great deal of money.

24,767. Have you ever heard it stated that it cost £40 per acre to reclaim?—Yes, I have heard that too.

24,768. In your opinion was it necessary to expend so much money as that to reclaim it?—Well, I don't think so.

24,769. Do you ever hear of crofters getting advances to enable them to reclaim land?—All the advance that I am aware of which the crofter got to reclaim land was in the year 1847 or 1848 if I remember well,—the year when the disease first came into the potatoes in the north. In that year there was a good deal of destitution along the coast side here, through their being no work on the place and the people having no crofts, and the Duke of Sutherland at the time had the matter laid before him by his late factor, Mr Gunn. He gave so much money for the purpose of reclaiming pieces of land within the crofts of tenants that had not been reclaimed before.

Helmsdale, Sutherlandshire.

William Macdonald.

24,770. Do you know anything of the cost of that reclamation?—Yes.

24,771. How much was that per acre?—It cost about £9 an acre.

24,772. So that when a crofter reclaims land it costs £9 an acre; when it is reclaimed on a very large scale like this it costs £40 per acre?—Yes, I may state in regard to this money that was advanced at the time to the crofters, they were getting I believe something like 1s. 2d. for six square yards for trenching it,—either 1s. or 1s. 1d. I am not quite sure. Then, they have been paying for that money since 1847 I think, at the rate of five per cent. up to this date.

24,773. So that there would be no loss then so far as the landlord is concerned?—I think it is all profit.

24,774. To the person who advances the money. Then I was going to ask you whether, in your opinion, it is necessary to expend £40 to reclaim an acre of land?—Not at all.

24,775. It could be done at a third of the money, is that your opinion?—Yes, and in some cases less.

24,776. So we need attach no weight, in your opinion, to any evidence as to what it would cost up there to reclaim land?—No, not the smallest.

24,777. Then, with regard to the crops that are the product, I think you gave some evidence. I did not quite follow you in the evidence you gave with regard to the newly reclaimed farms. I presume there has been a redistribution of them since they were first made in some measure?—Yes, there is.

24,778. And you stated, I think, that some of them had gone out of cultivation?—So they have.

24,779. If I remember rightly I think it was three people who were crofters proper who got any of these farms, is that so?—Yes.

24,780. Do any of these three crofters allow their land to run out?—No.

24,781. Are they not, as a matter of fact, the only tenants who have kept the land in cultivation?—Exactly.

24,782. And all the others have allowed theirs to run out?—They have all allowed it to run out except these three crofters.

24,783. The three crofters are the only people who have kept the reclaimed land in a cultivated state?—Yes.

24,784. Some of the reclaimed farms have been put together, have they not?—Yes.

24,785. I think you mentioned a case in which a proprietor in Ross-shire held three?—Yes.

24,786. And has he kept them in cultivation?—He has only three-and-a-half acres under crop.

24,787. And he is a man of skill?—Yes.

24,788. And of capital?—Yes.

24,789. And he has allowed it to run out of cultivation?—Yes.

24,790. He has got three houses in his possession, I think you said?—Yes, with steadings attached.

24,791. And he is non-resident?—Non-resident.

24,792. I did not fully understand the arrangement; you were in some doubt I think as to whether Badanloch was a deer forest or not?—Well, I am not clear about the part,—of course, I have been there at one time, that is before Muir got it, I knew that the upper part was kept as a deer forest then, and at Allt-an-duin too it was the same, because they had so many calves which they reared annually.

24,793. What sort of calves?—Deer calves; they brought them there in the morning and at night. The keeper allowed them to stray over the hills during the

Helmsdale, Sutherland-shire.

William Macdonald.

day, but he went out with a horn in the evening, and blew the horn and all the deer ran home and got their feed of oats. I am perfectly well aware of that.

24,794. But the place is either a deer forest, or it is not a deer forest?—I believe it is a deer forest.

24,795. How is it entered in the valuation roll?—I think it is entered as a sheep farm, but I am not certain.

24,796. But, as a matter of fact, you said it carried at one time a stock of 3600 sheep?—Yes.

24,797. You are certain of that?—Yes.

24,798. Absolutely certain, and now it carries only 700?—Yes. I stated already that these sheep were merely kept for the purpose of showing that it was meant as a sheep farm, whereas it was really a deer forest.

24,799. You also mentioned that Allt-an-duin, Borrobol, and Dalcharn at one time carried a sheep stock of 3000, and at present they carry only the half of that?—Half of that.

24,800. Is that from the same cause do you think as Badanloch,—the reduction in the stock?—Well, of course, the tenants are shooting tenants.

24,801. And have the shooting tenants got the nominal grazing also?—Yes.

24,802. So that they are not resident grazing farmers even?—No, they are not.

24,803. Now, I wish to hark back for one moment to the distribution of the population that there was; and you did, certainly, mention a number, that was a large number for Truderscaig. The holdings were small, no doubt, but were they so small as the present Navidale ones?—No, they could not be so small.

24,804. So the people were to be improved by being put out of larger holdings into smaller ones?—Exactly.

24,805. Then as to the situation, it is not a question of altitude?—No, it is not.

24,806. You are aware that at West Helmsdale, close by here, land is cultivated at 800 feet, and you are aware that Forsinard, 30 miles inland, is only 600 feet above sea level?—I was led to believe that it is 700.

24,807. The top of Gartymore where the land is cultivated is 100 feet higher than Forsinard, so that the question of elevation could not determine the success or non-success of the holdings?—No.

24,808. Now, as to the question of assistance; taking the concrete example we have had in this neighbourhood of three crofters taking some of these newly reclaimed farms,—are you aware that they got no Government assistance?—None, that I am aware of.

24,809. We have got the example here already of the reclamation; we have now got the example of crofters taking it, and by your admission they are the best farmers up there?—Of course, they are.

24,810. You have no doubt of that?—No doubt of that.

24,811. And they got no Government assistance?—No.

24,812. And have you any reason to suppose that they have improved their circumstances very much by the change?—I believe they have very much.

24,813. And are you of opinion that their case would not be a solitary one if others had a like opportunity?—No, it would not. There are many young men, who, if they got the opportunity, would just succeed fully as well.

24,814. And I have no doubt whatever, there are a great number of people who would take the opportunity if they got it?—I think so.

24,815. Then, with regard to the grazing the people of Navidale have got,—we will call it grazing by courtesy,—what is your opinion with regard to it? Could it be enlarged?—Most certainly.

24,816. Profitably?—To a very great extent.

24,817. Have you made any application for an extension of your grazing?—Yes.

24,818. What application have you made?—We have applied to the Crofters Commission.

24,819. What did you apply for?—We applied for so much of the grazing farm of Caen. I may state for your information that the inhabitants of Navidale and of Caen held the whole of the grazing land from a small burn called the Esk, on the east side of Navidale, out to the county boundary between Caithness and Sutherland, west as far as Presshill, and then down by the Caen burn. That was the march that bounded the grazing of the tenantry at that time.

Helmsdale, Sutherland-shire.

William Macdonald.

24,820. What time was that?—That was before the clearances.

24,821. And were there fewer or more tenants then than now in Navidale?—Fewer at that time.

24,822. And is this the result then, that the more tenants have got smaller grazings than the fewer?—Yes. I may state that there was a small strip of that grazing following a place Kilbreck, where there was one tenant. His small strip went up adjoining the march between Caithness and Sutherland, exclusively for himself. At the same time the tenants were not permitted to allow their cattle or horses or sheep down the east side of the sheep farm of Navidale, but they had the whole run of the hill as a common, between Navidale and Caen, before the evictions.

24,823. You have shown your desire to get an increase of the grazing by applying for it?—Certainly. We cannot keep any yeld cattle where we are during the summer months without sending them away. We send them up to the height of the Strath of Kildonan, and pay 7s. 6d. per head for them.

24,824. And is this a sample of your grazing we see out of the window?—Yes, that is just about the best of it you see there.

24,825. You have shown your desire to get increased grazing by applying to the Crofters Commission for it?—Yes.

24,826. Did you ever think of applying to the landlord for it?—We applied to the landlord, and a deputation waited upon the factor, and accompanied him over the whole ground to show it to him.

24,827. What was the result of the application?—The result of it was that we never heard anything more about it.

24,828. And when was the piece taken to build the gamekeeper's house?—About eight or nine years ago, or perhaps six or seven years ago.

24,829. *Mr Alfred N. Macaulay, Agent for His Grace the Duke of Sutherland.*—Have you been in the way of seeing the crops in the Kildonan district for the last few years, say five years?—Yes.

24,830. How did these crops for the last five years compare with the crops of this year?—I may say that the crops for the last five years on these places, have just compared very much as the crop of this year will compare with the crops of the last five years on the coast side here.

24,831. But how are the crops this year? Are they better relatively than the crops that there have been for the last five years?—Well, they are better.

24,832. Now, with regard to the potatoes which form a staple of the people there, how do those grow on these farms?—Potatoes in some parts grow very well, and in other parts they did not.

24,833. But in this special place you referred to, where there are now three typical crofters?—I don't suppose they plant many potatoes, if any at all.

24,834. Those that they do plant?—They are just subject to the climate as in other places.

24,835. Are they better this year than the last five or six years?—Of course, they are.

24,836. Is it not the fact that for the last five or six years they have been a failure?—They have been a failure in a good many other places as well.

24,837. But in this special place?—Well, yes, of course.

24,838. With regard to these three crofters that have been spoken of, I presume you are satisfied with their success? You are satisfied that they have done well?—I am quite satisfied.

24,839. Do they depend wholly on their crofts?—Yes.

24,840. They do not do anything outside of their crofts?—Not that I am aware of.

24,841. What are their names?—Adam Bannerman, Gordon Henderson, and William Sutherland,

Helmsdale, Sutherlandshire.

William Macdonald.

24,842. Now, with regard to Sutherland, is it not the fact that he is a road contractor?—Oh, well, of course, that is quite true; his father was before him.

24,843. It is the fact that he is a road contractor?—Yes, he is a contractor, but he simply took the contract that his father had. The road was just opposite his own croft, and it did not prevent him from labouring his croft.

24,844. Is it not the fact that he drives the sportsmen up there, and makes a considerable income from that source?—Well, I think that the arbitrary power of the proprietor has been carried to a very great extent, but I think it would be a great stretch of arbitrary power if that man was to be prevented for earning money were he could get it.

24,845. I do not object to a man earning money, but I want to get at the fact, and the fact is that he is not dependent on his croft?—Oh, well, of course, that does not at all say, but that his croft would maintain him without having anything to do.

24,846. The fact is that he does not live by the croft alone?—But then he has the time to spare.

24,847. Then, with regard to Henderson's croft, does he cultivate this place?—He cultivated so much of it.

24,848. How much probably?—I am not exactly sure.

24,849. It is not the fact that he has allowed a great part of it to go out of cultivation for some reason or other?—He has only allowed part of it.

24,850. Then, with regard to Lochside, do you know the previous tenant on the holding?—Yes, I knew him by sight; White was his name.

24,851. Did he cultivate this land?—No, part of it he did.

24,852. Did he not cultivate a considerable portion of it?—Not altogether, he only cultivated part of it.

24,853. How much more than is cultivated at present?—I am not clear about how much more he cultivated.

24,854. There are only 3½ acres cultivated now, is it not the fact that a considerable portion of that land was cultivated by the man who was there before Mr Gunn?—Possibly it may be, I am not aware of that.

24,855. Do you know with what success?—No, I am not aware what success he had.

24,856. Is it not notorious that the man who was there before did not succeed?—That might be quite true without being the fault of the land at all; it might be more the fault of the man than of the land.

24,857. We will get the fact, though it is the fact that he did not succeed. Then about Bannerman, has he been a success do you think in his holding?—I think so, I have no reason to believe otherwise.

24,858. *The Chairman.*—Is there any demand in this quarter for holdings where the occupant would live partly by his holding and partly by his labour?—I am not aware of that; as I have already stated, in this parish there is no constant labour to be got, so that a man as I have said maybe would require to go out of the county altogether to get labour, or to the farthest west end of the county so that I don't think it would be advantageous for a man to have a croft of that kind.

24,859. We have heard a good deal elsewhere about the time taken to bring land which had to be reclaimed into a state to yield a profit. What is your view of that? Suppose you had a croft consisting of old arable which you wished to put into a state of cultivation to a profit. How long would it be with average chances and average weather before you would expect to get a profit from the land you had to till?—I don't think it would take very many years. It would not take very many years on old arable land.

24,860. Take old arable of the kind you have had in view; how long would it be?—I have seen in a part of the country where old land that had been for about fifty years, I should say lying waste, was in the spring or rather in the latter end of winter simply ploughed and then sowed, an excellent crop of oats cut in the following harvest; but that is only one case, and in some places I don't think there would be a crop at all the first or even the second year; but I have no doubt in the space of six years, in the time it would take to go over a six shift rotation, there would be an ordinary fair crop by the time the whole of the six shifts were laid out.

Helmsdale, Sutherlandshire.

William Macdonald.

24,861. So you would expect to have such land brought into a state of profitable cultivation in six years?—Yes.

24,862. I would like to ask you this. We have heard from time to time a great deal about the crops of this year? Is this year, in your opinion, rather an exceptional year?—It is, as regards the crops; they are exceptionally light this year.

24,863. The crops are early, and the corn crop, potatoes, and turnips are extra good in most places?—Yes, but not the corn crop, it is very light. There is no straw, and I believe where there is no straw, the corn is not good.

24,864. Would you say that the crops, speaking generally, are above the average this year?—I would not say that they are above the average, but I would say as to the green crops that they are up to the average.

24,865. And the crop is early?—Fully a month earlier in a great many places.

24,866. Then, would you advise us to be careful in drawing conclusions as to the land from the appearance of the crops this year as being in many places exceptionally early, and in many places exceptionally good?—Yes, I would. As I have already stated, in a great many places, both the climate and the soil would have to be taken into consideration.

24,867. In every place I think we must take these into consideration.

24,868. *Mr Sutherland.*—With regard to the farm of William and Donald Sutherland at Auchintoul, are there not two of them, two brothers?—Yes.

24,869. And might one not cultivate the farm and the other drive the sportsmen?—Certainly.

24,870. On the principle of the division of labour?—Exactly.

24,871. Then, with regard to the weather, good harvests and bad harvests come everywhere as well as here?—Oh, certainly.

24,872. And you do not think it is fair to compare the bad harvests there with the good harvests here?—No, I don't think so.

24,873. The proper thing is to compare them the same year when the same weather is all over the country?—Exactly.

24,874. You do not think a few miles would make all the difference in climate at a lower elevation than what is cultivated here, as some people say?—I do not think so.

24,875. Your knowledge of Kildonan Strath is not limited to a period of two years, is it?—No.

24,876. But spreads over a lifetime?—I remember it since I was a boy of six years, and I have been going back and forward through the strath since I came to manhood, through the very top even of Loch-a'-Chlair on the Strathnaver side down as far as Suisgill.

24,877. And you know as much about it as most people?—Well, I know a great deal about it.

24,878. And you have always seen shepherd's crops?—I have.

24,879. How do they compare with the crops on the sea coast here?—Where there were men who had a knowledge of farming they have raised as good crops, these shepherds, as could be got in the country. But on the other hand where they were men who had no knowledge of farming and still less desire to cultivate the pieces laid out for them, they have scarcely any crop.

24,880. You remember Mr White: was he a practical farmer?—Well, we could not say that he was.

24,881. Did he come there for the *bonâ fide* purpose of farming?—I don't believe he did.

24,882. Is that your opinion?—My belief is that he came there for sheep farming; but I am not saying for certain that it was for that purpose he came.

24,883. Listen to this for one moment. This is a quotation from a newspaper article of date 1882, when these farms were advertised to be let after they were reclaimed:—'The object of these reclamations,

Helmsdale, Sutherland-shire.

William Macdonald.

'generally stated, was to increase the area of grass 'land relatively to hill pasture, thus increasing the 'general feeding powers of the farm or farms, and in 'particular, so increasing home resources as to enable 'the sheep stock to be wintered on the farms instead 'of being taken to Lowland grazings elsewhere. With 'the present season the reclamations under which from '1300 to 1400 acres, at selected points have been 'brought thoroughly into cultivation, cropped and sub-'stantially fenced, will have been finished; and the 'results thus far have been thoroughly successful. 'The newly reclaimed land has been found capable of 'bearing excellent crops both of oats and turnips' (*Aberdeen Free Press*, 22nd Aug. 1882). Do you agree with that?—I quite agree with that; and besides I have no doubt the reason why Mr White failed in his holding was that instead of £140, as is paid now, he paid £400 I believe.

24,884. The rent has come down?—From £400 to £140, upon land that cost £40 an acre to reclaim.

24,885. And land which you think any good farmer would keep in cultivation?—I think so.

24,886. Land of not worse, but perhaps better quality than that which has been kept in cultivation?—By far.

24,887. So that you are quite clear it is not the fault of the land?—I am quite clear.

24,888. *Mr Gordon.*—You have told me a good deal about this Badanloch district. Are there any shepherds' houses up there just now?—No, there is only one shepherd.

24,889. Have you ever seen shepherds up there, or any cultivation up there at all?—Yes, I have.

24,890. Have you seen potatoes growing there?—Yes, I have.

24,891. And the question, I may put it to you direct, is this, do you consider that a district that is subject to frost, or not?—Of course, some years there may be frost.

24,892. But is it particularly liable to frost, or not?—Not so liable as the land in the main valley of the river.

24,893. In the main valley of the river, it is also subject to frost?—Yes, it is lower down.

24,894. How far up the valley do you go before you would say that the country is subject to frost; as far as the Kildonan Station?—No, I would not go so far; below that, I have seen frost coming down as far as Caen here; but late in the season, not early.

24,895. Is it an occasional circumstance that grain is frosted in that valley?—Yes, it does happen at times, but at intervals of years.

24,896. But there is no real test up there in the meantime of shepherds or gamekeepers cultivating three, four or five acres?—Shepherds never had that quantity. [*Mr Sutherland.*—But they always cultivated land, did not they?—They had so much to cultivate,—so much under potatoes, and so much under barley.]

24,897. And were the shepherd's potatoes safe, as a rule?—Yes, in a great many cases. Of course, some suffered from frost.

24,898. There is no doubt of this, that this is a very exceptional year as regards earliness, and, therefore, safety from frost?—Yes, of course, late years are more subject to frost.

24,899. *Mr Sutherland.*—How many degrees more of frost are there up at Kildonan than here at Helmsdale?—I am not clear about it.

24,900. Do you believe there is any difference?—The difference may be very little. I believe that wherever there is fresh water there is more likely to be frost.

24,901. Will there be an appreciable difference in the degrees of frost that are registered here and at Kildonan, twelve miles further up?—I am not aware that there is.

William Matheson.

WILLIAM MATHESON, Tailor, Badanloch (64)
—*examined.*

24,902. *The Chairman.*—You heard the statement read by Macdonald, Navidale?—Yes.

24,903. Do you agree with it?—In the main. He mentioned that Halamdary was a deer forest; so is Gearnsary joined to it, and a good part of Breacather. Griamacharry is a deer forest altogether, and a good part of Araichrini.

Helmsdale, Sutherland-shire.

William Matheson.

24,904. You want to make that correction upon his statement?—Yes.

24,905. But otherwise, do you agree with it?—Yes.

24,906. Have you any additional information to give us?—As far as I know Macdonald gave it fully.

24,907. Fully and satisfactorily?—Yes.

24,908. You have some statement I see; what does it contain?—It gives a list of old townships and the number of families that formerly lived in them:—

Rumsdale, eight; Garvault, five; Innse-chombraig, one; Eilig, three; Doire-Dhamh, one; Griamacharry, five; Ariclinidh, three; Corrish, four; Bad-an-t-Seabhaig, three; Claggan, two; Tornacreve, one; Torra-dhordason, one; Ach-na-h-uaighe, four; Bad-Clavan, four; Easter Badanloch, nine; Wester Badanloch, thirteen; Halamdary, four; Gearnsary, five; Breackachu, five; Achnamorine, two; Feith-na-fola, one; Dalcharn, Fairanach, Askadh, Cinachad, Achin, Braincholl, Reisg, Allt-an-duin, Tomich, Borrobol, Leurable, Dal-Langwell, Achnacrening, Suisgill, Dalbhuie, Kinbrace (partly reclaimed), Ault-i-conishgil, (partly reclaimed), Rinacorrach, Ach-an-fhaicinn (partly reclaimed, and peopled, no outrun), Toribhra, Achintoul (partly reclaimed), Bannockburn, Achencrask, Cnoc-fionn.

24,909. What do you mean by "no outrun?" [*Mr Gordon.*—Do you mean "now run out?"]—Very likely. Ten or eleven of these townships are now the sacred preserves of the deer. No other animal from man downwards has permission to walk over these grounds—no animal I may say except those that are preserved for the pleasure of murdering them some day and their warders. Some people maintain that the game-laws of our day are mild and unoppressive; but I say where they have the full chance of showing themselves, they are as barbarous and tyrannical as the game-laws of William of Normandy, if not worse. As far as I know, the game-laws of the Norman Court only punished those that went through their forest with the intent of doing harm, or did kill one of the sacred animals. But the refined game-laws of our day make it a crime to walk over a game preserve, although you go handcuffed and gagged. I am surprised that they did not try to change the Sutherland Coat of Arms, as it represents an animal very obnoxious to the sporting class There is no denying that these wild lands could be put to a better purpose, and I hope the Deer Forest Commission will see their way clear to give their verdict on that point, so clear that the banishment of the worst remains of our old feudal laws will be the result.

24,910. We have heard a great deal of evidence from Macdonald, with regard, at all events, to most of these townships?—Yes.

24,911. Have you anything to add to what you have said in answer to my questions or in addition to this statement? Do you wish to add anything more?—There are some townships where two were settled instead of one as mentioned there, but it was all in the other paper.

24,912. The other paper was very full and complete?—Yes.

24,913. And a very correct statement in your opinion?—Yes.

24,914. *Mr Sutherland.*—You have no doubt I suppose as to these people being in the places you have stated there? From the best information you can get all these people were in these places?—Oh, yes.

24,915. And, is it your opinion, that these same places that held the people before would hold them again if they went back upon proper conditions?—Yes.

24,916. Would you take a holding yourself if you got it in one of these places?—I am too old now, but the mind would take it.

24,917. If you had been a younger man and had got the opportunity you would have taken it?—Oh, yes.

Helmsdale, Sutherlandshire.

William Matheson.

24,918. You have lived in these places yourself all your lifetime?—Yes.

24,919. And you are satisfied from your observation that good holdings could be made?—But the way I was situated is that for thirty or forty years I had been the same as a fox among hounds if I was to interfere with anything.

24,920. Are you prevented from walking across the moors?—I was never prevented, but I tried to do as little of it as I could. If I had to go off the road unless it is just a message between the houses, I will be looking from side to side, in case any one is seeing me.

24,921. Then, with regard to the farmers that are up there, do you think they are upon the whole better off than people down here?—Oh, yes, at the reclamation, the land is good yonder.

24,922. And the crops are good in ordinary years?—Yes. But, of course, it was the very worst of land that was reclaimed.

24,923. You agree with Mr Macdonald in that, that it was the worst land that was reclaimed?—Sure enough.

24,924. And you think that if the better land was reclaimed there would be better crops and better results?—There is no mistake about that; I heard my father tell after the clearances that for some years there would be a yellow "scruff" on one's boots or shoes, the grass was so fat.

24,925. *Mr Gordon.*—You live up at Badanloch?—Yes, I was born there.

24,926. Have you a croft at all?—I have a small one.

24,927. How many acres?—No acres at all; I have the fourth of an acre.

24,928. Do you grow any potatoes at all?—I have some potatoes there, and very good ones.

24,929. What like were they last year?—They were not so good last year; they were not so good in any place that I saw last year.

24,930. Have you been in the habit of growing potatoes up there?—Always.

24,931. And did they frost sometimes?—Since a few years back only. My father was in Badanloch, and he was an old man between eighty and ninety, and he never saw "tattie shaws" black in Badanloch; but I saw it since then.

24,932. 1885 and 1888 would be rather frosty years?—Yes.

onald atson.

DONALD WATSON, Crofter, Gartymore (53)—*examined.*

24,933. *The Chairman.*—What rent do you pay?—£4.

24,934. Can you tell us the size of your holding, what extent of arable land it has?—About 5¼ acres.

24,935. And have you some outrun?—Yes, a small bit.

24,936. And have you hill grazing?—Yes.

24,937. A share of hill grazing?—Yes.

24,938. Do you know the extent of the hill grazing?—I am not exactly sure, but I think it is over 1500 acres.

24,939. Which you share along with how many other tenants?—118.

24,940. Have they the right to put on anything they like, or have they a souming?—They are allowed to put on cattle, and sheep and horses.

24,941. What stock have you got?—Two cows and a horse, and a stirk or two.

24,942. And some sheep?—Yes.

24,943. How many sheep?—About 15.

24,944. You heard Macdonald's statement?—Yes.

24,945. And do you agree with it?—Yes.

24,946. Does it convey your views?—Certainly it does.

24,947. Do you wish to add anything to his statement, or does it fully set forth the case that you wish to present?—I have not anything else as far as I know.

Helmsdale, Sutherlandshire.

Donald Watson.

24,948. What is your own individual desire in the matter: do you wish a new holding or an extension of holding?—Certainly, I would like to get an extension.

24,949. Is it more an extension you want than a new holding?—Well, if it could be possible that I should get an extension, but if not I would take a new holding.

24,950. You would prefer an extension to leaving the present croft?—Yes.

24,951. But if you cannot get an extension you are ready and willing to leave your croft and take a new settlement?—Yes.

24,952. Upon some of the lands mentioned by Mac donald?—Certainly.

24,953. What size of holding would you desire to obtain?—Between 25 and 30 acres I think would be sufficient.

24,954. Arable land?—Yes.

24,955. And what stock would you wish to be able to have? Both cattle, horses, and sheep?—That is according to the land, the quality of the land.

24,956. Suppose you got a fair quality of land, of the land in the district, what stock do you think you would need to have for a self-sustaining croft?—I think 2 ponies, 4 cows, and followers.

24,957. And how many sheep?—That would be according to the number of acres of outrun I would be allowed.

24,958. Suppose you had an outrun which your arable enabled you to winter?—Well, I think 100 sheep.

24,959. Have you considered the matter of rent of such a holding as you have in view?—No.

24,960. Have you considered the question whether you would require assistance to take up such a holding, or whether you would enter upon it at your own expense?—Well, that depends upon how I would be dealt with if I was to leave where I am. If the place where I am was left with me for a few years until I got a start in the new holding, I might perhaps get on.

24,961. You would not like to be removed or obliged to leave the one holding suddenly and take to the other?—No.

24,962. But gradually shift yourself from the one to the other?—As I would get on with the other I would be able to leave the old one.

24,963. And how long do you think it would take you before you could make such a new holding a profitable one with fair chances?—Not less than five years.

24,964. And would you like to be in a position to remain in your old holding that time?—Certainly.

24,965. Till the new holding was able to keep you and leave a profit?—Yes.

24,966. *Mr Sutherland.*—You have had a good deal of experience as a cultivator of the soil?—A little.

24,967. And you have had experience of attending sheep?—A little.

24,968. A good deal?—Well, I have been amongst them all my lifetime, more or less.

24,969. You said the extent of your own holding was about 4½ acres and that you had some outrun; what is the nature of the outrun you have got?—It is in parts very dangerous and rocky and steep.

24,970. Could any of it be cultivated that is not already cultivated?—Not an inch. There are parts of it that I have trenched to the depth of ten feet.

24,971. Your outrun is almost a precipice, is that not so?—A precipice.

24,972. With regard to the common grazing that you have a share in, you said that the extent of it was about 1500 acres?—Yes, I think so.

23,973. And that a great number of people shared in it. You said that you had sheep?—Yes.

24,974 Since how long have you had any sheep?—I have had a few sheep for some time.

24,975. Was there any break in that time at all?—Yes.

24,976. Were you prohibited from putting sheep upon that common grazing at all?—Yes, that was about eleven years ago.

24,977. So that if you have sheep it is contrary to the wish and the will of the proprietor?—No. We had a dispute, but we stopped the case. We employed an

agent to stop the case till such time as his Grace came home.

24,978. But steps were taken to prevent your keeping any sheep?—Yes. Most of the people signed away their rights to common pasture.

24,979. Very few people except yourself have kept sheep, is that not so?—At the time.

24,980. Or now?—Oh, they have got it now.

24,981. But the attempt was made to deprive you of the sheep?—Yes.

24,982. Then, with regard to the new holding, you have stated in answer to the Chairman that there would be some years before you would expect to get a profitable return in a new holding?—Certainly. Where it was all arable a return could be expected, but if there was new land to take in it would take more time. A man would need to go according to his ability, he could not get on all at once.

24,983. I quite understand that. But you are labouring away at your present holding, and can you make it any better than it is?—No, I think I have gone as far as I could. I covered some shingles.

24,984. You covered and made arable some seabeach?—Yes.

24,985. And you think that is not a profitable occupation of your industry,—you could employ it far better if you had a suitable place?—Though I lived to be a hundred years of age it would not pay.

24,986. But if you got a new holding of the kind you have described, if you had to wait some years before you got a return you would be rewarded by the hope of having it in the future?—Yes.

24,987. But your present holding you cannot make better than it is?—No.

24,988. Suppose the opportunity was given to change from your present holding to a new one, do you know that under the Crofters Act you would be entitled to compensation when you left?—Yes.

24,989. And would that not furnish part of the capital?—Yes.

24,990. So that a man like you who has a holding would be in a far better position to take up such a holding than a man who has not?—Yes.

24,991. And you know also that the men who took the new holdings up the Kildonan Strath were men like yourself who had holdings down here?—Yes.

24,992. Do you believe then that there are a considerable number of people who would take advantage of such an offer just as these three men did?—I think they would be quite willing if there were any chance.

24,993. Now, as a man of experience in these things, have you in your mind new holdings where you would have separate grazings for each farmer, or a common sheep stock, which?—Separate grazing, I would prefer; I think it would give better justice in every way, for a man could have his own to attend, and if there was anything required amongst them he could take them and give them justice on the arable of the bit farm.

24,994. He could winter them on his arable?—He could winter them and assist them if it was required. Now, this club system, of course, is looked upon as cheaper in one way, but I think it is dearer upon the other hand, for I could not exactly get my own sheep to attend to them at the bit arable of my farm to do them justice if required. I would need to run my share in the risk.

24,995. What size of grazing attached to the 35 acres arable would you need to have in the case of separate grazing?—It would take about 1000 or 1500 acres for that.

24,996. Which is the smallest of these farms up at Kinbrace?—I think it is Burnfoot.

24,997. Do you know how many acres of hill pasture Burnfoot has got?—I think over 1000 acres.

24,998. And he has got it separate of course?—Burnfoot is fenced.

24,999. Have you considered the difficulty with regard to fencing when you said you would prefer to have your stock separate?—Well, fencing is not so very dear now, and I think it would pay in the long run.

25,000. But suppose you yourself had this practically to do, would you put up the fence yourself?—If I could manage, certainly, I would.

25,001. I mean would you do the work yourself?—Certainly.

25,002. Have you put up fences yourself?—I have fenced the whole of the bit I have, the first dyke fence that there was.

25,003. Could you do the same if you got an arable land farm, with a hill grazing attached of that size; could you do a great part of the fencing yourself?—Yes, with very little assistance.

25,004. And could the general run of the crofters do that if they got the opportunity?—A good many of them.

25,005. And in that way would you reduce the expense of fencing?—Certainly.

25,006. So that the estimates that we hear so much of per yard would not apply in the case of you, or men like you. When a contractor puts up a fence does he not contract to have a profit out of it?—Certainly.

25,007. And you would save that profit if you were doing it for yourself?—Yes.

25,008. Now, is it an absolute necessity, in your opinion, to have fencing?—I approve of the fencing.

25,009. Could it be done without?—It depends on how the arable land lies to the outrun.

25,010. The fence then would be between the outrun and the pasture?—Certainly.

25,011. It is not to separate neighbours' stock from each other?—Well, it is, in a way. I have seen them in several places in the county of Sutherland where they were keeping their stock separate and they were doing pretty well.

25,012. Had they fences?—They had not fences. You see they had a family to attend to the work.

25,013. But it would be better with fences, you admit?—Oh, yes.

25,014. You have been a shepherd, have you not?—Yes, for a number of years.

25,015. You have herded sheep on large grazing farms?—Yes.

25,016. Were there fences between these grazing farms?—There was no such thing.

20,017. How has the necessity arisen now?—Because it is coming in new.

25,018. Not because it is absolutely necessary but because it is fashionable, is that it?—Fashionable.

25,019. But, as a matter of fact, is there a fence between the farm of Navidale and the farm of Kildonan at present?—No.

25,020. Is there a fence between the Elderable sheep farm and the neighbouring sheep farm?—No.

25,021. And has not been for thirty years?—The only fence, as I understand, is between the forest and the sheep farm.

25,022. For the benefit of the deer?—Certainly.

25,023. But you admit all the same that the herding would be easier if a fence were there?—Yes, and it would give more justice to the stock.

25,024. You know these lands that Mr Macdonald and Mr Matheson spoke to?—Yes.

25,025. You have travelled over the whole of them?—Yes.

25,026. You are perfectly well acquainted with them?—Well, I have travelled over them several times.

25,027. Have you formed an opinion as to whether they are suitable for the purpose of our inquiry?—There is lots of land that never was before cultivated that is very good soil and would be very easily taken into cultivation.

25,028. Did you use to cultivate land when you were a shepherd?—Yes, a little. I was a "single lad" with the shepherd and saw the crops.

25, 029. I mean the usual croft?—Yes.

25,030. What part of the country have you been in as a shepherd?—I have been a while in Assynt, and I have been in Strathnaver, and in Ross-shire.

25,031. What place in Strathnaver?—As high up as Syre.

25,032. What sort of crop had you there?—A very good crop.

Helmsdale, Sutherlandshire.

Donald Watson

25,033. Were your crops there ripe as soon as they had them at Bettyhill?—Very nearly.

25,034. Were you troubled with frost very often?—Not very often.

25,035. Was the frost there more severe than anywhere else in Sutherlandshire, to any appreciable degree?—No, I have seen some parts of the low green ground nearer home more frosted than up there.

25,036. Does the water freeze up there sooner than it does at the shore?—No, I do not think so, I found that in the winter season it was warmer in Strathnaver than at Helmsdale, for I have been there in the severest storms.

25,037. Had you ever your crops mildewed?—No, not at Syre.

25,038. And the climate will not have changed since then?—The last few years were about the coldest.

25,039. Your opinion is valuable, with regard to the new holdings up the Kildonan Strath, are the people raising good crops there?—I have seen as good crops there as ever I have seen here.

25,040. And if they have had bad crops it was during bad seasons?—Yes.

25,041. And there were bad crops here at the same time?—Certainly.

25,042. But you never saw bad crops there and good crops here at the same time?—No.

25,043. *Mr Gordon.*—The necessity for fencing might arise in consequence of the subdivision. When you were a shepherd you would be in charge of a hirsel?—Yes.

25,044. How many sheep would be in the hirsel?—Sometimes I have seen 400 and another time 500.

25,045. How many sheep would you propose to have attached to each of these new crofts or small farms?—That would depend on the number of acres of arable.

25,046. But assuming that you have 30 acres of arable, and 1000 acres of hill ground, as you spoke of, how many sheep would that keep?—I think it would be heavily enough stocked by 100; it would depend a good deal upon the nature of the pasture. Some pasture might keep a few more, but in this county it will not take many more.

25,047. We have been accustomed recently to set them down as four or five acres to each sheep?—There is a great difference in different parts.

25,048. No doubt. If you have small holdings of 100 sheep each, would it not be an expensive thing to herd these sheep if you had not them fenced?—No, it would not. I have seen the like of that in back times in other parts of the country, and it was not such a heavy thing. All these might not be on the hill all the year, they could have so many of them at home. They could winter their ewe hoggs at home, and there were only ewes and gimmers.

25,049. Go up to Halamdary. How many holdings would you suppose could be placed, of the size you have mentioned, between Halamdary and the outrun of West Helmsdale?—I am not exactly sure, for I never examined that ground, it is so extensive. That is a thing it would take a little time to estimate.

25,050. How many people do you think in West Helmsdale would be willing to take crofts or small farms?—I could not say how many, but I heard always the cry amongst them for more land.

25,051. Would there be a dozen or twenty?—Oh, I think so.

25,052. Looking at the size of this ground and looking at the distance, the area between West Helmsdale and the farthest up place you mentioned, it appears to me that it would only hold about ten on each side of the Strath, or twenty in all?—God bless you, far more.

25,053. You would require to restrict your allowance of land then. You speak of 1500 acres: that means a large strip of ground. I am quite in favour of your making the places of a fair and reasonable size, but it won't hold so many as you think if you make them so big. You think yourself there is no fear of mildew in that country?—Of course, there are exceptional years; every year is not the same.

Helmsdale, Sutherlandshire.

Donald Watson

25,054. But on the whole you think you would be willing to shift from West Helmsdale and take a croft up in the neighbourhood of Badanloch?—Yes.

25,055. Willingly?—Yes.

25,056. And you think a good many more in your township would?—Yes.

25,057. *Mr Macaulay, Agent for the Duke of Sutherland.*—You are one of the Gartymore crofters, are you not?—Yes.

25,058. Were you recently offered some additional grazing by the Duke of Sutherland?—Yes.

25,059. How far did you take advantage of that offer?—Which is the last grazing,—Elderable?

25,060. Yes, towards Elderable?—We took no advantage as it was rented too heavy. [*The Chairman.*—What was the rent per acre?—It was only 6d.—And you did not think it worth 6d. an acre?—No.]

25,061. Was that the reason you gave to the Duke of Sutherland's representative for not taking advantage of the offer?—I understand so.

25,062. Were not you one of the parties who took a leading part in the matter?—Yes.

25,063. And do you say that was the reason given, that it was too highly rented?—Too highly rented. [*The Chairman.*—Is he right, Mr Macaulay? Was it 6d. an acre?—*Mr Maclean.*—I will submit the conditions.]

25,064. Then, as to sheep being put off your grazing ground, were there some of your neighbours who did not keep sheep?—Yes.

25,065. And is it not the fact that these people complained that their land was being fed on by your sheep and by the sheep of others who kept sheep?—That might have been.

25,066. Don't you know as a fact that that was the case?—That might have been the case on the one hand, and those who had less to do made more complaints. [*The Chairman.*—But there were complaints made?—I understood there were.]

25,067. Is it the fact that the majority of these crofters had not got sheep?—I am not exactly sure if it was the majority that had not them. [*The Chairman.*—Had a considerable number of them no sheep?—There was a considerable number of them that had no sheep; but if they had no sheep I think they had other stock according to that.]

25,068. So that this trouble was brought about by disturbance, between you and your neighbours, and others?—There was no disturbance.

25,069. But these neighbours complained?—Whatever complaints went in went in by disguise to the office.

25,070. There was no open complaint?—No.

25,071. But the fact remains that some had sheep and some had not?—Yes.

25,072. And you believe that reports went in in disguise?—Certainly, for I did not hear it until I heard it from the office.

25,073. Were you one of the committee who had to do with the Suisgill club farm?—Yes.

25,074. And do you consider that that farm was moderately rented?—Owing to the state we were in at the time it was rather, for at the time we got the farm prices were very high, and before we sold anything of what we bought prices fell, and we could scarcely make them pay; then we had nothing but the fleece and the wool to depend on.

25,075. What rent did you pay?—£100.

25,076. And did you see out your lease?—No.

25,077. What became of it?—It was given to Mr Bruce, West Garty, after that.

25,078. So that the Duke of Sutherland relieved you when you got into difficulties,—is that the fact?—He relieved us of the lease.

25,079. You said a little ago that you and the like of you would expect compensation for your croft if you took another holding, and would be better able to go into these new crofts than outsiders. Have you been successful in your present farm?—I was doing my best,

but it was all that I could do to make a living, and I could scarcely do that.

25,080. Your rent is £4?—Yes.

25,081. What is the state of your rent; have you been able to meet your obligations?—Not altogether.

25,082. Then, are you in arrears of rent?—Yes.

25,083. How far?—So much.

25,084. You stated as to these other places that you thought you would be able to set them agoing without much aid. How do you expect to do that, knowing that you are at present in arrears of rent?—Oh, well, I might get over the arrears, perhaps.

25,085. Why do you not get over them?—I was not able to carry them out at the time as I was working at the bit land to get it fenced and different things cleared, and if I got that done I was expected to make the rent as I could.

25,086. Then, about the frost up these straths, is it not the fact that what destroys potatoes is not so much the frost as this 'rime' that lies in these glens? [*The Chairman.*—Frosty vapour]. It is commonly known, I believe, as 'rime' or hoar frost. It is the moisture that destroys the potatoes more than the frost?—It is what we call the hoar frost.

25,087. So that the number of degrees of difference in frost between here and Kildonan really has very little to do with the question? There being more frost here or at Kildonan won't affect the question; it is the moisture that affects the question?—It is the lowness of the land beside the river.

25,088. So that the difference in frost has really nothing to do with it?—I don't believe it has.

25,089. *Mr Sutherland.*—With regard to the sheep being put away, did the landlord ever give you power to put sheep upon these holdings, upon the common grazing?—A few of us that were summonsed.

25,090. Was it according to any rule of the estate?—No.

25,091. The grazings were not given for the purpose of keeping sheep on at all?—No, I understand since the time of the evictions.

25,092. Listen to this: this is a letter from Sir Arnold B. Kemball to Mr Joseph Peacock, Factor to the Duke of Sutherland at the time; the date is January 22, 1882. Among other things he complains that certain parties were keeping sheep upon grazing assigned to the use of their horses and cattle?—Yes.

25,093. And not for the use of sheep?—Oh, it is like enough.

25,094. So it was never meant that you should have sheep grazing at all?—I understand not.

25,095. Now, with regard to the arrears, have you applied to the Crofters Commission?—Yes.

25,096. How long ago?—We are served now since three years with a schedule from his Grace.

25,097. And when you get a judicial rent fixed you are quite prepared to settle with that Court, with regard to arrears and everything else, are not you?—Certainly, I am.

25,098. Perfectly ready and willing?—Yes.

25,099. The judicial rent is the one that you mean to recognise?—Yes.

25,100. You think you are entitled to that by Act of Parliament?—I think so.

25,101. Then, you said you were expending money on your holding; have you been doing that to any extent?—All that I could afford to spend I was spending, but I scarcely ever kept a proper note of that.

25,102. What length of fence have you put up round your holding?—About 500 yards wire fence.

25,103. Did you get any assistance?—No.

25,104. You did it all yourself?—All myself.

25,105. Did you get any assistance for reclaiming the land on the sea beach?—Yes.

25,106. That was all your own labour?—My own labour.

25,107. And you said that your arable acreage was how much?—5¼.

25,108. And for that you are paying £4?—Yes.

25,109. *Mr Gordon.*—You have a right to the grazing for that also?—Yes. Helmsdale Sutherlandshire.

25,110. There is one thing I forgot to ask you. Where was this grazing that you were offered?—Elderable, the nearest farm. Donald Watson.

25,111. Did it join your present grazings?—Yes, it joined the present common.

25,112. It was simply an extension of the present pasture?—Yes.

25,113. *Mr Sutherland.*—Did you complain at the time that the extension of the grazing stopped at the very place where the grazing began to get useful?—Certainly.

25,114. That it cut off all the green land, that was Elderable grazing?—We only got the worst.

25,115. And if you had got the whole of the pasture with the mixture of green, would you be prepared to take it?—If we had got it at a reasonable rent.

25,116. *Mr Gordon.*—Look out at the window; is that the pasture you were offered?—It is not in sight.

25,117. *The Chairman.*—Suppose you had got a croft up at Badanloch of the size of arable you have mentioned, and a corresponding extent of grazing, would you prefer to have that croft fenced round about if you were able to do it?—Certainly.

25,118. The arable and the grazings fenced round?—I would find the benefit of it.

25,119. Would you think it a very beneficial thing?—Yes.

25,120. And you would fence it if you possibly could?—Yes.

25,121. Do you mean to fence your arable and outrun, or to fence the grazing too?—I would fence the arable separate, and if the grazing would do without being fenced, certainly I would never do it.

25,122. But suppose you found the grazing would not very well do without fencing, would you fence it too if you could?—Yes.

25,123. *Mr Forsyth.*—Do you know the cost of that? It would be very heavy I am afraid; if your grazing was from 1000 to 1500 acres, as you estimate the cost of fencing would be very heavy, do you quite understand that?—Oh, yes, I understand that perfectly.

25,124. And you think that it would pay interest on the cost?—Yes.

ALEXANDER GUNN, Crofter, West Helmsdale (48)—*examined.* Alexander Gunn.

25,125. *The Chairman.*—What rent do you pay?—£3.

25,126. Can you tell me the extent of your arable?—I can give a rough idea, about 2½ acres arable.

25,127. And have you some outrun?—Yes, about 2½ or 2¾ acres outrun.

25,128. And a share of hill grazing the same as Watson has?—Yes.

25,129. And what stock have you got?—A cow and follower.

25,130. Have you any horses?—No.

25,131. No sheep?—No, the holding cannot take any more.

25,132. That is all you are able to keep?—Yes.

25,133. You heard the statement made by Macdonald?—Yes.

25,134. Do you agree with that statement?—Yes, I agree with the general statement.

25,135. And you agree generally with the evidence given by the preceding witnesses?—Yes.

25,136. Now, do you wish to make any addition of your own?—I don't remember just now, but if anything occurs to you to ask, I will be happy to answer it.

25,137. You heard a good deal said about fencing; are you in favour of a crofter having his holding fenced, if he is able to fence it?—I would not be in favour of fencing the whole of the hill grazing, but I would give an opportunity to the crofters to do what

Helmsdale, Sutherlandshire.

Alexander Gunn.

suited them best. But I would be in favour of fencing all the arable.

25,138. And fencing the grazing or not, according to circumstances?—Yes.

25,139. Are you desirous of leaving the holding you have got if you can get another holding?—I think I ought to.

25,140. Your present holding is exceedingly small?—Yes, and it is bad ground.

25,141. Possibly you may think the rent stiff?—Well, the rent is, I think, rather high. The original rent was only 15s.,* and then it was raised to 25s., reduced when the railway went through on account of part of it being cut away to 19s., and then raised to £3, and I have not got any amendment.

25,142. When was it raised to £3?—I do not remember exactly, but about fourteen or fifteen years ago.

25,143. Now, of the two-and-a-half acres arable, have you reclaimed any portion?—Yes, I reclaimed some of it too, but there is a good bit of it that is very steep and would not give any crops; it is too cold. It is up the hill and very steep. I allowed that to run out for pasture or outrun.

25,144. Do you live by your holding?—No, I could not do that altogether.

25,145. Then, how do you maintain yourself?—I just engage in manual labour.

25,146. And do you get regular work?—No.

25,147. It is precarious?—Yes.

25,148. Upon what do you depend mainly for labour: is it the herring fishery?—No, I do not follow the fishery at all.

25,149. What kind of labour is it?—Working at any manual labour, such as roads, or any other thing that may occur, but not steady labour at all; perhaps two or three months in the year or thereby, so that we must be very economical in the way of living.

25,150. You would like if you could get a settlement large enough to enable you to sustain yourself?—Yes, no doubt.

25,151. Without outside labour or any other source of profit?—Certainly, I would.

25,152. Are there a good many other crofters and small tenants in this quarter having crofts of a similar size to your own?—Well, there are a good many.

25,153. And are these desirous like yourself of getting new and larger holdings if possible?—They expressed themselves to me to that effect. There is no doubt there is excellent land in the straths referred to.

25,154. *Mr Sutherland.*—Were you appointed at a public meeting to represent the opinions of the people here?—Yes.

25,155. You represented the eastern division in the County Council?—Yes.

25,156. So you have had abundant means of knowing the opinions of the people on this matter?—Certainly.

25,157. Are you of opinion that there is a strong desire existing to get opportunities of going back to this land?—Yes, that is a fact. I was coming in contact with the people since a short time back, and asking their opinions about it, and they expressed themselves very strongly in regard to it.

25,158. Do you believe in the great difficulty with regard to frost?—I do not. As an instance I may tell you that two or three years ago frosty vapour was lying upon the crofts in the morning and we were afraid—at least I was afraid—that the potatoes that were next the river would be more liable to be frost bitten, and I went to examine the potatoes. They were not touched at all, tho' a strip of the frostiness that came through the land about 400 yards from the water was all black and that strip continued for ever a mile from the west end of Marrel to the west end of Helmsdale.

25,159. And what happened to the potatoes; were they injured by that?—The shaws were black, but that was all.

* Gunn has since written explaining that the original rent was 5s.

25,160. How did the potatoes do in autumn?—Very well.

25,161. They were well enough after that?—Yes.

25,162. The holdings that you have referred to in your district lie along the bank of the river?—Yes.

25,163. There is no cultivated land on the whole strath of Kildonan from end to end so close to the river as yours?—Yes.

25,164. So that if any place is subject to the frost from the river it is Marrel?—Yes.

25,165. And that is the land the crofters have already is it not?—Yes.

25,166. How often are your potatoes destroyed by the frost in Marrel?—Some patches almost every year.

25,167. Have you got losses of potatoes by frost?—Yes, it prevents them from ripening.

25,168. So much?—So much.

25,169. How do the potatoes grown in Marrel compare with the potatoes that grow in other parts round here about; are they as good, or are they worse, or are they better?—I am not very well acquainted with the rest of the districts here, but I know for a fact the potato crop is very important.

25,170. But if there is any place on the whole course of the Kildonan Strath from the top to the bottom that is in a position to get frost it is Marrel?—Yes.

25,171. And that is the land the crofters have now?—Yes.

25,172. So that in any circumstances they were placed they could not be worse with regard to frost than they are in Marrel?—No, I don't think so.

25,173. Now, with regard to the pasture you have got, could you give us any idea of what angle it forms with the horizon?—I could not say.

25,174. Is it 95 degrees do you know?—(*No answer.*)

25,175. Is it mostly composed of what is called "scree,"—rocks crumbling away?—Yes. We can boast of having the most rocky land in Sutherland.

25,176. And the steepest?—Yes.

25,177. It is almost perpendicular?—Almost perpendicular. With your permission, I may add with regard to the Elderable grazing, that part of it was offered to the crofters at the rate of £40. Now it is practically useless to the crofters to take that park, because there would be as much expense in keeping that up as the whole farm of Elderable. We had a meeting over it and we viewed the thing,—we saw that it would be of no use, that price that was offered, so we came to the conclusion to apply to the Crofters Commission for the whole of it, and that is still pending.

25,178. The conclusion they came to was, that they should apply to the Crofters Commission for the whole hirsel of Elderable?—Yes.

25,179. *Mr Gordon.*—What was the rent to be, £40?—£40 for what was offered, the salvage that was offered.

25,180. Do you know how many acres were in it?—No.

25,181. Have you any idea how many sheep this additional pasture would keep?—About 200; that would be the utmost.

25,182. Cheviot ewes?—Yes.

25,183. *The Chairman.*—As to the sheep grazing in this locality, what is the proportion of sheep to grass on the average?—Is that with reference to what is on the straths?

25,184. Yes?—I could not exactly say.

25,185. You would not put 3 acres to the sheep, would you?—I have no knowledge of shepherding myself.

25,186. *Mr Macaulay, Agent for the Duke of Sutherland.*—Has the rent been raised since you became tenant of this holding?—Not since I became tenant.

25,187. You told us that you had a cow and a follower, but no sheep?—No sheep.

25,188. You have a right of keeping sheep, have not you?—I am not aware: I never kept sheep.

25,189. You know that your neighbours keep sheep —some of them?—Very few of them; if they do keep sheep it is tethered on their crofts.

25,190. But Mr Watson, the previous witness, keeps sheep?—I am not his neighbour.

25,191. And do none of the people in your township keep sheep at all?—I think two or three have sheep, I see them on the crofts, tethered.

25,192. Do they not put the sheep out on the common grazings?—Well, they may.

25,193. Have you any reason to believe that you have not as much right as they have to keep sheep?—I don't want to bother with sheep. [*The Chairman.*—But do you understand that attached to your holding there is a right to keep sheep on the hill pasture?—I am not aware that we ever got the right to keep sheep.]

25,194. Do you know that some of the other crofters have sheep?—They have.

25,195. *The Chairman.*—It does not quite follow that, because they have a right, he has a right.

25,196. *Mr Macaulay.*—My object was to find out whether he has exhausted his rights.

25,197. *The Chairman.*—You are quite entitled to do that.

25,198. *Mr Macaulay.*—Did you object to these other men having sheep?—No, I never objected.

25,199. You simply allowed them to have as many sheep as they liked?—I knew very well some of them were dependent upon them for their main subsistence.

25,200. Did it not suggest itself to you that this might be a means of subsistence to you as well as to them?—Yes, I took a notion to that for some time, but the croft was so small that we could not manage.

25,201. Have you been able to fulfil your obligations to your proprietor?—I don't know if I have altogether.

25,202. Are you in arrears of rent?—A little, I think.

25,203. How much?—I did not calculate exactly just now.

25,204. You are considerably in arrear?—Considerably? No, not considerably.

25,205. How do you propose to take this holding that you picture to yourself in the Strath of Kildonan in your present circumstances?—I suppose we would require a little Government assistance.

25,206. What do you mean by a little assistance? Just tell us frankly?—To get some Government money.

25,207. Some Government pay?—Government pay, and I would be in favour of getting compensation from the landlords for the loss.

25,208. Loss of what?—Loss of the reclamations of our forefathers.

25,209. You stated some time ago when asked how you made your living, that you did not get estate work?—I did not say that. [*The Chairman.*—No, what he said was this. I rather assumed in the question that possibly some of his labour was estate labour; he said he did not depend mainly on estate labour; he took labour anywhere he could get it. Part of that might be estate labour.]

25,210. The fact is you do get estate labour?—Yes.

25,211. You have just now completed a contract in Helmsdale?—Yes.

25,212. *The Chairman.*—What is that a contract for?—For repairing some streets in Helmsdale.

25,213. *Mr Sutherland.*—Did you get that employment from the County Council or from the estate?—For the period since last spring.

25,214. What is the nature of the contract?—Some of the streets in Helmsdale were handed over to the County Council.

25,215. To the Road Board?—To the Road Board to be maintained, and the estate put them in repair. The estate advertised for offers, and I was the successful offerer.

25,216. It was to put certain streets in repair that they might be taken over by the Road Board?—Yes.

25,217. Now, as to the right of keeping sheep, how many families did you say had the same sort of right to this hill grazing?—They had all an equal right.

25,218. How many families are there from the east end of Marrel to the west end of Gartymore?—Nearly 200. Helmsdale, Sutherlandshire.

25,219. How many acres have they of common grazings?—I suppose there are about 1500 acres. Alexander Gunn.

25,220. If 200 families have a common right of grazing on 1500 acres, and it takes 8 acres to keep a sheep, how many sheep could a family have?—Some families could not have any at all.

25,221. A vulgar fraction of a sheep?—Yes.

JOHN THOMSON MURRAY, Crofter, Portgower (54) —*examined.* John Thomson Murray.

25,222. *The Chairman.*—What is your rent?—£3.

25,223. Can you tell us the extent of your arable?—A little over three acres.

25,224. And have you some outrun?—A small bit.

25,225. What stock have you got?—One horse, one cow, one heifer, one calf and six sheep.

25,226. And you have a right of grazing on the hill?—Yes, in common with my neighbours.

25,227. You heard the evidence of Macdonald, the first witness?—Yes.

25,228. Do you agree with that evidence?—I do.

25,229. Does it set forth your views fully?—Yes.

25,230. Are you desirous of leaving your present holding if you could get another, and a larger one?—Yes, to-morrow, if I got compensated for the present one.

25,231. In leaving the present holding you desire compensation at the outgoing?—Yes.

25,232. Were you appointed at a meeting at Portgower to represent the crofters there?—Yes, for the parish of Loth.

25,233. You are here, therefore, as a delegate from the parish of Loth?—Yes.

25,234. I take it that Macdonald, in his statement which was a very full one, has mentioned all the lands that you think we ought to consider and inspect in this quarter?—Yes, regarding the parish of Kildonan, but not regarding the parish of Loth.

25,235. What is it you would like particularly to tell us regarding the parish of Loth?—I have to tell you first about Glen-Loth, secondly about Lochbeg, and thirdly Crackaig.

25,236. These are the principal places?—There is a bit of outrun at Kintradwell, but it is comparatively small.

25,237. At each of these points there is land which you think we ought to consider?—Yes.

25,238. As suitable for new settlements?—Yes. I travelled Glen-Loth recently, and I found that there was a large tract of land extending for about two miles and a half, all suitable for cultivation.

25,239. Along the river?—Along the road. That is from the foot of the Crask to the Sletdale bridge.

25,240. And is there a desire among those you represent to obtain new settlements in that quarter?—Yes. There are many who have made applications before now to his Grace the Duke of Sutherland for land, thus showing that they are desirous at this time of obtaining more land.

25,241. What was the result of these applications?—The result was that his Grace the Duke of Sutherland replied to me and said, the present holder of the farm of Garty, which is adjacent to the Portgower fields, could not give over part of his land in order that the crofters should be bettered.

25,242. Is the desire among those you represent mainly to get new settlements, or to get extensions of their present holdings?—I believe most of them would take new settlements, and others would go in for additional land.

25,243. In your own individual case, do you wish to leave your holding, or to get your holding extended?—I would leave it to-morrow if I got compensated for my present holding; but at the same time there would be a great advantage to the Portgower people if the

Helmsdale, Sutherlandshire.

John Thomson Murray.

Garty farm was broken down; the whole of them could get a piece of additional land without moving.

25,244. Is the Garty farm arable or grazing?—It is an arable farm.

25,245. How far up the river from Lothbeg is the land suitable, in your opinion, to be found?—From Lothbeg Bridge going straight up to Sletdale Bridge, there is hardly any land at the roadside that could be cultivated; but from the Sletdale Bridge to the top of the Crask, or rather underneath the Crask, it is quite suitable for cultivation, and the very best of soil too.

25,246. There is not much land of the kind you have in view between Lothbeg and Sletdale Bridge, but a great deal between Sletdale Bridge and Crask?—Yes. But let my lord remember that there is plenty of land at Lothbeg itself, extending to Coilburn.

25,247. Then, is there also land up the River Sletdale?—Yes, there is a part on the right hand side as you go up from the Sletdale Bridge.

25,248. It is pretty high there?—It is pretty high, but after you go over the ridge it is quite level.

25,249. And there is land there, you say?—Yes.

25,250. Is it a considerable area?—It is; it would make one good farm anyhow, that part of it that I allude to, and likewise there is land at the left hand side of the Sletdale River, but still further off.

25,251. What is the name of the place?—The name escapes me at present, but it can been seen.

25,252. Now, is there not other land in this parish that you ask our attention to?—Not except the arable farms.

25,253. Do you mean the arable land of the arable farms, or the grazings of the farms?—I made reference to the grazings belonging to the Crackaig farm, including the three pieces that I mentioned before.

25,254. You direct our attention to the grazings upon Crackaig farm?—Yes.

25,255. You think there is land there that we ought to look at?—Yes, first class land.

25,256. Are there grazings on any other farm you would like to mention?—No, that I am aware of.

25,257. When you referred to Garty farm, did you speak of arable land?—The arable.

25,258. *Mr Sutherland.*—But is there no arable land attached to Garty farm?—There is a small bit away to the right hand side above the Garty Bridge; there is a small place there called Barraclien, and then there is another place above the West Garty Bridge called the Riaskin. There was a croft at each of these places at one time.

25,259. But adjoining to the grazing of the Portgower crofters on the west, there is grazing land now attached to the Garty farm, is there?—Not that I am aware of, except the shore, but that has been cultivated.

25,260. Who meets you up the hill on the left?—Garty.

25,261. Garty grazing is it not?—Yes.

25,262. So that there is grazing at Garty attached to the arable land?—Yes.

25,263. Now, would you kindly tell us who occupies Garty farm adjacent to Portgower?—Mr Bruce.

25,264. Does he hold any other land?—Yes.

25,265. What does he hold?—Killearnan and Suisgill, and Craggie and Learable; he has all these.

25,266. He has two sheep farms up Kildonan Strath, Killearnan and Suisgill?—Yes, and Craggie and Learable.

25,267. You said that you applied to the proprietor of the land for an extension of your holdings?—Yes; we did it twice.

25,268. And the answer you got was?—We applied for Crackaig and Lothbeg.

25,269. You mean the arable land?—Yes, and we applied for the arable land a second time for Garty.

25,270. Did you apply for any grazing?—Not that I am aware of.

25,271. And if you do get the Garty farm, would you take the grazing along with it?—Certainly, they would require grazing along with the arable.

25,272. The other land in Glen-Loth, what use is it put to?—Sheep grazing.

25,273. Who is the tenant?—Mr Dudgeon.

25,274. What has he got besides Glen Loth?—Elderable and Lothbeg and Crackaig.

25,275. What is the population of the parish of Loth, do you happen to know?—It escapes me now, but I ought to know, for I was taking up the census two years ago,—I think it is 584 or so.

25,276. Where are the bulk of the people in the parish situated?—At Portgower.

25,277. Where do you find the next aggregation of population?—Culgower is the next place to Portgower; then Loth and Crackaig.

25,278. Do you know the acreage of the common grazing that the Portgower crofters have?—They are in common with the Gartymore people I understand.

25,279. You are aware that the burn between Portgower and Gartymore is the parish boundary?—Yes.

25,280. Do the Loth crofters have their grazing in common with the Kildonan crofters?—The Kildonan cattle come on our grazing.

25,281. In short, you live in a neighbourly way?—We live and let live.

26,282. So that you don't know whether the grazing is common, or whether you have it separate?—No. We maintain that we have it separately, but in such a thing I think we have it in common, the whole of us.

25,283. Will it amount to many acres per family?—I should think not.

25,284. Will it amount to 10 acres of grazing a family?—About that.

25,285. Where do you find the next population gathered in the parish of Loth?—Did I mention Loth and Culgower?

25,286. Yes?—Crackaig is the next hamlet.

25,287. Have they got any pasture do you know?—No, except that bit that was in dispute of late, between Mr Dudgeon and the crofters, and I suppose all the world has heard of the dispute That was between Mr Dudgeon and the crofters at Crackaig; it is almost more than it is worth. [*The Chairman.*—There was a litigation about it?—Yes.]

25,288. It went to Edinburgh, to the Court of Session?—Yes, it has been there.

25,289. And how much did it cost altogether?—It cost as much money as would cover the piece of ground.

25,290. And who has got it now?—They are in common again, as far as I understand; they live and let live; I think they came to that conclusion.

25,291. After spending all that money?—All that money; as much as would cover the piece of ground.

25,292. What land does Mr Dudgeon occupy besides this little patch?—He has got the whole of the parish almost.

25,293. And do you think that the people of the parish of Loth proper,—I am talking just now of Crackaig and these places,—are very much in need of some enlargement of their holdings?—Yes, very greatly.

25,294. You are quite certain of that?—Yes, I am certain, and although it should come to-morrow it would not be too soon.

25,295. Do you know if they have applied to the Crofters Commission for any extension of their holdings?—Yes, they did.

25,296. That you think also shows their desire?—Yes.

25,297. And those places that you think are fit for peopling, you or some one else would point them out to us, I have no doubt?—Yes, I will be most happy to point them out, that is to say whenever you call upon me.

25,298. *Mr Macaulay, Agent.*—This land near the Crask to which you have referred, has it ever been cultivated?—Yes.

25,299. Then, about Suisgill here, one of Mr Bruce's farms, is it not the fact that he took that farm when the crofters gave it up?—He did, and at the same time he was very anxious to get hold of it from the crofters.

25,300. So you have really no objection to Mr Bruce having taken that?—I have not.

25,301. Then, as to this piece of land that you referred to near Crackaig, what was the result of this

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action in the Court of Session?—The result was that they have to use it in common, both the tenant and the crofters.

25,302. Is it not the fact that the crofters were found not to have right to it?—So far as I could learn, they had the same right.

25,303. You don't know that that is the fact? [*The Chairman.*—What was the decision of the Court?]—The decision was as far as I am aware that they were to have it as they had it formerly, hand in hand. [*The Chairman.*—You can put in a copy of the judgment, Mr Macaulay.]

25,304. As to your holding, did you get an extension some time ago?—I cannot say I did, because it belonged to the house formerly.

25,305 But you as an individual did get an extension?—Yes, I as an individual did.

25,306. You have got this stock that you told us about?—Yes.

25,307. And you pay £3 of rent?—Yes.

25,308. Have you fulfilled all your obligations to the landlord?—I have not.

25,309. You are considerably in arrears of rent?—Some.

25,310. Considerably, are you not?—Yes.

25,311. Then, how do you propose to stock this new holding that you picture to yourself in the parish of Loth?—By some help, and in the course of time I could manage to get out of difficulties. The world is not to be the same always over a man; the best of men are in difficulties at times.

25,312. How do you propose to get this help, have you any suggestion to make?—I cannot see through it in the meantime, but I might see through it in the future. I have some prospects, but I am not to relate them in a public place like this, how to get over the difficulties.

25,313. In the meantime you are not in a position to take one of these holdings yourself?—I could; I could get the loan of money perhaps before very long although I have not it at present.

25,314. *Mr Sutherland.*—If you got a new holding under these conditions, would you expect to be so highly rented as at present?—No, I would not.

25,315. And you have no fear that you would fall into arrears of rent?—No.

25,316. Have you got in your mind at present that supposing such a holding were to be got, the rents would not be fixed by the landlord? Would you object to the rents being fixed by the landlord in this new holding?—I would.

25,317. The landlord fixes the rent you have at present?—Yes.

25,318. But you anticipate that in the new holding you would form an impartial tribunal like the Crofters Commission would fix the rent?—Yes.

25,319. And you think, therefore, you would not be likely to fall into arrear?—Yes.

ald clean.

DONALD MACLEAN, Factor for the Dunrobin Estates of the Duke of Sutherland (46)—*examined.*

25,320. *The Chairman.*—You are factor on the Dunrobin management?—Yes.

25,321. And have been factor since 1885?—Yes.

25,322. There is also a factor on the Scourie management and one on the Tongue management?—Yes.

25,323. Kindly read your statement.—The Duke of Sutherland's estates in the county of Sutherland extend to an area of 1,176,454 acres, and for convenience of management are divided into three districts, viz.—

Dunrobin with a rental of . .	£38,327
Tongue	17,000
Scourie	14,500
Total, . . .	£69,827

The Dunrobin district is under my charge, and it is with it only I have to deal in this statement. It comprises the eight parishes of Clyne, Creich, Dornoch, Golspie, Kildonan, Lairg, Loth, and Rogart, the whole area of these parishes being 583,818 acres, and exclusive of water, tidal water, foreshores, roads, and railway, 560,804 acres. Of this 415,000 acres may be taken as belonging to the Duke, exclusive of a large area of waste, lochs, &c., and this area classified and divided as follows:— Helmsdale, Sutherlandshire. Donald Maclean.

	Acres.	Acres.
1. Sheep Farms (33)		268,085
2. Arable Farms (53) . . .	7,513	
Outrun in connection with these	12,067	
		19,580
3. Crofters' Holdings—		
Arable	6,517	
Improvable and Individual Outrun	4,681	
Hill Grazings	31,437	
		42,635
4. Deer Forests and Cleared Ground . .		70,200
5. Woods and Plantations, exclusive of Natural Wood		11,000
6. Accommodation Land and Grazings, &c. .		3,500
		415,000

The district rental is classified as follows:—

	£	s.	d.
Sheep Farms . . .	7,239	2	6
Arable do.	7,116	10	2
Inns and Lands attached .	1,055	11	2
Houses, Gardens, &c. . .	1,643	16	7
Accommodation Land . .	441	19	0
Crofters and Cottars . .	3,572	2	7
Grazing Parks . . .	237	5	3
Water Rents . . .	41	8	3
Feu-duties and Ground Rents	984	3	2
Colliery and Works . .	472	11	0
Shootings	13,583	5	1
Salmon Fishings . . .	1,939	10	0
Total, .	£38,327	4	9

SHEEP FARMS.

Since 1882 the sheep farm rental, owing to depreciated value of wool and stock, and increased cost of wintering, has depreciated 37 per cent., and the arable farm rental has fallen 26 per cent. I submit a statement showing the classification of the agricultural rental [Appendix A, page 602], and the following is the classification of sheep farms, 33 in number:—

Between	25,000	and	30,000 Acres ...	1
„	20,000	„	25,000 „ ...	2
„	15,000	„	20,000 „ ...	2
„	10,000	„	15,000 „ ...	6
„	8,000	„	10,000 „ ...	3
„	6,000	„	8,000 „ ...	3
„	5,000	„	6,000 „ ...	1
„	3,000	„	5,000 „ ...	6
„	1,500	„	3,000 „ ...	3
Under 1,500 Acres			...	6
Total,			...	33

I also submit a statement showing the total area of each sheep farm, with estimated area of old arable land, &c., and other details. [Appendix B, page 602].

The list of sheep farms includes, with one exception, the *reclaimed farms* in the parishes of Lairg and Kildonan, which have been mostly put back to grass, being found unprofitable for cultivation.

I submit a plan showing all the sheep farms, deer forests, and cleared ground in the district. The sheep farms are edged green and coloured green; the deer forests are all coloured red, and the yellow shows ground belonging to other proprietors. The numbers on this plan correspond with those in Appendix B.

It will be seen by the statement as to area of the

Helmsdale, Sutherland-shire.

Donald Maclean.

sheep farms that the proportion of arable to hill land is exceedingly small. Diminish this area and you at once seriously injure the remainder of the grazings, and render immense tracts of land unlettable for either sheep or deer.

The quantity of land afforested for deer in the district is exceedingly small as compared with the whole area; and, as will be seen by a reference to the map submitted, with the exception of Dunrobin, the forests are all in the interior of the county, and consist of high-lying and exposed land, with but a very small area of old green or arable in it.

The forests are as follows:—

	Acres
(1) Dunrobin	13,300
Less Woods	2,000
	11,300
(2) Ben-Armine	18,450
(3) Ben-Hee	15,800
(4) Corriekinloch	10,800
	56,350
Cleared pieces—	
Part of Dalnessie	4,177
„ Shinness	5,200
„ Borrobol (formerly Ben-Armine)	3,411
„ Balnacoil (do).	1,062
	70,200 Acs.

The sheep farms numbered 13 and 33 on the submitted map, extending together to 9400 acres, have also been wholly or partially cleared by the tenants, who occupy both farm and shooting. Badenloch and Gearnsary (Nos. 2 and 4) are not fully stocked, the wedder ground on these being kept mostly clear of sheep. None of this cleared ground is adapted for small holdings, and for many years past could not have been profitably occupied as sheep grazings. The class of stock such as could be reared in these situations would only find a market at prices fatal to profitable occupation.

The following is the present rental or value of the forests and cleared places:—

Dunrobin,	£1000
Ben-Armine,	750
Ben-Hee,	125
Corriekinloch,	400
Part of Dalnessie,	50
„ Shiness,	60
„ Borrobol,	60
„ Balnacoil,	40
Total,	£2485

Dunrobin Forest has been considerably reduced in area of late years, and a proposal is under consideration just now for reducing it still further, with the view of extending grazings on the Dunrobin or east side.

There can be no better illustration of the absurdity of cultivation to any extent in high-lying and exposed situations than that afforded by the late Duke of Sutherland's reclamations. The details and extent of this work at Shiuness in the parish of Lairg and at or near Kinbrace in the parish of Kildonan are already pretty well known.

I submit a statement [Appendix C, page 602], showing the date of reclamation of the several farms, the names of the farms, the areas reclaimed, total expenditure on each farm, cost per acre, present rents, and rents prior to reclamation. The statement shows that in Lairg parish 1932 acres were reclaimed at a cost of £122,547 or an average of £67 per acre. The present rents of these farms are £948, 2s. 7d.; the old rents before the reclamation were £359, 15s. Of course, the present rents include not only the area of land that was reclaimed but also a considerable extent of hill grazing. Similarly in Kildonan parish the total area reclaimed was 1316 acres and the cost £57,918, or an average of £44, 0s. 3d. per acre. The present rents are £1041, 9s. 4d.; the rents prior to the reclamation were £1040, so that the increase of rent in Kildonan is £1, 9s. 4d. only, or practically *nil*.

Helmsdale, Sutherland-shire.

Donald Maclean.

25,324. *Mr Sutherland.*—May I ask if Suisgill is included in that comparison?—Yes, it is included.

25,325. But there was no money expended on Suisgill I understand?—None. In addition to that I may say that Kinbrace farm was taken on hand for the reclamations and there was a loss of £3000 on the working, no less than £1700 being a loss occasioned by a disastrous winter.

25,326. May I further ask if the average reduction of 37 per cent. that has been given all over the estate is also applied to that before the comparison is made? You have stated, I think, that there was a reduction of rent given in the grazing farms of 37 per cent. and on agricultural farms of 26 per cent. Have you made the deduction from this before making the comparison?—Yes, these are all the reduced rents.

Of the 3247 acres reclaimed, only about 700 are now cultivated, cultivation after years of test and trial being found unprofitable, notwithstanding the fact that the farms have been worked as mixed farms along with hill land as sheep grazing.

As will be seen from the statement there was expended on these reclamations the enormous sum of £184,454 exclusive of the great loss on farming the land while on hand, and the result both as regards the land itself and return for the money expended has proved a failure in every sense of the word. The experience has proved that without a very great change in climate, cultivation in such exposed districts as those where the reclamations were carried out, cannot be made profitable, however apportioned or highly farmed the land may be.

The farms on hand at Lairg were under the charge of an experienced manager of both arable and sheep farms, and every care and economy was exercised; and yet up to the time the last of them was let (1892), there was a loss on the working of no less than £22,292.

The result at Kildonan has been worse than at Lairg, and there most of the land has gone out of cultivation, and a large area has fallen back into a condition worse than its natural.

Since 1885 there has been taken off large farms and added to crofters' holdings in different parishes in the district 484 acres of arable land, of which 117 are kept in grass as park grazings, and 8318 acres of hill pasture. This was fenced for the crofters at a cost to the proprietor of £750. Most of this pasture was of the best of the grazing of the farms from which it was taken.

In addition to this the principle of enlargement of holdings has been carried out since 1883 by adding 32 crofts which fell into the proprietor's hands to the neighbouring holdings.

In August 1888, 1420 acres of pasture were offered off the Elderable Farm to the West Helmsdale crofters and those in the townships adjoining as an extension of their grazings, but it was declined by them. Copy of correspondence and conditions on which the grazing was offered can be submitted if desired.

25,326*a*. Just tell me what was the rent proposed to be asked?—The rent I think was £40, but at the same time we stated that if they thought that too high we were quite prepared to leave it for settlement by the Commission. The ground was relet to the farm tenant, but with a condition in the lease that he should relinquish it at a stipulated rent, if the Crofters Commission decided that it should be given to the crofters. I may state that the stipulated rent on which he agreed to relinquish it was £50 a year. A much larger area was asked for, and might have been granted, but the experience of Suisgill, which had been given up by mostly the same tenants, only a short time previous, did not warrant the granting of a larger area than it was thought the tenants were able to stock.

An application by the tenants for the whole of the Elderable Farm was made to the Crofters Commission in December 1888, but it has not yet been dealt with.

The Suisgill Farm, Kildonan, extending to 6000 acres,

was let to the Kildonan and Loth Grazing Association in 1883, on a nineteen years' lease, at a rent of £100 a year—just about *half* the value at the time, and of that paid by the adjoining sheep farmers. The grazing was granted exclusively for the cottars and crofters in the parishes of Kildonan and Loth, as will be seen by the lease and Articles of Association.

On the favourable terms granted the grazing should have proved of great advantage to the crofters, but want of capital to properly stock, differences of opinion as to working, and so on rendered it unprofitable, with the result that it was relinquished at Whitsunday 1888, the landlord remitting the last half-year's rent; and but for the fact of the adjoining sheep-farmer coming forward and assisting them by taking a portion of the grazing, it must have been given up sooner.

It was then let on a seven years' lease to Mr Bruce at the same rent, with a condition that he would provide grazing for crofters' stock for the first two years, by which time it was thought some extension of existing grazing would be made.

Here was a case of a large grazing granted exclusively for the benefit of the small tenants at about half rental value, with the management in their own hands, and full permission to stock with either cattle, sheep, or horses, proving a failure in less than five years.

We have several instances in this district of small mixed farms from £30 rent upwards, and some of these in outlying parts of the district. It would have been a pleasure to me could I have spoken of all the latter as successful examples of what could be done with small holdings in the internal parts of the county; but I am sorry to say that, notwithstanding industry, perseverance and economy on the part of the tenant, the fact that there was to begin with no borrowed capital, and that great assistance had been given by the landlord both in reduction of rent and otherwise, the tenants at the present moment are in a precarious position, to say the least. I mention no names. Names have been mentioned here to-day, but I would rather not particularly refer to them: I merely refer to the position generally in which these farmers stand.

We have some instances, too, of small holdings, £30 to £50 rent, under lease, where the tenants bound themselves to erect new buildings, the landlord undertaking to supply materials, and tenants having right to compensation at end of lease.

They have never been able to fulfil the condition, notwithstanding very low rent; and it simply means that if these tenants continue, the landlord must erect the buildings for them. A crofter with seven or eight acres of arable land and share of hill pasture in a good locality, where he can supplement the produce of the croft by wages from outside labour, is infinitely better off and more comfortable than such tenants.

Then, I have a statement here containing my own personal views, which I suppose I may read.

25,327–8. *The Chairman.*—Certainly.—A proper gradation of holdings is admitted and should exist on all estates, but the adaptability of the land and climate must rule this. Landlords, as individuals and owners, who wish to make the most of their land, will, as necessity arises, offer stronger inducements than now exist to tenants to remain on the land and for the investment of capital in it; and no doubt an increase of small farms or holdings may be one inducement, and if a real demand for such arises, and men with sufficient capital are ready to take them, the *supply* will arise; but it would be an extremely risky experiment to chop up large pastoral farms and give State assistance in localities not adapted for small holdings either by soil or climate. Small holdings in situations where there is a ready outlet for the smaller industries or products, dairy produce, poultry, &c., may pay, and the more of such holdings the better for the country; but in situations where there is no such market, and the produce is limited almost exclusively to sheep and cattle, as it is in the greater part of Sutherland, they would not pay at such prices as have been prevailing for stock, and more especially if a tenant had, over and above his rent, to meet interest on borrowed capital. Sheep farmers during recent years have come far short of making ends meet, and, through foreign competetion, no class of farmers have more cause to look forward with anxiety than the occupiers of hill grazings whether large or small. The future of British agriculture is more than ever dependent on the numbers and quality of its live stock. Anyone acquainted with the successful conditions of sheep and cattle farming knows the importance of rearing only the highest quality of stock if anything like a remunerative price is to be obtained in the market. Experience has taught us that with regard to both cattle and sheep, the small tenants generally have not been able to produce a quality sufficiently attractive to buyers for some years now at anything like a paying price. Many unfortunately, are perfectly unmarketable, and, with regard to cattle especially, the class which would be reared in the straths and on the hills adjoining would not in the present state of stock markets find customers. Cheap transit of stock of the highest quality from foreign countries precludes the possibility of small tenants, who have to pay rent and interest on borrowed capital, besides maintaining their families in anything like comfort, from making headway against it.

Helmsdale, Sutherlandshire.

Donald Maclean.

In conclusion, I have the authority of the Duke of Sutherland to say that he is favourable to the formation of more small farms in this district, in localities well adapted for them, and where there is every chance of making a living; and as certain lands fall out of lease, they will be broken up and offered to crofting tenants who are known to be industrious and persevering, and who are in a position to occupy larger holdings.

(Signed) Donald Maclean.

Population.

Just one other statement in regard to population, as this matter has been referred to. I submit a statement showing the population of the county since 1801, from which it will be seen that between that year and 1891 there is a decrease on the ninety years of 1240 while there is a decrease on the ten years 1881 to 1891 of 1449. In the eight parishes in this district the decrease for the ten years to 1891 was 898. Natural causes account for this. The advance of education has much to do with it, for I find unmistakably that as the young people become more educated, the greater is the tendency to move to spheres which afford better opportunities in life than can possibly be found in rural districts. I may state that I have had practical experience of that within the last two or three months, when I offered very nice sized holdings to crofters' sons, not in this parish but in parishes very little removed, and they have been declined, notwithstanding strong inducements by young men who might have done well in these holdings. They preferred to go south and make their way in other parts of the world. Such reductions of rural population are in accordance with the mechanical and other changes and developments which have characterised the life of many years, and they are not by any means as serious a matter as the rapid growth of towns. I am not sanguine enough to imagine that any compulsory formation of small holdings will bring about a revolution in the conditions affecting agriculture in this country. Legislate as you like, you will not arrest the reduction of the rural population to any extent.

Helmsdale, Sutherlandshire.

Donald Maclean.

Appendix A.

Classification of the Agricultural Rental of farms in the Dunrobin Management.

Rent.	Parish of								Total.
	Clyne.	Creich.	Dornoch.	Golspie.	Kildonan.	Lairg.	Loth.	Rogart.	
£500 and upwards	1	...	...	2	1	1	2	...	7
£400 to £500 . .	2	...	2	...	1	1	...	1	7
£300 to £400 . .	...	...	...	1	2	...	...	...	3
£200 to £300 . .	...	1	1	1	1	...	2	...	6
£150 to £200 . .	1	1	5	...	...	...	1	1	9
£100 to £150 . .	...	...	2	1	2	2	...	...	7
£75 to £100 . . .	...	1	1	3	2	...	...	1	8
£50 to £75 . . .	...	2	4	...	3	...	...	2	11
£40 to £50 . . .	3	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	5
£30 to £40 . . .	1	1	2	...	1	1	1	...	7
£20 to £30 . . .	...	...	2	1	...	3	...	5	11
£10 to £20 . . .	1	...	19	2	...	7	...	9	38
Under £10 . . .	194	14	157	43	176	88	47	193	912
Total, . . .	203	21	196	54	189	103	53	212	1031

Appendix B.

Sutherland Estates—Dunrobin Management.—Statement showing total area of each sheep farm, estimated area of old arable land, exclusive of naturally green ground, and area now or lately under cultivation.

No. on Plan.	Name of Farm.	Total Area.	Old Arable Land.	Now or recently cultivated.	Remarks.
		Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	
1	Garvault, .	9,000	21	...	
2	Badanloch, .	18,000		153	Not now cultivated.
3	Namoine, .	1,800		...	
4	Gearnsary and Achnamoine,	10,200		...	
5	Harvieston, .	1,200		203	35 acres now cultivated.
6	Claggan, . .	875	488	55	
7	Blarmhor, .	1,450		93	
8	Lochside, .	4,900		323	None cultivated.
9	Achintoul, .	4,500		415	52 acres only in rotation.
10	Burnfoot, .	1,000		31	
11	Kinbrace, .	4,500		68	About 30 acres cultivated
12	Suisgill, . .	6,000		...	
13	Altandoun, .	5,800	100	...	
14	Borroble, . .	13,500		...	
15	Torrish, . .	11,500	110	45	
16	Kilbournan, .	17,700	130	...	
17	Naviedale, .	8,200	100	78	
18	Eldrable, . .	13,500	120	...	
19	Glen Loth, .				
20	Gordonbush, .	24,300	200	70	
21	Sciberscross, .	27,300	300	...	
22	Morvich, . .	3,600	50	...	Arable part under cultivation given in arable farms, 213 acres.
23	Torboll, . .	8,500	54	114	
24	Cambusavie, .	2,550	20	...	Arable part under cultivation given in arable farms, 118 acres.
25	Morness, . .	750	...	30	
26	Blarich, . .	13,300	300	33	
27	Grumby, . .	1,660	15	...	
28	Dalnessie, .	6,400	10	...	
29	Dalchork, .	23,600	105	115	Reclaimed land; about 80 cultivated.
30	Shinness, &c., .	12,500	70	1421	All reclaimed land except 83 acres.
31	Achinduich, .	4,750	55	...	
32	Invershin, .	1,450	...	50	Recently ploughed out by tenant and put under crop.
33	Duchally, .	3,600	5	...	
		268,085	2253	3297	
				2764	Of which reclaimed by the late Duke at enormous expense from 1872 to 1882.
				533	

25,329. For my own part, Mr Maclean, I have some questions to put, but before putting them I should like to have an opportunity of considering the various statements that you have put in, and if you will allow me I would defer putting questions to you till we have the opportunity of doing so at another sitting within the district over which you are factor.—I am quite willing to offer the Commissioners every facility to farther their inquiry, and if they wish me to attend at another sitting, I am quite prepared to do so.

25,330. *Mr Sutherland.*—I am very much in the same position as you are yourself, Mr Chairman. I would like, however, to ask the witness one question, and any other questions will follow after I have seen

Appendix C.

Lairg and Kildonan Reclamations.—Statement as to cost and rent of Farms.

Details of Kildonan Holdings.	Reclaimed Area.	Rents.	Remarks.	Date of Reclamation.	Farms, &c.	Acres Arable.	Expenditure. Total.	Expenditure. Per Acre.	Present Rents, 1893.	Old Rents before Reclamations.	Remarks.
	Acres.	£ s. d.					£	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	
Achintoul farm, .	393¼	130 0 0	Hill pasture in addition.	1873–5	Colaboll, . .	313	22,953	73 6 7	147 6 6	360 15 0	Includes hill pasture.
Badanloch ,, .	153¼	300 0 0		1874–6	Achnanerain, .	330	20,337	61 12 6	696 0 0		
Lochside, &c. farm,	323⅔	140 0 0		1875–7	Achadhaphris, .	475	32,314	68 0 7			
Blarmhor ,, .	98	61 6 6		1875–7	Lubvree, . .	405	31,947	78 17 7			
Burnfoot ,, .	33	37 12 10		1876–8	West Shiness, .	217	9,070	41 16 0	60 0 0		
Claggan ,, .	103	62 0 0		...	Flag grazings, .	...	...	...	43 12 6		Arable area of these crofts now increased to 137 acres by taking off Achadhaphris farm. *Increase of rent*, 9s. 7½d. per cent. on outlay; or including loss on farming, 8s. 1½d. per cent.
Gushetneuk croftland reclaimed by tenant,	...	6 10 0		1876–7	Achnanerain Lots (3),	69	3,918	56 15 7	61 3 7		
Harvieston farm, .	157¼	91 15 0		1875–7	Achadhaphris Lots (6),	20	2,008	100 8 0			
Kinbrace, . .	38	92 5 0	All hill pasture.								
Suisgill, . .	...	100 0 0									
Kirkcroft, . .	...	9 0 0									
Kinbrace croft, .	...	8 8 0									
Badanloch crofts, .	...	2 12 0									
Shooting lodge accommodation land, .	16½	...		1873–7	Dalchork, . .	103	3,989	38 14 6	948 2 7	359 15 0	*Increase of rent* £1 9s. 4d. only! Practically nothing.
				1877–82	Kildonan (as under), .	1316	57,918	44 0 3	1041 9 4	1040 0 0	
Total, . .	1316	1041 9 4			Total, . .	3248	184,454	56 15 10	1989 11 11	1399 15 0	

Helmsdale, Sutherlandshire.

Donald Maclean.

more at leisure the statements he has been kind enough to submit to us. With regard to small holdings and the opportunity for increased holdings not having been taken advantage of, may I ask if there has been an attempt made to put the Small Holdings Act into operation in this county?—An application was made by the County Council to the Duke, but no specific lands were applied for.

25,331. What was the result of the application?—The result was that there was no land available at the time; that was the Duke's reply.

25,332. That was the practical result?—That was the practical result at the time; the leases were running, and there was no land available.

25,333. When was that?—In the commencement of this year; I think in April or May.

25,334. And, with regard to the general statement you made, is there a prospect of more land being available within a reasonable time?—There is.

25,335. That alone was the ground of the declinature of the Duke?—That alone.

25,336. I have a number of other questions, but as you have kindly expressed your willingness to meet us again, I shall reserve them till that occasion.

25,337. *The Chairman.*—We will consider the whole of these documents carefully, and let you know as to your affording us another opportunity for putting questions to you upon them, before we leave your district.*

[ADJOURNED.]

TWENTY-FIFTH SITTING.

GOLSPIE, September 19, 1893.

Present:—

DAVID BRAND, Esq., Advocate, Sheriff of Ayr, and Chairman of the Crofters Commission, *Chairman.*
ANGUS SUTHERLAND, Esq., M.P.
JAMES NOEL MULLER FORSYTH, Esq.
GEORGE GORDON, Esq.
WILLIAM MACKENZIE, Esq., *Secretary.*

Golspie.

George Grant Fraser.

GEORGE GRANT FRASER, Farmer, Achvaich, Dornoch (33)—*examined.*

25,338. *The Chairman.*—Are you a crofter at Achvaich?—No, I am a joint-farmer with my father.

25,339. What rent do you pay?—£48.

25,340. Do you hold under a lease for a term of years?—Yes.

25,341. Which is still running?—Yes.

25,342 Is it a nineteen years' lease?—No, it is a fifteen years' lease.

25,343. Have you been appointed as a delegate by the crofters at Dornoch to appear before us?—Yes.

25,344 Were you appointed at a public meeting?—Yes, along with others.

25,345. Along with Macleay, Clashmore, and Grant, Evelix?—Yes.

23,346. Have you a written statement?—Yes.

25,347. Read it please.—At a public meeting of crofters, labourers, and others held in the Birichen Schoolhouse in the month of March 1893, we, Thomas Grant, Evelix, and George Grant Fraser, Achvaich, whose signatures are appended hereto, were unanimously appointed to prepare and submit to the Royal Commission (Highlands and Islands, 1892), a statement showing what lands in the parish of Dornoch not already in the occupation of crofters or small tenants could be made into crofter holdings.

According to the Ordnance Survey Maps, this parish extends to about 33,931 acres. It is owned by two estates—the Sutherland and Skibo estates. A considerable portion of the parish, as will be seen from a glance at the maps, is covered with woods. The acreage of these as entered in the Valuation Roll is 5270. Of that extent the Sutherland estate claims 4560 acres and the Skibo estate 710. The remainder of the parish is occupied by large farmers and crofters. It is needless to remind your honours that the fat of the land is in the hands of the big farmers. From the last Valuation Roll we find there are, excluding the municipal burgh of Dornoch and village of Embo, 186 crofters paying a rent of £855 and 20 cottars paying a rent of £30—altogether 206 crofters and cottars paying a rent of £885. There are, besides, the following 20 large farms:—Torboll, valued at £280; Cambusavie, £158; Skelbo, £380; Embo, £360; Coul, £168; Trentham, £60; Achinchanter, £63; Pitgrundy, £146; Proncynain, £150; Proncy, £184; Milton of Evelix, £80; Lower Evelix, £112; Davochfin, £86; Cyderhall, £180; Rosebank and Dalrae, £86; Ardallie, £65; Cuthill, £190; Skibo, including grass parks, £260; Achormlarie, £72; Achley, £60; Overskibo, £160—twenty farms paying a rent of £3240, and 206 crofters and cottars paying a rent of £885. All these farms bear traces of evictions. The 206 crofters and cottars are nearly all descendants of those who were evicted from the above-mentioned farms after 1812, and had to settle or squat on what was formerly their common pasture. Shortly after this the greater part of what remained of their common pasture was appropriated and planted. Not only that, but several of the crofters were a second time removed and their improved patches planted. These again had to settle down on what remained of the pasture. Hence the reason for the present congested state of the crofters. All these woods and plantations are now fenced in for the use of game. We look upon this as a clear case of afforestment. His Grace the late Duke of Sutherland was frequently petitioned to grant the use of these woods for pasture, but as frequently declined, because, he alleged, the crofters' cattle when grazing would destroy the trees. These trees were full grown years ago. The present Duke's attention was drawn to these woods when on his election tour in 1885. He then promised to remedy matters when he would get 'into 'power.' This summer a petition was sent him praying him to grant the woods for pasture, but evidently his promises were forgotten, as his reply ran as follows:—

'Dunrobin Castle,
July 22nd, 1893.

'MR ANGUS MUNRO,—In reply to the petition dated 'June 1st, and signed by yourself and fifteen other 'crofters asking for the grazing of the Harriet Planta-'tion, I am desired by the Duke of Sutherland to say 'that he has given it his very careful consideration, 'and he regrets very much that for various reasons 'connected with the estate management he cannot 'comply with the request.—Yours faithfully,
HENRY WRIGHT.'

A drive through the parish will at once show your honours where the dividing line between good and bad land comes in. Here you will find the order of things inverted. All the big farms lie along the coast, and the crofters are huddled on the barren hillsides and peat-bogs further inward.

We shall now direct your honours' attention to the lands which we think come within the scope of your remit. Let us begin with the farm of Achormlarie, situated on Skibo estate at the head of the valley through which the Evelix flows. It is now a sheep-farm, valued at £72 (about 5d. per acre), and rented by a non-resident pluralist tenant, Mr Hugh Ross, Inverbrora. The arable land more recently under cultivation and known as the Newtown extends to about 27 acres. This land was last cultivated about fourteen

* For further examination, see page 637.

Golspie.
George Grant Fraser.

years ago. Excellent crops were grown here. The old town, lying to the west, has been much longer lying waste. It extends to about 70 acres, has a southerly exposure, and is excellently fitted for the formation of new holdings. A considerable part of good hill pasture adjoins these places. They are on the Skibo estates.

We shall next direct your honours' attention to *Strath-Carnach*. Along this strath we find several townships formerly occupied by man but now devoted to sheep and game. The following are the townships:—Brae, Garskelly, Achtaduach, Dalnameine, Torfalloch, Esvreck, Achinael, Lednacloiche, Allt-tigh-Neill, and a part of the farm of Torboll. All the aforementioned townships are on the Torboll and Cambusavie farms, and were formerly occupied by a peaceful and prosperous tenantry. From inquiries of the older inhabitants—some of them being those evicted—we learn that there were no fewer than 45 families removed from these townships. The first evictions, as far as we can learn, took place in 1809. Some of these settled in Laid-na-Cloich. After years of toil cultivating the soil, and struggling with a policy of oppression, they were again evicted from there in 1833, and their land added to the farm of Cambusavie, then occupied by Dr Ross, afterwards of Torboll. When the 93rd Regiment was being raised, a call was made on the householders of Strath-Carnach to supply each a son to that Regiment. This call was responded to on the understanding that it would protect them from eviction. How far the promises made to the relatives of those who, relying on these promises, had gone forth with their lives in their hands to fight their country's battles, had been observed, fills a well known page of history. Surrounding these several townships mentioned are several hundred acres of very good hill pasture which would add considerably to the value of the arable holdings. We shall now direct your honours to the arable farms on the south side of the parish. Although these pass under the name of arable farms they are not all cultivated. In consequence of this, we submit they come within the remit made to your honours. On the Skibo farm there is a series of eleven grass parks. These parks extend in the aggregate to about 150 acres or thereby. They are green and uncultivated. They are annually exposed to auction and rented by large farmers and dealers as grazing parks. Besides this, some of them are used as breeding grounds for hundreds of pheasants. There are also lying near these parks the farms of Rosebank, Dalvrae and Ardallie. They are occupied by non-resident pluralist farmers. On the farm of Sidera, or Cyderhall, there are also the old arable townships of Dalbhabbie and Tighcliobe with pasture adjoining. The foregoing farms we consider, would be cultivated to much greater profit if they were in the hands of smaller tenants. We consider we have in the foregoing statement shown to your honours that there is a considerable number of acres of land in this parish presently in the hands of pluralist and sheep farmers which could be cultivated to profit by a class of smaller tenants. The question of the size of holdings now comes in. A hard and fast rule cannot be laid down. The situation of the locality may interfere with the size of the holding. The cultivated land on an exclusively arable holding would not be the same as that on a holding partly arable and partly pastoral. Before a crofter would have any degree of comfort he would require to have two ponies, three cows and their followers. If his holding were exclusively arable, he would, to bring this stock through, require from 16 to 31 acres of fairly good soil. One acre of this we would allow for house, steading, garden and corn-yard. The remaining acres would be for crop; and, on account of the want of outrun, would require to be worked on the six-shift course. Give the same crofter or farmer a holding in any of the straths or glens, with pasture to graze from thirty to forty sheep, and he can do with about from 13 to 26 acres of fairly good soil, and bring through the aforementioned stock.

Stocking and Building. The question now arises, and, we observe, is frequently put by your honours, whether there is a desire on the part of crofters or cottars to take up new holdings or a likelihood of them being able to build houses and purchase stock in the event of grazings or other suitable land being made available for holdings. There is a very strong desire on the part of crofters, cottars and ploughmen to take up new holdings if made available. Some ten years ago a petition was presented to His Grace the late Duke of Sutherland asking land for new crofts. A reply came in due course. It pointed out that the only available land that the estate had was some barren moorland which would require about four acres to feed a snipe. When the County Councils were empowered to administer the Small Holdings and Allotments Acts, hundreds of applications flowed in to the Council from the county, this parish included. As yet not one acre has been taken up, and to all appearance cannot until such time as these Acts are made workable.

Golspie.
George Gr Fraser.

Now as to the likelihood of crofters or cottars being able to build houses and purchase stock. If we lived in anything like a world of fairplay, such a question would not be necessary. When the forbears of the present crofters and cottars were evicted from the straths, glens and large farms, did they get compensation for the improvements they did? If not, that lies still an unpaid debt, and the best way the estate can pay it off is by building and reclaiming the new holdings. If the estate does not see its way clear to pay its legal debts or to make reparation for the sins of its predecessors, we ask, is it necessary to put the question at all? If so, a glance at any of the crofters' holdings should be sufficient answer. Look at him! He or his forefathers were evicted from a comfortable home and cast to the four winds of heaven. What did he receive when cast out? Nothing—probably everything he had burnt to the ground. Follow him! He sits down on a barren hillside with neither house nor perhaps one inch of green soil. He builds a house and sets to reclaim and trench land. A neighbour comes and does the same. Look at that hillside then and now. All that change was brought about by the crofter who not only built the houses, reclaimed and stocked the land without any aid from the proprietor, but also paid rent. Look at the man who appropriated the land the crofter was evicted from. He got that land improved, without paying anything for it. Not only that, but the estate built houses and erected fences for him. While the crofter has to do all this unaided he is charged a rent from 25 to 100 per cent. above the man who gets everything done for him. Seeing that the crofter was able to do this when threats and fears were hanging about him like millstones, is there any reason to doubt but he can accomplish the same, or even more, when he can breathe the air of freedom, has the benefit of fixity of tenure and a probability of a fair rent?

Supposing in some instances a loan were required, would it not be a much more Christian act on the part of any Government to use the money in helping to repeople the straths and glens in the Highlands rather than transport the Highlanders to the wilds of America? The giving of a loan for this purpose would be a perfectly safe investment. Sufficient security would be found in the land, buildings and other assets of the occupiers, and the investment would, we are sure, be the best of the kind for the country which any Government ever made.

This leads us to say a few words on the question of rent. What is a fair rent for land is, we think, a question easily answered. In fixing a rent for any piece of land, the first thing we consider should be done is to ascertain what is known as the prairie value of the land, if it has been improved, and at whose expense this was done. If the improvements, reclamations or buildings have been done by the crofter or farmer or his predecessors in the same family, the prairie value, we hold, is still the fair rent of that land. The improvements, reclamations and buildings we consider represent the occupier's capital sunk in the soil, and as such, the proprietor or landlord has not, or should not, have any legal or moral claim to it. On the other hand, if the improvements, reclamations or buildings were done by the proprietor or his predecessor

the fair rent we consider should be the prairie value *plus* a reasonable interest on the money expended on the improvements.

The foregoing statement we respectively submit to your honours' consideration with the consent and approval of the crofters and others in the parish of Dornoch.

(Signed) THOMAS GRANT,
" GEO. G. FRASER.

25,348. You mentioned the matter of congestion. Is that due mainly to previous removals by the landlord, or partly due to that and partly to sub-division by the tenants themselves?—I am not aware that there was any sub-division by the tenants.

25,349. Your view and the view of those you represent is that it was due to previous removals, sending the people down towards the shore?—Yes.

25,350. A good deal of the information you have given us is of a date prior to the recollection of the present generation. Now, may I just ask you how you gathered that information?—We got this information from the older people of the parish.

25,351. Some of them very old?—Yes.

25,352. Old enough to remember the removals?—Yes.

25,353. Did you act through a committee?—Through a committee who gathered the information.

25,354. Appointed at that meeting?—Yes.

25,355. You mentioned woods at Dornoch. For what in your judgment are these woods adapted under the present remit?—The people are of opinion that it would be no harm to the woods if they were given to the people for a small sum as pasture for their cattle and sheep.

25,356. Woodland grazing?—Yes.

25,357. But may I take it that you do not propose to cut down the wood?—No, there is no proposal to cut down the wood.

25,358. The grazing in the wood would be very suitable for an extension of crofters' grazings?—Yes, and the crofters are very anxious to obtain it.

25,359. You mention the farm of Achormlarie as containing land suitable for the purposes of this remit. You spoke of the rent as £72; what is the extent of the farm?—I am not prepared to say at present what the extent is, but there will be 400 or 500 sheep on it.

25,360. And is there arable land suitable for a farm of that size?—Yes. It would be divided into two or three very nice arable farms, with a less number of sheep for each, and some cattle and horses.

25,361. Do you mean with or without taking the arable?—Oh, with the arable. The arable is not cultivated; it is lying waste.

25,362. Is it in permanent grass?—Yes.

25,363. How much of the land is under rotation?—There is no land under rotation except a small bit by the shepherd,—perhaps two acres or so.

25,364. It is all being used as a grazing subject by a non-resident farmer who lives at Inverbrora?—Yes.

25,365. Is there a dwelling-house and steading upon it?—Yes.

25,366. And does anyone live there?—The shepherd.

25,367. Has it been occupied of late years by the tenant?—Yes.

25,368. How long is it since it was occupied?—About fourteen or fifteen years ago.

25,369. But not since then?—No.

25,370. Is any of the land in that farm formed out of small holdings?—Yes, it was small holdings at one time, perhaps eighty or one hundred years ago. There are none who remember the tenants there, but the marks show that they were there.

25,371. Then the farm consists to a considerable extent of these holdings consolidated into a farm?—Yes.

25,372. You mentioned the district of Strathcarnoch. In that quarter there is a large number of old townships?—Yes.

25,373. The names of which you gave us, and these townships are now to be found in the farms of Torrobol and Cambusavie?—Yes.

25,374. Is there, in your opinion and in the opinion of those you represent, a considerable tract of ground there suitable for the purpose you have in view?—Yes.

25,375. For what precise purpose is it,—for new settlements or for extension of grazing?—For new settlements they would be more useful, as they have sheep pasture and cattle pasture, and arable besides.

25,376. Are there considerable tracts of old arable land in that quarter?—Yes.

25,377. And is it your opinion that that land might be occupied by self-sustaining holdings which could be cultivated to a profit?—Yes.

25,378. Now, on the Skibo estate you mentioned some farms which you described as arable farms. Do you mean by that farms under rotation, or consisting of old arable land?—They are under rotation, but the remark was made that they were held by pluralist farmers.

25,379. These are Rosebank, Dalvrae, and Ardallie?—Yes.

25,380. Is there land in these farms that we might look at with advantage?—Yes.

25,381. Is that land under crop?—Yes.

25,382. Or is it land under grazing?—It is under crop.

25,383. The farmer there is non-resident?—Non-resident.

25,384. Where does he live?—There are two farmers, one has Ardallie, and he lives at Evelix.

25,385. And the other?—The other has Dalvrae and Rosebank, and he lives at Cyderhall.

25,386. What is his name?—Maclennan, Cyderhall.

25,387. And the name of the tenant who has Ardallie?—Grant, Evelix.

25,388. Who has a farm on Evelix besides?—Yes.

25,389. How many farms have these tenants altogether?—That is all. Maclennan has three and Grant has two.

25,390. Are there the remains, the visible remains, of old townships on Cyderhall farm?—Yes, there are two named in the report,—two small places with about 57 acres between them, that would be very suitable.

25,391. All these lands you have mentioned are at no great elevation above the sea?—Oh, no, they are not very high.

25,392. They are low-lying lands?—Yes.

25,393. And what is the general character of the soil?—It is fairly good land.

25,394. What kind of land,—clay, or sand, or moss?—Light loam land.

25,395. Would it, in your opinion, grow the crops that are usually raised in this quarter?—Yes.

25,396. To a profit?—Yes.

25,397. You dealt with the subject of the cost of new holdings. Suppose no assistance to be obtained from the landlord, would the crofters in this vicinity desiring new holdings be able to proceed with them without assistance?—Some of them would.

25,398. Many of them?—I am not aware.

25,399. Most of them?—Most of them are inclined in the way of Government assistance.

25,400. But am I right in thinking that as many as possible would proceed without such assistance?—Yes.

25,401. What assistance have they in their minds?—The only assistance they have in their minds is Government assistance.

25,402. But for what particular purpose,—for building, or what?—For building I suppose; most of them would, I think, be able to stock if the buildings were erected.

25,403. They would like assistance for building dwelling-houses and steadings?—Yes.

25,404. And would repay the loan in the course of years?—Yes.

Golspie.

George Grant Fraser.

25,405. They have no desire to have the money gifted?—No.

25,406. Is the system of cultivating land by rotation pursued here, even by small holders?—Oh, yes, it is by rotation.

25,407. Most of the crofters cultivate their crofts by rotation?—Yes, on a five-course shift.

25,408. And is it quite understood now in this quarter that that is the best way of carrying on even a small holding?—Yes, where they have any pasture or outrun; but they consider where they have no outrun that the six-course shift would be better,—it would strengthen the land more, and would give them more room for pasturing their stock.

25,409. But any case of not following a rotation is exceptional?—Yes.

25,410. *Mr Sutherland.*—You said that there were 3913 acres in the parish of Dornoch, and that in that area there were 20 farms and 206 crofters?—Yes.

25,411. Could you give us any idea of the relative amount of land held by both classes? Do the 206 families occupy the greater part of the parish?—I don't think they do.

25,412. Do the 20 farmers then occupy it?—Yes.

25,413. Do they occupy twice as much land as the 206 families?—I would be inclined to think so, but I have not got the figures.

25,414. But from your knowledge of the parish I wish you to give us an approximate idea. You think, do you, that the 20 farmers have got more land in their possession than the 206?—Oh, yes, and the very best of the land.

25,415. Then, those places that you referred us to for our observation of the land are on the two farms of Torrobol and Cambusavie?—Yes.

25,416. Are these lands, in your opinion, well adapted for the purposes of our inquiry?—Yes, we think so.

25,417. And you think the desire exists on the part of the people to get that land?—Yes.

25,418. I have no doubt you have very good means of knowing of the existence of that desire?—Yes.

25,419. Are you in a favourable position to know their minds?—Oh, yes.

25,420. You are a member of the County Council, are you not?—Yes.

25,421. And had you yourself to deal directly with the Small Holdings Act?—Yes.

25,422. Were you a member of the Council's committee with regard to that Act?—Yes.

25,423. You were a member of the committee appointed to report to the County Council as to the existence of a desire to get land?—Yes.

25,424. And did you report to the Council that you found such a desire?—Yes, we had petitions.

25,425. Petitions from various parts of your constituences?—Yes.

25,426. And did you report to the Council?—Yes.

25,427. And did the Council then proceed in terms of the Act to apply to the landlord?—Yes, the committee proceeded to apply to the landlord.

25,428. Had you any reply?—Yes.

25,429. What was the tenor of that reply?—That there was no land available, except some parks at the Embo farm, which the Council considered too high.

25,430. Why were they considered too high?—Too highly rented.

25,431. Do you remember what the rent was that was asked?—£1 per acre, and to keep up the fences, and several other conditions.

25,432. Did the Council consider they would not be justified in taking land on these conditions?—No.

25,433. You referred, I think, in your statement to the desire to make the Small Holdings Act workable. May I ask you what you exactly meant by that? Did you find the Act unworkable?—Yes.

25,434. Both the Small Holdings and the Allotments Acts?—Yes.

25,435. In what respect did they fail?—There was no way of compelling the landlords where they were unwilling to give the holdings; and there was no way of fixing rents by arbitration. The Council thought the rents ought to be fixed by arbitration rather than that the landlord should have the sole power to give or retain the land and to fix the rent at his own figure.

25,436. So far, then, as the County Council are concerned, they were in no better position to deal with the land than a single tenant would be?—No.

25,437. And the landlord might dictate his own terms?—Exactly.

25,438. And that is practically what is done in this case?—Yes.

25,439. Then, with regard to the advancing of money for the making of new holdings. You referred to the historical fact that when the people were deprived of the land,—put off the good land on to the worse land,—they got no help to erect houses?—No.

25,440. And yet they succeeded?—Yes.

25,441. And they reclaimed land for which they are now paying rent?—Yes.

25,442. And the rent has been increased?—Yes.

25,443. I think you stated that as an argument,—that if they were put back again upon that better land there would be still less danger that they would not get on?—Yes.

25,444. That is the view you take of it?—That is the view the people themselves take of it.

25,445. Did you yourself ever hear any argument used against that argument?—Yes.

25,446. You have heard it attempted?—Oh, yes, by several people who did not know anything about it.

25,447. But this is the opinion of people who had to deal with it practically?—Yes.

25,448. And who came through it all themselves?—Yes.

25,449. You referred to the time when those people were cleared off the land as an argument in favour of their succeeding now if they got the land?—Yes.

25,450. Do you know, in a general way, what the result was so far as the rent was concerned to the men who came after the evicted crofters?—The rents were always raised on the improvements of their predecessors.

25,451. Sheep farming for a while paid?—Yes, but they are declining now.

25,452. Why are they declining now, do you think?—The land is deteriorating, owing to want of cultivation.

25,453. Are you aware of the fact that the pasture lands of Sutherland support fewer sheep per acre now than they did thirty years ago?—Yes, I am aware of that.

25,454. Do you know that the old rule on the Sutherland estate was six acres of hill and dale for one stock sheep?—Probably I might have heard that.

25,455. You have a knowledge of sheep?—Yes.

25,456. How many acres does it take now to maintain a stock sheep?—I suppose more than that.

25,457. Did you hear that it took ten?—I did not hear that.

25,458. You may take it from me as a fact,—we had it stated in evidence that it took ten acres on the average, hill and dale, to support a stock sheep. You, as I gather, attribute that to the deterioration of the pasture through lack of cultivation?—Yes.

25,459. And is there another element, in your opinion, that the grazing of sheep on land does not improve it, while the grazing of cattle does?—Yes.

25,460. And in the small holdings which you and the people of Dornoch have in your minds would you have a larger proportion of cattle grazing in the land than the present possessors have?—Yes.

25,461. With regard to the land that the crofters have got in the parish of Dornoch,—take about Rearquhar for example,—what is the character of that land?—Very poor.

25,462. Do you know any poorer in the county of Sutherland occupied by people?—No.

25,463. What rent are they paying for it per acre?—I am not exactly sure, but some of them are paying pretty high rents.

25,464. You have no idea of the rent they pay?—No.

25,465. Are you aware that they pay 7s. 6d. an acre for it?—I believe they do, and more in some cases.

25,466. And did they reclaim all the land themselves?—Yes.

25,467. Without any assistance?—No assistance whatever, unless they might have got some Government money for making some drains recently.

25,468. Government money for making drains?—Yes, recently.

25,469. Through what channel?—Through the estate.

25,470. You mean advances to the landlords?—Yes, it was called Government money; they were obtaining it from the ground officers, but they were paying interest on this money.

25,471. They received money advanced by Government for the improvement of land, and that money came to them through the estate, is that so?—Yes.

25,472. Certain moneys were expended in making drains, and interest was charged upon it by the proprietor?—Yes.

25,473. What interest was it?—I think it was five per cent.

25,474. And is it to terminate in a number of years?—I am not aware that it is; I think it continues.

25,475. Are you aware that the loans to the landlords themselves cease after a certain number of years?—No, I am not aware of that.

25,476. But you are aware that the interest is continued to be exacted from the tenant?—Yes.

25,477. You never heard any word that they were to cease?—No.

25,478. Now then, could those farms that you have mentioned, Torrobol and Cambusavie, be utilised in any other way than you suggested, that is for affording room for new settlements? Could they be used for the purpose of affording an extension of the grazing to the people at the top of Dornoch?—Yes.

25,479. Are they contiguous to their present holdings?—Yes, to some of them.

25,480. What crofters in the parish of Dornoch are not contiguous to them?—Those that are contiguous to them are a few in Little Torrobol.

25,481. That is down by the side of the Mound?—Yes.

25,482. Could they not be extended into the grazing of Torrobol?—Oh, yes, those that are contiguous, and the others in Balvraid moor.

25,483. And who are those who are not contiguous to it?—Rearquhar.

25,484. What intervenes between Birichen and Rearquhar?—Plantation.

25,485. But if the plantation was given for grazing, would they not be made contiguous to them then?—Yes.

25,486. You were asked a question with regard to the sub-division of holdings by crofters; do you ever know of any such in this county?—No, I am not aware of any.

25,487. Who attended to the sub-division business here? If there were no sub-divisions of holdings by the people, how do the holdings come to be so small?—The landlord was evicting the people and putting them into the common pasture that the former tenants had, and they were reclaiming there and making holdings, so that they have been getting congested.

25,488. So it was the landlord who attended to the sub-divisions?—Yes.

25,489. And that was the ground, I think, of your statement, that there should be some reparation made by the landlord for the injuries to those people in the past?—Yes, that is the opinion of the people.

25,490. They think that that opinion is founded on reason?—Yes, they have a great impression that that ought to be the case.

25,491. But looking at it from a practical point of view, I suppose they are of opinion that the landlord cannot do it now?—Yes.

25,492. Now, with regard to the opportuneness of the present time for making such holdings, do you see any reasons that make the present time very opportune for making these small holdings?—Yes, the purchase of stock would be easier just now.

25,493. Is there any other circumstance do you think? Has it ever occurred to you that the sheep farm system has utterly failed?—Yes, we can see that daily.

25,494. What is the ground of your opinion on that point?—The land is deteriorating, that is one thing.

25,495. What evidence have we, do you think, that the sheep farm system is a failure?—The landlords have been seeing through it; they have been taking the farms from the sheep farmers, as they were, I suppose, bothering them for a reduction of rents, and making deer forests out of them.

25,496. They were bothering them for reductions of rent?—That is the opinion.

25,497. But did they get reductions of rent?—Oh, yes, they have been getting them from time to time.

25,498. Have you read Mr Maclean's statement to us at Helmsdale, on behalf of the Sutherland estate, in regard to the reductions that the sheep farmers have been obliged to get for a number of years?—Yes.

25,499. Did you ever hear of crofters getting reductions of rent from the estate?—No, raising their rents rather.

25,500. And they have to reduce the large farmers' rents?—Yes.

25,501. Is that not a reason, in your opinion, why something should be done to remedy the present state of things?—Yes.

25,502. And you think all the elements are favourable to making such an attempt at the present time?—Yes.

25,503. Were they ever so favourable within your memory?—No.

25,504. *Mr Gordon.*—With regard to this farm of Achormlarie, I think you said you would have three holdings in it?—Yes.

25,505. Would that not make them rather small for that glen? It is not a very big farm just now, is it?—No, but the people were of that opinion, that that would be a very desirable holding for having some sheep.

25,506. Is there much arable land outside the present green land below the houses that could be cultivated?—Well, there are patches on the west end.

25,507. But they don't extend to a large area, I think?—No, they look smaller now owing to the long time they have been lying waste, under heather.

25,508. Where is this place upon the farm of Torrobol which you think might be utilised? Is it near the arable lands of Torrobol, or up the river?—It is up the river; there are several townships between Loch Buie and Torrobol, scattered on each side of the river.

25,509. Is that up the Strath-Carnach river?—Yes.

25,510. There is some old arable land up there, is there?—Yes.

25,511. And some patches of wood, I think, by the look of the map?—There are clumps of natural wood here and there.

25,512. Now take Cambusavie; whereabouts do you think is the land that would be available? Is it between Cambusavie and Cambusmore house?—No, it is out on the hill pasture. The holdings are where the people were before, among the hill pasture.

25,513. Does the farm of Cambusavie bound with the farm of Torrobol up the Strath-Carnach?—Yes.

25,514. There is a place there called Achterduich?—Yes.

25,515. Is that upon Cambusavie?—It is upon Torrobol.

26,516. Does Torrobol cross the water?—Yes.

25,517. Then where is the hill pasture of Cambusavie?—The boundary line comes along at the east side of Achtadnach.

25,518. To Creagmaill?—Yes.

25,519. That is behind Cambusmore house?—Yes.

25,520. And is there arable land there?—There is a place called Achinael where two or three nice holdings could be got with hill pasture adjoining, and Leathadna-Cloich on the south side.

25,521. Take the farm of Embo, where is the ground there?—It is arable.

25,522. It is under cultivation?—Yes.

Golspie.

George Grant Fraser.

25,523. There is a place called the Embo moor; are there any crofters there?—The crofters have got some of the land that was reclaimed out of that moss some years ago. They got it recently from the Duke, and there is some more too, but it is a very barren moor and not very good for pasturing sheep.

25,524. What would be the extent of the arable farm of Embo?—I think about 300 or 400 acres.

25,525. Would it be for new holdings, or for an extension of the present Embo Street crofters' grazings?—It is they who got an extension lately, and I suppose they would be satisfied.

25,526. Did they get it on the Embo moor, or on the seaside?—Adjacent to the holdings.

25,527. On Embo Street up to the first burn?—I am not very sure; I have not been there.

25,528. You have not seen it?—No.

25,529. Now, with reference to the woods which you think might be devoted to the pasture,—which is the wood you refer to?—The plantations that go along from behind Proncy, adjacent to the holdings of the people.

25,530. What age would the wood be?—Thirty to forty years, and perhaps more.

25,531. That should be a good enough age for pasture; but if it was older wood than that, what means would you suggest for the proprietor having the power to replant it again when it was cut down?—Oh, I suppose it would have to be enclosed for a certain time.

25,532. But you are aware of this, that if it is once devoted to crofters' pasture, it would pass from the landlord's hands, would it not?—Well, we did not take that into consideration, but I think the crofters would be quite reasonable to deal with in a case of that kind.

25,533. Is there a large extent of woods do you think, which might be utilised for grazings?—Yes.

25,534. What crofting townships would be benefited by that extension of present grazings?—Rearquhar, Birichin, Proncy, Badninish, Balvraid moor, Skelbo moor, Embo Street, Astle, Clashmugach.

25,535. These are on the Skibo estate, are they not?—Yes.

25,536. You spoke of one or two other farms on the Skibo property; your proposal there would be entirely for agricultural holdings?—Yes.

25,537. There is no pasture there that you know of, that could be had?—No.

25,538. What size of holding would you suppose they would have there,—30 acres?—30 acres, or more or less according to what the people would want.

25,539. It is not very good land there, is it?—Not very good.

25,540. And you think you would find people willing to take up those 30 acres and to rely upon their own money, or getting sufficient assistance to stock these holdings?—Yes. I frequently heard people expressing desires of that kind.

25,541. What rents do you think they would be able to pay for 30 acres of that land?—They would be able to pay a fair rent for it. The land is not very good; it is very light.

25,542. It is all arable, and there would be no outlay in regard to the land,—it is not as if you had to trench it?—No.

25,543. It is all fenced land?—Yes.

25,544. You would have the holdings to provide?—There are holdings on Rosebank farm.

25,545. What is your idea with regard to the comparative rents which a man would be able to pay compared with a tacksman? In other words could the proprietor break up these farms without a direct loss of rent?—I don't think there would be any loss of rent.

25,546. You think he would be able to get the same rent that is now being paid for it?—I think so.

25,547. *Mr Forsyth.*—Can you give me any idea what is the ordinary size of the crofters' holdings in that parish, in the matter of arable land?—From 4 to 10 acres; some more and some less.

25,548. Then, are there no crofters' holdings that could fairly be called self-sustaining?—Very few.

25,549. Is that the reason why you have indicated in your statement only a holding which is larger and which is self-sustaining?—Yes.

25,550. Do you consider that there would be smaller holdings which, though not self-sustaining, would form a home for the crofter, and enable him to live by work elsewhere?—There is not very much desire in that way among the people in our parish.

25,551. The desire is mainly for a self-sustaining holding?—Yes.

25,552. I am putting these questions, because the same evidence has been given elsewhere upon this Coast, and I want to get it out particularly. Does not that depend a good deal on the amount of work that is obtainable in the district? That there would be a demand for smaller holdings if work were plentiful?—There might be, but they are much more inclined to get holdings of their own.

25,553. The wish is more to live solely by the small farm?—Exactly.

25,554. Then, a good number of the present crofters would like, if they could get it, to have such holdings as you have indicated?—Yes.

25,555. Have you given any thought as to how such holdings could be found within the parish?—There could be a considerable number,—I am not prepared to say how many, but it would relieve the congestion in the parish greatly if the lands named in our statement could be utilised for that purpose.

25,556. You have a large number of crofters in the parish, I think, considerably over 200?—Yes.

25,557. Can you give us any idea as to how many of these would like small farms; at a venture, at a guess?—I am not prepared to say how many, but I know a good many are very anxious to receive larger tracts of ground than they have got.

25,558. And do you think a large number of holdings could be provided of the kind you have mentioned without touching purely arable farms?—Oh, yes; the grounds that were mentioned in the statements would give a considerable number without touching the arable farms.

25,559. Two or three holdings of say 30 acres arable and some pasture would take up a good deal of ground, you know?—Yes, but where pasture could be got adjacent, people would be glad to take less than 30 acres.

25,560. How much arable would they require if they had say hill grazing for from 40 to 80 sheep?—They would be glad to do with 12 or 16 acres, or so.

25,561. But still the whole desire is for a self-sustaining holding?—Yes.

25,562. Would that keep a man and his family working?—Yes.

25,563. And do you think they could live off it?—At a fair rent, they could live on it till such time as the family could get up and do for themselves.

25,564. Supposing it were new land, would there not be a good deal of difficulty during the first few years?—Yes, there would.

25,565. How do you think they could tide through?—They have been getting through on less favourable conditions before now.

25,566. Has not that been mostly by taking work elsewhere?—They would take work of course, those who could go, and they would work at home when they could get no work elsewhere, and they would be often able to make pretty comfortable homes in the course of a few years.

25,567. And could they face a rent at the present value of the land, and interest upon cost of buildings?—Yes.

25,568. And how about stock; there must be stock in the case of these grazing holdings, for sheep you know?—Some of them at least would be able to stock the land for themselves, but, of course, there is a desire among the people and a sort of expectation that they will get Government aid.

25,569. For stock as well as for buildings?—Yes, in some instances.

25,570. Have the people in your district formed any

idea as to how, assuming that such holdings were available, tenants would be selected for them?—Not to my knowledge.

25,571. In some cases where one man will do well another man will fail. Would it not be necessary to exercise some discretion and judgment in the placing of new tenants in these new farms?—Yes, certainly.

25,572. But you have not formed any idea as to how that could be done?—No. There is generally a more enterprising tenant who is more ready to put himself forward in a case of that kind.

25,573. Do you think that the holdings should be applied for solely by people of the district, or should they be thrown open as it were to general,—I was going to say competition, but that is hardly the word?—Well, the people of the parish.

25,574. Would you invite all offerers?—I think the inclination is among the people of the parish where there are such pressing wants that they should be relieved as long as the land lasted.

25,575. You think the needs of the district should be supplied first, and then if there were more land, possibly outsiders might then come in?—Yes.

25,576. And you think also that the best men would apply first?—Yes.

25,577. But that you can give no further idea as to how this question of the desirability of the applicants for the holdings could be settled?—No.

25,578. Am I right in saying that you have not considered that?—I have not considered that point.

25,579. But still in the face of all the difficulties which you have so frankly admitted, you are of opinion that this idea of holdings which you have submitted might succeed?—Yes.

25,580. You mentioned in your statement in talking of the land as it is now, the words "prairie value"?—Yes.

25,581. Could you define that expression in any way, as the term is new?—What the land was worth in its original state before the people began to cultivate it.

25,582. Then, in some cases you would have the land which has been more or less improved, and let out to pasture, would not you, in taking a new holding?—Yes.

25,583. The land would not be exactly in its condition of nature, would it?—I mean that when the crofter would get any of that old land he should get it at its prairie value, its present value.

25,584. Its present prairie value?—Yes.

25,585. You do not wish to complicate the matter with the difference between its value in an absolute state of nature and its present grazing value, because it may or may not have been partially cultivated in times past?—The impression among the people is that where it has been cultivated by their forefathers who were evicted out of it, they think the prairie value *before then*, or the value of the ground adjacent that has not been cultivated, ought to be the measure of the rent that should be asked.

25,586. In that case would not the extra value of the land, because of its previous cultivation, fairly belong not to the new tenant but to the descendants of the people who originally cultivated it?—Yes.

25,587. Would not there be great difficulty in apportioning the value? It is probable the new man would not be a direct descendant of the people who were formerly there?—Probably not, but in the case where he might happen to be, that is the opinion of the people.

25,588. Then, perhaps you would find it safer to take the land at its present grazing value, would not you?—Yes.

25,589. *The Chairman*.—Do any of the crofters in your quarter carry on their holdings to a profit at present?—Oh, yes, as far as that can be said regarding their holdings; but their holdings are so small.

25,590. Do you mean that they eke out their livelihood by means of outside labour?—Most of people, where they can get that; their holdings are so small, that they cannot live upon them.

25,591. The rent is paid partly from the holding and partly from outside labour?—Exactly. It is generally from money that they gather by doing outside labour; it is very little money they can turn off their small holdings.

25,592. In your judgment, would a self-sustaining holding, or one that was likely to be self-sustaining, be less precarious than the present system?—Yes.

25,593. *Mr Macaulay, Law Agent for the Duke of Sutherland*.—You told us you had been appointed by the crofters of Dornoch to represent them here?—Yes.

25,594. Was there a meeting convened?—Yes.

25,595. In what form?—A public meeting.

25,596. How many crofters were present?—I am unable to say.

25,597. You can give us some idea surely; you know the number in the parish, and you know them all I suppose?—Yes.

25,598. Were there 100 present?—I daresay there would be about that, or perhaps more.

25,599. Are you satisfied that there were 100 of these 200 parties that you represent present at that meeting?—Yes.

25,600. Not more than that?—I am not prepared to say whether there might be more.

25,601. There might be more, and there might be less, but it was not a full meeting of crofters?—Yes, we considered it a full meeting of crofters. Those who were not there in person had representatives present.

25,602. Did they show you in any way that they were representatives of those who were away?—Yes.

25,603. In what way?—They were all desirous that we should represent their case, and there were committees appointed for drawing up the statement.

25,604. At this meeting?—Yes.

25,605. With regard to these woods that you referred to, is it not the fact that a portion of the woods has been replanted, so that besides the wood of thirty or forty years of age there is also a good deal of young wood in this plantation?—I am not aware that there is; there may be a few about the roadsides.

25,606. Have you ever been through them?—Not through the whole of them.

25,607. So you don't know whether there is young wood or not?—I have not seen any of them, and I have been frequently through the woods.

25,608. And you saw no young wood?—Except a few that I have seen at the roadsides, and they were protected.

25,609. But had you means of seeing whether there was young wood elsewhere?—Yes, I have been crossing through the woods.

25,610. And you saw no young wood except at the roadside?—No.

25,611. Then, with regard to this farm of Cyderhall, is it not the fact that that farm is now an arable farm under cultivation?—Yes, except those places that I mentioned.

25,612. So that this division that you talk of would affect the present arable farm?—In the matter of grazing it might.

25,613. Only grazing? Do you say that it would not affect any portion of the ground under rotation just now?—No, it is not under rotation in those parts that I mentioned.

25,614. Where are these parts?—They are outside, a little isolated from the farm.

25,615. So that you did not refer to the farm of Cyderhall so far as arable when you spoke of this?—No.

25,616. Now, when the County Council applied to the Duke of Sutherland for lands under the Small Holdings Act, did you specify any lands that you wanted?—I am not aware that we did.

25,617. You did not specify any lands?—So far as my memory serves me we did not.

25,618. You did not apply for any specific land, you simply made a general statement?—Yes.

25,619. You told us a little ago that while the farmers' rents were being reduced, the crofters' rents have been going up?—Yes.

25,620. How far is that true during the last ten years? [*The Chairman*.—He hardly put it in that

Golspie. George Grant Fraser.

way. I think he put it that crofters' rents always went up]. [*To Witness*]. Can you tell me how far that is true as regards the last ten years?—It has been always true where there have been new tenants going in.

25,621. But you made a general statement as regards the crofters, and I want to find out how far that is correct?—Well, I am not prepared to say at present the names, but I could get them in a short time.

25,622. The fact is you cannot support your statement? [*The Chairman.*—He says he could get the names]. So that when you made that statement you perhaps exceeded what you meant?—No, I am not of opinion that I did.

25,623. But what have you to support your opinion?—I have not got figures.

25,624. So that you made a statement which you cannot support just now?—I can support it.

25,625–6. You cannot support it just now by any evidence or any statement of specific cases. Now, with regard to Embo, is Embo not also in this position that it is an arable farm?—Yes.

25,627. So that any action as regards that would affect the present arable farm under cultivation?—Yes.

25,628. Have you any idea how many acres of arable are held by the crofters in the parish of Dornoch, the Duke's tenants?—I do not know the number.

25,629. Have you any idea?—No.

25,630. Would you be surprised to find that there are 1800 acres arable, or thereabout?—I would not think there would be that number.

25,631. But you have no idea how many acres there are?—No, I have not taken the trouble of looking it up.

25,632. You have not taken the trouble of looking into the matter?—No.

25,633. How do you think the amount of arable land held by crofters compares with that held by farmers?—I think the farmers hold more.

25,634. Very much more, do you think?—Yes.

25,635. But you have no idea as to the exact state of the case?—No.

25,636. You made a statement a little ago to the effect that some of the crofters in the parish of Dornoch were in the way of getting "Government money" as you called it. What do you mean by Government money?—That was the name given to money obtained from the estate through the ground officer for drainage that was executed.* [*The Chairman.*—Drainage money borrowed by the landlord and expended by him in draining his land and for which a slight interest is charged?—They call it Government money.]

25,637. It is not Government money. [*The Chairman.*—That is their way of expressing it]. Are you aware that all that money was lent by the Duke of Sutherland out of his own pocket?—The people were led to believe that it was Government money obtained by the Duke of Sutherland for that purpose.

25,638. Well, that is not a fact. You told us that there were 45 families once living upon these straths which are now included in the farms of Torrobol and Cambusavie?—Yes.

25,639. How many acres arable, both arable that is now under cultivation and old arable, do you suppose there are in these two farms? Have you any idea of that?—No.

25,640. What size of holding do you suppose these men held?—Ten or twelve acres, more or less.

25,641. Ten or twelve acres each probably?—Yes.

25,642. Would you be surprised to find that there are less than 200 acres of present arable or old arable in these two farms?—I would say there would be more.

25,643. Would you be surprised to find that that was the case?—Yes, but I believe it would be coming under heather, a lot of it. Golspie.

25,644. You have no idea how many acres they would have, but you would suppose about ten?—Yes. George G. Fraser.

25,645. Would you be surprised to find there are under 200 in all?—Yes, I would be surprised.

25,646. Two hundred acres among 45 tenants would give considerably less than five acres to each?—

25,647. *The Chairman.*—Yes, but, Mr Macaulay, are you able to give an estimate of the total old arable and the total under rotation?

25,648. *Mr Macaulay.*—So far as ascertainable now, my lord. [*To witness*]. Then, you would be surprised to find that they had perhaps not more than four acres each?—Some of them might have as little as four, but the others would have more.

25,649. You meant, I suppose, an average of ten acres when you spoke of those tenants?—Yes.

25,650. But you would be surprised to find that there is not land available to afford ten acres on an average?—I would be of the impression that a lot of the land has come under heather, and that it can hardly be distinguished now.

25,651. How did you come to estimate the ten acres for each party?—Just by going over the land.

25,652. You have no other evidence, no other means of showing it?—We had survey maps that we were looking over.

25,653. And you found there that they averaged about ten acres?—Yes.

25,654. *Mr Sutherland.*—I would like to ask you a further question. Mr Forsyth asked you a question, a very proper question, with regard to the selection of new tenants. Are you of opinion that there would be much difficulty in selecting the most suitable tenants for the new holdings provided such holdings could be got?—No.

25,655. You are no doubt aware of the terms and conditions of the Small Holdings Act?—Yes.

25,656. Are there the same powers given, conditional no doubt under that Act, as would be in the case we suppose now?—Yes.

25,657. And in whose hands is the selection of the tenants put under that Act, do you remember? Suppose you were successful in getting lands let or bought from a proprietor, and then you proceeded to settle them, who would have the selection of the tenants in that case under this Act, do you remember?—The Land Court.

25,658. The County Council, is it not?—Yes.

25,659. That is, then, a public body that has been entrusted by Act of Parliament with the selection of tenants; and that would be a precedent, would it not, for any new legislation if such were got?—Yes.

25,660. No doubt it would. Then, I wish to ask you a question in reference to what you said about crofters' rents being put up when sheep farmers' rents were taken down. You are aware, are you not, as a matter of fact, that within the last ten years the landlord could not put the crofters' rents up though he tried, is not that the case?—Yes, owing to the Crofters Act.

25,661. It is the Crofters Commission that fixes the rent?—Yes.

25,662. So that having regard to the last ten years or rather perhaps to the last seven years, the rents could not have been put up?—No.

25,663. But was there a time during which the sheep farmers' rents were taken down and the crofters' rents put up?—Yes.

25,664. The two things occurred within your memory simultaneously?—Yes.

25,665. That must be previous to 1886?—Yes.

25,666. And that is what you had in your mind when you answered the question?—Yes.

* Fraser has since written, explaining the above answer, thus:—

"A number of crofters, when they made some drains or "trenched a piece of ground, applied to the ground-officer for an "advance of money. This money, when advanced, was given by "the ground-officer in the name of 'Government money,' and "interest was charged first at the rate of 7 per cent., afterwards it was reduced to 5, and latterly to 4½ per cent."

WILLIAM MACLEAY, Clashmore, Dornoch (57)—*examined.* William Macleay

25,667.—*The Chairman.*—Are you a crofter?—Well, partly, but I do not live on the holding. I am partly a crofter and partly live on my own means.

25,668. Your rent has not been dealt with by the Crofters Commission I suppose?—No.

25,669. Do you hold under lease?—Yes, conjointly.

25,670. A joint-tenant under a lease?—Yes.

25,671. For a term of years?—For ten years.

25,672. And the lease is still current?—Yes.

25,673. What is your rent?—The rent conjointly is something over £11,—£11, 14s. I think.

25,674. You appear, as I understand, along with Fraser, as a delegate, on behalf of the crofters at Dornoch?—Yes.

25,675. Were you appointed at that public meeting which he mentioned?—Yes.

25,676. Have you a written statement?—Yes, I have a written statement, which is practically a corroboration of Mr Fraser's to a great extent, with some more facts. It has been got up by myself, from the evidence of my own eyesight, and from information, it has not been got up by the committee, but by myself, and I would like to read it.

25,677. Please proceed?—The parish of Dornoch extends to 33,931 acres, as per Ordnance Survey, and contains 21 arable farms, ranging from about 60 acres to 400, or upwards, two of these being pluralist farms, part of the Skibo estate, and held on lease by farmers occupying farms on the Duke of Sutherland's property. There are three sheep farms in the parish; two on the Duke of Sutherland's property which are arable and pastoral combined, and one on the Skibo estate, solely pastoral at the present time. There are 183 crofters in the parish outside the municipal burgh of Dornoch; 10 of these are on the Skibo estate, three of them being leaseholders. There are 5851 acres of plantations as returned by the estate officials to the assessor, which, in my opinion, is a long way under the proper area; 710 of this acreage is on the Skibo estate. The parish of Dornoch, outside the municipal burgh of Dornoch, is owned by only two proprietors, viz., the Duke of Sutherland and George Auldjo Jamieson, Esq., Edinburgh, as Trustee on the Skibo estate. The Skibo portion of the parish will be about one third of the whole parish more or less.

1. *Arable Farms.*

The whole of the arable farms about the beginning of this century were more or less occupied by a class of people now called crofters, but then they were called occupiers of the land. Several of these farms were at that time owned by several chiefs or heads of the different clans residing in the parish, but they were all from time to time swallowed up by the predecessors of the aforesaid proprietors who now own the whole, the estate of Embo being the last one which was purchased by the then Duke of Sutherland, about thirty years ago. Now, all the occupiers of those 21 farms, or crofters as they would now be called (with the exception of the farm of Trentham which had not then come into existence), were about the beginning of the century evicted, removed, or bruised out from time to time, some of them to the four winds of heaven, the large cities of the South, America, &c., &c. Others of them were allotted small patches of barren moor to live (or die) on, in the highest and coldest and most unnatural parts of the parish. Unlike some of the other parishes in the county where the people were driven from the good land in the glens and straths to the barren rock on the shore, the people in Dornoch were driven from the good land near the shore to the barren mountain sides, as can be seen by any person with half an eye in his head. In fact, gentlemen, within my own living memory there have been removed in some shape or another, within a radius of a mile and a half from the village of Clashmore, 40 families who occupied more or less land, and what they did occupy was either added to large farms, or planted with trees, with the exception of two families who occupy small leaseholds. A great number of the old habitations can still be seen as ruined monuments, and now the population of the Clashmore district is less by half than it was forty years ago. So much for the political economy of the then landlord government of the Highlands.

Golspie. — William Macleay.

2. *Sheep Farms.*

The sheep farms, two of which are on the Sutherland estate, viz., Cambusavie and Torroboll, have both arable farms attached to them, and I am led to believe by aged authorities that there were close on 50 families removed off these farms to make room for cheviot sheep

25,678. Have you a practical knowledge of these farms of Cambusavie and Torrobol?—Yes, I have been a practical shepherd in my days, and grazed sheep.

25,679. Where were you a shepherd?—I have been a shepherd on Kildonan Strath, and I have been a shepherd in the Colonies.

25,680. Do you concur with the evidence given by Fraser, with regard to the availability of land in Torrobol and Cambusavie?—I quite agree that it would be the only thing for the prosperity of the people of this country to make small holdings out of these with the pasture added.

25,681. What size of holdings?—My own opinion is that those of the people who are in any degree of prosperity in the parish of Dornoch are those who hold 10 to 20 acres arable and from 50 to 150 acres hill pasture, and who can graze 60 to 100 sheep.

25,682. And with a holding of that size and with that extent of grazing is it your opinion that a crofter would be able to live without outside labour?—Yes, and rear a fine healthy family who would have plently of blood and stamina in them, with milk and butter, beef and mutton to eat. The sheep farm of Torroboll extends from the arable farm up both sides of Strath Carnaig, a distance of over six miles, and contains several old arable townships, with the ruins still to the fore, as can be pointed out to the Commissioners. The whole farm is in my firm opinion undoubtedly adapted for small arable and grazing holdings. The pastoral farm at present carries a cheviot stock of about 1300. The arable farm employs a good pair of draught horses and occasionally three horses.

The sheep farm of Cambusavie extends from the south side of the Mound over the hills above the Cambusmore shooting lodge by the old crofting township of Achinal, a distance of four miles, and is occupied by Mr Urquhart. It carries a stock of about 400 cheviot sheep, and it contains two old arable townships of splendid soil, and, like Torroboll, the old ruins are still to be seen, although the inhabitants were cleared out of them about eighty years ago. Like Torroboll this farm is specially adapted for combined arable and pastoral holdings. The only living occupant residing on it now is one solitary shepherd and his family.

The farm of Achormlarie is on the Skibo estate, about six miles up the Evelix valley, and is a pluralist farm occupied by Mr Hugh Ross, a farmer on the Duke of Sutherland's estate. Its sole occupant is one solitary shepherd and his family and a gamekeeper—a lodger. Formerly it contained eight families, who cultivated the township of Achormlarie and grazed cattle and sheep on the hill pasture. Although these occupiers were about the first evicted in the county, the ruins of some of the old habitations are still plainly visible. The farm carries at present a stock of about 400 cheviot sheep, and the arable land has the reputation of growing the finest oats of any land in the county, weighing 44 lbs. per bushel.

It would make four splendid small holdings and they could live in comfort, like Mr John Grant, crofter, Achoinich; Mr Robert Ormiston, Strathan; Mr William Fraser, Achavaich; and Mr Alexander Mathieson, Lebnashermaig, all small holders in the vicinity of Achormlarie, and who are arable and pastoral occupiers. I am convinced that Achormlarie is really adapted for combined small holdings, and as such would be a greater benefit to the nation and the parish than being a wilderness as it is at present.

3. *Crofters.*

Of the 183 crofters in the parish of Dornoch, the rents of eleven of them range from £10 to £20 per annum, including three leaseholders. Seventeen crofters

Golspie. William Macleay.

in the hamlet of Hilton, Embo, I believe, are having their crofts enlarged out of the neighbouring farm of Embo, to what extent or rental I am not prepared to state; but I think this is a step in the right direction. The remaining £155, whose rental ranges from 13s. to £6, 13s. with the exception of two who pay about £9 rent per annum are congested or caged in on the one side by large farms and on the other side by enclosed plantations, with the exception of 560 acres of plantations which the Duke of Sutherland's officials maintain is not enclosed, and which are exempt from taxes; but the crofters maintain that they do not know of much more than the half of that acreage on which they have free liberty to graze their cattle and sheep, those of them that have any sheep. The great majority of those crofters' holdings that have nearly all been improved by their predecessors and themselves are so small and poor that it is impossible for them to maintain themselves and their families, and there being no employment for the young people, they keep clearing away to different parts of the world, so much so that I could relate many instances where there have been from six to ten of a family, and their parents have been left alone, and getting old and frail, their crofts and everything they possess is going to ruin. In several cases the old people have died out or been taken away to other places by members of the family and their crofts divided amongst the neighbouring crofters; and this is what the landlords call the enlargement of holdings, so that, gentlemen of the Commission, you will see that in the parish of Dornoch at present and for a long time past one crofter family in and residing there before he can or could get his holding enlarged a small piece, had and has to wait patiently until his neighbour dies out or leaves the country in disgust, so that the rural population is yearly decreasing. The only remedy I can see for maintaining and increasing the rural population is to enlarge a number of the crofts, where adjacent, from the large farms, and give them the plantations for pasture, and also to repeople the sheep farms with others who would be willing to remove and also with labourers and retired ploughmen, who have nowhere now to go to but crowd the burgh of Dornoch, and in cases prepare for the poorhouse. There are a number of discharged ploughmen residing at present in Dornoch who would only be too willing to occupy land.

4. *Plantations.*

Of the 5851 acres under plantations, the whole was at one time the people's common pasture, and in many instances it was called "commonage." In order to enclose this ground there were, I believe, from time to time some forty families removed; and a number of the old ruins which were at one time inhabited are still to be plainly seen. Although those commonages were strictly enclosed from the inhabitants, I can find no trace of rents being reduced, but only raised from time to time according as the people made improvements. Now, gentlemen of the Commission, I am not myself averse to plantations where they do not occupy land fit for cultivation. In the parish of Dornoch hundreds of acres now under plantations is equally as good land, if cultivated, as the land at present under cultivation; and I must say that the plantations in the parish of Dornoch are nothing more or less than a forest as they contain red deer, fallow deer and roe, and all kinds of winged game, and also rabbits to such an extent that they are a pest. All these are very destructive by feeding on and destroying the people's crops; and I know instances where the farmers in winter time have had to employ night watchmen to protect their turnips from the red and fallow deer. Now before the days of plantations red and fallow deer and rabbits were animals unknown to the inhabitants of this parish, and I must say that my own opinion, and the firm opinion of the whole of the inhabitants that I come in contact with is, that the game and the game laws are a curse to the parish, and the only exceptions who do not agree with us are the gamekeepers and a few ghillies who attend them, and the ghillies are very few indeed in the parish of Dornoch. In my young days there was only one gamekeeper and a boy as assistant between Balblair, in the parish of Creich, on the one side, and the Mound, round by the burgh of Dornoch and the Big Ferry on the other side. Now there are fourteen gamekeepers within this area, and six of them are within a radius of two miles of the village of Clashmore, where I reside, so that it has come to this, that all the wild animals and birds that destroyed rats and mice and kept down small birds are destroyed, so that all these are a nuisance both in the houses, the corn yards and the fields; and I may state that even the domestic cat cannot now live, as the better the hunter the sooner its days are numbered—and it is rare for a cat to see the age of eighteen months in our locality, what with baited traps and snares. I myself have on several occasions relieved cats out of traps within about 100 yards of where I live, and they are eagerly looked after by the gamekeepers, as their skins are very remunerative to them—and I must say that a good cat is a very valuable domestic animal, and is also troublesome to rear, and at the same time cannot be kept on a tether—so that the sooner there is a law to exterminate the—I would not say the gamekeepers, but the gamekeeping system, and the cats get a chance to live, the more prosperous will the nation at large be; and I trust your recommendations will be to this effect, and that Parliament will crown them with legislation.

(Signed) WILLIAM MACLEAY.

25,683. *Mr Sutherland.*—You stated certain names, Fraser, Ormiston, and I did not catch the other names, who are small tenants already in the vicinity of the farm that you think suitable for making into several small farms?—Yes.

25,684. Are these side by side?—Yes, side by side.

25,685. And do you think this farm of Achormlarie is fitted for accommodating more people who have got little or no land now?—Oh, yes, I think Achormlarie is; as all the arable land is in one part mostly, it would be more fitted for making small arable pieces, and that the farm would be worked as a club farm; it could not be very well worked from the township, otherwise than as a club farm. People could not herd their sheep separately from the arable of the township. But as to these other grazings that I mentioned, I may state that they have pieces of arable land from 10 to 15 acres.

25,686. Separately for themselves?—Yes.

25,687. And could not that be done with the farm of Achormlarie?—No, it could not.

25,688. Why?—Because it is all mostly in one block.

25,689. But that would not prevent its sub-division. Would this be possible, that the arable land could be held individually, but the grazing land in common?—Exactly, or it might be made into two. The east side might be divided into two.

25,690. But you are aware that that is the common system in this county for small holdings—that they have their arable separately, and they have such grazing as they have in common?—So it is with small tenants. Astle has hill pasture, and it is like that. A few tenants of Rearquhar have some, and along by Lairg I know that is the system.

25,691. The important fact you stated is that already in the neighbourhood of this farm you have got small tenants, and, in your opinion, they are prosperous?—I have not the slightest hesitation in saying that they are the most prosperous small tenants in the parish.

25,692. Then, you said something with regard to ploughmen being able or likely to avail themselves of small holdings, if they got them on favourable terms?—Yes.

25,693. Are there many such in the parish of Dornoch?—There are five aged ploughmen that have been discharged, I suppose through age and getting frail, in the burgh of Dornoch, who have gone to reside there within the last five years.

25,694. Would these be men who, in your opinion, would make successful small farmers on arable land?—I have not the slightest idea; if they were in a

olspie. / illiam acleay.

position where some of their family could be staying with them, and if they had got the land when they retired it would have been all right; but their families now have gone all over the world, and probably some of the men might not be able themselves to cultivate land, because they are about sixty years of age.

25,695. But if they retired earlier, they would be men of skill and experience in farming?—Yes, they would. I have not the slightest idea, but there are men of about thirty and forty years of age in the parish of Dornoch who would retire any time, because there are several of them that I know myself among these ploughmen who applied to the County Council for small holdings.

25,696. I do not wish to detain you long, but I have another question to ask. You have had experience in the Colonies?—Yes.

25,697. And you have also had experience in Scotland, in the Highlands?—Yes.

25,698. Now, give us your general impression with regard to the different kinds of life that would be led on the small holdings you contemplate in this country, and the life that a colonist is obliged to live in the Colonies you know. Which do you think would be the more likely to succeed?—It would be most favourable, because—

25,699. What would be most favourable?—This country, because in the Colonies people are rather unsettled; and in the Colonies I may tell you a man cannot live on arable land and bring up a family unless he has from 80 to 100 acres of good arable land, and he requires about 5000 acres of hill pasture. It takes from 1500 to 1000 sheep to keep a man and his family in the Colonies, and to live on it.

25,700. Is your general impression then that on such a holding as you have been describing, a man would be better off and more likely to succeed, than in the Colonies generally?—Oh, yes.

25,701. That is your impression?—Well, I don't know that he would succeed better, because in the Colonies there is a chance in one way or another, and through speculation that a man may make a fortune in twenty-four hours, and perhaps in another twenty-four hours he may lose the whole.

25,702. Is that speculating in land?—Well, speculating in land; I have known a man buying 100 acres of land to-day, and selling it to-morrow at a profit of £300 or £400.

25,703. But apart from speculation in land, taking the ordinary industrial conditions, which would be the more desirable life in your opinion?—The more sober and desirable life would be in this country.

25,704. You think so?—Yes, more sober, and it is easier for a man to keep a good moral character in this country, than in the Colonies.

25,705. The conditions for rearing a family as good citizens are more favourable in this country?—Yes.

25,706. Then you referred to the fact that old people were left by themselves, and the population thus died out?—Yes.

25,707. I think you mentioned also that that was one of the common ways of enlarging holdings?—Yes, and I can give instances in the parish of Dornoch; in fact, one instance in which that has been done within the last twelve or fifteen months.

25,708. I do not want to trouble you to give examples if you can state that it is the practice?—Yes, and there was a question put to Lord Stafford on the subject when on his election tour.

25,709. You think then that the tendency of that is bad?—It is bad; it decreases the population; and as far as I have had experience of the Colonies, they do everything in their power there to increase the population, because an increase of population means revenue to the nation.

25,710. Has it any effect on pauperism, do you know?—It has an affect on pauperism, when the people are so poor that their families leave and go to different parts of the world, and in many instances do not send anything home to relieve their parents, the latter make application for parochial relief, as I know as a member of the Parochial Board.

Golspie. / William Macleay.

25,711. In other words the natural breadwinners being away, the parents and helpless dependents are left on the parish; is that the result of the system?—In many instances where the families are not able to send them home money; and I consider that it is nothing else than living on charity when people have to depend on far-away friends for the means to live on.

25,712. Then, with regard to those places you referred to as fitted in your opinion for the purposes of our inquiry, would you be prepared to point them out to us if we visited the places ourselves?—Yes, I would, but perhaps on Thursday and Friday I might not be able.

25,713. But they are matters of fact?—They are matters of fact; I am quite prepared to point out the places.

25,714. You have given your opinion of them, and you are quite prepared to show them to us, so that we may form our own opinion?—Yes, I can show you instances of everything I have referred to in my paper.

25,715. *Mr Macaulay, Law Agent.*—With regard to these crofts that are divided among neighbours when a tenant dies out, is it not the fact that the crofters themselves desired this division? Is it forced upon them, or do they ask for it do you think?—Those that die out? When they die out, they could not be asking for it.

25,716. I mean the neighbours?—I have not the slightest idea. There is that nature in the people that they want more land, and they are glad to get it wherever it can be got.

25,717. So that you have no doubt yourself that it is as much the desire of the crofters as of the proprietor that such vacant crofts should be divided?—Among the living ones.

25,718. Well, of course. Then about families going away and leaving the crofts, I suppose you attribute that to the smallness of the holdings?—Yes.

25,719. Is it not the fact that farmers' families go away in the same manner?—Often, when they go bankrupt.

25,720. But even when they do not go bankrupt?—They go to different offices throughout the country. The farmers are able to educate their children better than the crofters.

25,721. There is no difference between the going away of a crofter's family, and the going away of a farmer's family?—The one goes away better educated than the other.

25,722. We know perfectly well that many families of crofters who go away, have got on pretty well when they are away?—Some of them have the sinew of the blood and the bone of the farmers, only they do not go away of their own free will, but are expatriated; and others go away because they cannot settle themselves at home.

25,723. You said something about the plantations in the Parish of Dornoch. Apart from these plantations, would not the parish of Dornoch be a very bleak place in your opinion?—I am not averse to plantations; the only thing I am averse to is that they should be kept on the estate on lands fit for cultivation. I can prove that the plantation where cattle are allowed to feed always produces the best and most durable timber; in fact, the young plantations that are allowed to grow as in a wilderness, where sheep and cattle do not feed, are not thriving, and are dying out.

25,724. Has not the arable land in the parish of Dornoch been improved by the presence of these plantations?—I am not going to say that.

25,725. You think these plantations have been of no good as a shelter?—It may shelter some places, but it gives no shelter to the place I live in.

25,726. Probably there is not a plantation near there?— Oh, yes, but they are of no use as shelter, they are only keeping the sunshine from us.

25,727. You think plantations are not a great benefit —They are a great benefit so far as there is some labour

Golspie.

William Macleay.

connected with them, but that is not the case in Dornoch.

25,728. But I mean benefit to the arable land?—I don't think they do any good to the arable land, I am quite satisfied that they are very good for firewood however.

25,729. *The Chairman.*—You spoke of cottars in your statement, can you tell me how many cottars there are in the district?—Oh, there are not very many, most of the cottars are in the little village I live in myself, and it only came into existence about fifty years ago.

25,730. How many cottars are there?—There are about ten or twelve feus in it. I hold a feu myself. But the most of the cottars there are generally those people who were evicted off the large farms on the estate and sent almost as paupers, and they have to come into these feus to get a home.

25,731. Can you tell me how many there are?—I am not altogether prepared to say how many there are, they are mostly widows, and some of them old maids.

25,732. Is the number small?—Yes, there are not above fifteen or sixteen of them altogether.

25,733. You mentioned that you had been in the Colonies. What Colony were you in?—New Zealand.

25,734. Any other Colony?—No, I have not been in any other Colony; I have been in Australia, but not residing.

25,735. Now, in the matter of employment, do a great number of the crofters in this district get employment on the Sutherland estates?—None that I know of, except a few that work in the plantations,—a dozen, or fourteen perhaps.

25,736. And they have regular employment?—Yes, I must say they have pretty regular employment.

Thomas Grant.

THOMAS GRANT, Crofter, Evelix near Dornoch (50)—*examined.*

25,737. *The Chairman.*—Are you a crofter?—Yes.

25,738. What is your rent?—£2, 15s.

25,739. Was your rent dealt with by the Crofters Commission?—No.

25,740. Do you hold from year to year or under lease?—From year to year.

25,741. You heard the evidence given by Fraser and by Macleay?—Yes.

25,742. Do you agree with the evidence?—Yes, I do. The evidence given by Fraser was joint evidence with mine.

25,743. And you concur in their statements?—Yes, I do.

25,744. *Mr Sutherland.*—You said your rent was not dealt with by the Commission?—No.

25,745. Can you give us your acreage?—Six acres.

25,746. Of arable?—Yes, it is all arable.

24,747. And have you any outrun?—None whatever.

25,748. Any pasture?—No.

25,749. Your holding is entirely arable?—Arable altogether, it was moor when my father got it about seventy years ago.

25,750. What was the state of it when your father got it?—Black moor; it was not worth sixpence an acre at that time.

25,751. Did your father do all the improvements?—Yes, with the exception of £7, 12s. he got from the estate, on which he was paying £5 per cent.

25,752. Why have you not got a judicial rent?—I did not apply for it, but I mean to apply for it.

25,753. And has it been applied for by the proprietor?—No.

25,754. You said you gave a general concurrence in the statement that was made by Mr Fraser?—Yes, I do.

25,755. And you signed the statement which he submitted?—Yes.

Alexander Bannerman.

ALEXANDER BANNERMAN, Crofter, Langwell, Rogart (73)—*examined.*

25,756. *The Chairman.*—You are a crofter?—Yes.

25,757. Was your rent dealt with by the Crofters Commission?—Yes.

25,758. What rent do you pay now?—£11, 8s.

Golspie.

25,759. What was your previous rent?—£16.

Alexand Bannerm

25,760. What is the extent of your holding?—The extent when I got it was ten acres arable.

25,761. What is it now?—I added six or seven acres myself to that number.

25,762. And what is the grazing?—The whole of the township measures 1300 acres I suppose, pasture and arable.

25,763. And you have a share of that?—Yes.

25,764. What share?—There are seven crofters.

25,765. And have you equal shares?—With the exception of one. The pasture is a common pasture, and every one takes his share of it.

25,766. I see from the Blue Book your holding is given as 14 acres 3 roods arable, and 11 acres of outrun with a seventh share of 1300 acres common pasture as you mentioned?—Yes.

25,767. Have you a written statement?—No, I brought no written statement; the statement I am going to make has been written on my heart, as a descendant of those who were evicted, during the last eighty years.

25,768. The district you specially know about and can speak to is the Rogart district?—Yes.

25,769. Can you mention land in that district which you think would be suitable for extension of crofters' grazings or for new settlements?—I am not a native of the parish, and I don't know the names correctly, but I know the land; I know the quality and the extent of it, and I know that there is a good deal of good arable land included in what Mr Menzies, the sheep farmer at Blarich has.

25,770. You say there is grazing land on the farm of Blarich?—Grazing land and old arable land.

25,771. And old arable land suitable for the purposes I have mentioned?—Suitable for being occupied again by the descendants of the evicted.

25,772. I think we got from Mr Maclean, the other day, a very detailed statement with regard to the farm. 'Blarich farm extends to 13,300 acres, of which there 'are 300 acres old arable land and 33 acres now or 'recently cultivated.' Do these figures accord with your information?—Well, I know that whenever the estate statements were questioned they were found to be faulty,—that was with regard to the holdings of the crofters as well as the present state of old arable.

25,773. I will put the question in this form. How many acres of old arable would you say are to be found on the farm of Blairich?—I am not prepared to tell you the number, but I know that there is a good deal of old arable land now covered with heather and rushes, so much so that no man going over it without paying great attention could mark even what was under cultivation at that time.

25,774. Would you put it in this way, that you say there is a considerable extent of land, whatever the precise extent may be, to which you invite our attention for the purposes of this remit, when we go to the district?—Certainly.

25,775. It may be 300 acres or more or less?—I could not state the number of acres.

25,776. Now, I want to ask you to what purpose would you devote these lands? I mean would it be for extension of grazing, or for new settlements, or both?—When it lies immediately in connection with the neighbouring townships, I would give extension of grazing.

25,777. Are there townships in the neighbourhood to which these grazings would be contiguous?—There is one in particular.

25,778. Which one is that?—The district of Muie, in the upper end of the parish.

25,779. Is there a township there?—Yes, Muie.

25,780. And you think there is land at Blarich which might be devoted to extension of grazing for the township?—Immediately marching with them; there is only a wire fence between the crofter's grazing and the farmer of Blairich's grazing.

25,781. How many crofters are in Muie?—I think sixteen or seventeen.

25,782. Do you know what extent of grazing they have at present?—The extent is not very much.

25,783. Can you tell me how much it is?—I could not tell you the number of acres, but it is not much for the number of crofters.

25,784. But according to your knowledge, are they in need of that extension of grazing?—Much in need of extension.

25,785. Now, passing from that to the old arable, you say I think that there is old arable on Blairich farm where new settlements could be made?—New settlements.

25,786. How many, do you think?—Well, I am not prepared to say the number; that would depend on the extent of the holdings each would have.

25,787. What extent of holding would you give there having regard to the nature of the land and the climate?—I think when a man would require to keep a pair of horses, not of the largest kind but of medium size, he would require from 25 to 30 and up to 40 acres arable.

25,788. And corresponding grazings?—And corresponding grazings for a certain number of sheep.

25,789. How many?—That would depend on the locality.

25,790. But you are talking of a particular locality which you know well?—I think he should have up to 100 sheep whatever.

25,791. And the rent?—Well, if the tenants would get the land for the present rent, I think they would be quite prepared to take it, arable and pasture.

25,792. The present rent of Blairich farm; is that what you mean?—The rent the farmer pays at present.

25,793. You think that much smaller holdings than Blairich farm would afford, and that the tenants could pay a rent as high as that presently paid by the occupant of the farm?—I think I am safe in saying that the crofters are paying far more than the sheep farmers.

25,794. That is a general opinion, but is it your opinion that tenants settled there on holdings cut out of Blarich farm would be able to pay the present rent that the tenant of Blairich pays?—Yes, I think they would.

25,795. That rent has I suppose depreciated of late years?—The farm of Blairich paid over £1000 not very long ago.

25,796. And now it pays what?—£433, so that there has been a reduction of over £600 when the tenant entered on his new lease.

25,797. Is that farm at present occupied by a tenant?—It is occupied by Mr Menzies.

25,798. And he holds under a lease, I suppose?—Yes.

25,799. Now, do you ask our attention to any other grazing land besides Blairich farm in the Rogart district?—There is part of Strath Brora.

25,800. What farm is that?—On the Sciberscross farm, and there is another part of it at Dalnessie.

25,801. Sciberscross farm extends I see to 27,500 acres, at a rent of £300, and Dalnessie extends to 6400 acres, but the new rent is not mentioned by Mr Maclean. Now, is there a considerable extent of old arable which you think we ought to inspect on both these farms?—On both these farms.

25,802. Where does the land you have in view particularly lie?—It lies above Sciberscross, up beside the water all the way to Dalnessie and Crockan.

25,803. Between what two points?—Between Sciberscross and Crockan, between the sheep farmer's house at Sciberscross and Dalnessie at the top of the water.

25,804. Is that land principally along the margin of the river?—Yes.

25,805. Low-lying land at present covered with old grazings?—It is covered with rushes; but, I am not very sure whether some of the land immediately in the bottom of the flat would be very useful for small holdings, because it may be subject to blight by frost.

25,806. Is that parcel of land you are now referring to subject to frost?—Very often; but there is better land, far better land, outside. The best of the land is not immediately on the channel of the water.

25,807. How far is it from the water?—Some of it might be more or less, but there are very good dases of land away from the water.

25,808. Is that other land you mentioned not subject to frost?—Not subject; a little higher up it is quite secure.

25,809. The frost there is not so much dependent on the altitude as upon its proximity to the water?—To the water; immediately beside the water.

25,810. Now, do you think that holdings of adequate size with corresponding grazing could be cultivated there to a profit?—Yes.

25,811. Have you gone into that subject with pen and paper?—I am what might be called a practical farmer myself, and I know where a farm could be made that would suit a crofter.

25,812. And you give that answer, therefore, with all your practical knowledge and experience of land in that district?—Yes, I cultivated the worst land myself.

25,813. To a profit?—Well, I get all the profit I can out of it.

25,814. But I understand you to say, that you do get a profit out of it?—I make a living so far with the help of my family, but I never yet could make my rent out of the holding.

25,815. But is the land that you are speaking of now, land that could be made a self-sustaining holding, or would the farmer require to supplement it by outside labour?—If he had as much land as he could cultivate properly he could live in comfort on it.

25,816. You make something depend on the question of area?—Yes.

25,817. And you think that a pair horse farm might be worked to profit in that quarter?—By the family.

25,818. And would the occupier require to hire labour, or would he be able to work the holding with the assistance of his own family?—Labour can be dispensed with, because implements are now so common and so useful that a man and his family can now work a farm which otherwise would require half-a-dozen labourers.

25,819. A man and his family, with the aid of implements, could work it without hired labour?—Without any extraneous labour.

25,820. That is a pair horse farm?—A pair horse farm.

25,821. Now, besides these farms you have mentioned, are there any other lands to which you wish to call our attention?—You can find all the way up from Gordonbush to Dalnessie, on both sides of the water, flats of land, as good as you can find in any Highland strath in the north of Scotland, and a good deal of land outside of that.

25,822. How would you compare that land with the land of Strath Helmsdale or Kildonan Strath?—I believe there is as good land between Gordonbush and Dalnessie as you can get in any strath in Sutherland.

25,823. What farm are these places on?—There is a good deal on Gordonbush farm up to Ascoile, and the rest is on Sciberscross farm.

25,824. I see that Gordonbush extends to 24,300 acres, and the land you are now talking of is, I take it, mainly on Gordonbush?—Yes.

25,825. And running also into the farm of Sciberscross?—Yes.

25,826. These are among the largest farms I think, which the Duke has in this part of the country?—I believe so at present.

25,827. Gordonbush is occupied by a tenant, is it?—Yes, by Captain Shaw.

25,828. Now, besides these lands, are there any others you desire to mention?—There are, what would make a very fine farm immediately at the deer forest, at the back of Ben-Horn, that is the highest hill between the Brora water and Dunrobin. It is called Scottarie.

25,829. What kind of land is that?—I could not tell you the exact area of it, but there is a good deal of most excellent land, and the soil is as good as any you can get in the county of Sutherland.

25,830. Is it as good as the land in Strath-Brora?—It is fully better.

25,831. But at present it is under old grazing I suppose?—It belongs, I believe, to the sheep farm.

Golspie.

Alexander Bannerman.

25,832. What sheep farm?—Mr Milligan's.

25,833. It belongs to Sciberscross, does it?—Yes.

25,834. Is that land immediately behind Ben Horn part of the forest?—It was at one time, but it is now given over to Mr Milligan.

25,835. The land has been taken from the forest, and added to the farm of Sciberscross?—Yes.

25,836. Can you tell me when that occurred?—I believe it occurred lately. When the Master of Blantyre had the farm, it was fenced off to join the forest.

25,837. When did the Master of Blantyre give up the farm of Sciberscross?—A few years ago.

25,838. And then was it taken by Mr Milligan?—No, it was taken by a young gentleman, Mr Scott, a sheep farmer, and after him Mr Milligan took it.

25,839. And when Mr Milligan got it, this land was taken from the forest, and added to the farm?—It was added in Mr Scott's time.

25,840. But that land, in your opinion, is suitable?—Suitable for a very good holding.

25,841. One holding or more?—Well, of course, you can find what is suitable for one good holding, which by dividing it would be not so useful for two.

25,842. You don't think two holdings there could be carried on to a profit?—Well, I know many holdings are on far less land than is there; but I think if it was given to one enterprising tenant, he could make a very good holding of it.

25,843. Well, now, without pressing you very much on the subject of rent, what rent would you suppose appropriate for such a holding?—The rent would depend very much on the quality of the soil.

25,844. But you are speaking of soil that you know about?—I know that all the old arable land is given with the grazing at the same rent; the one is not rented more than the other, and taking the general rent over the whole I think that would be fair.

25,845. You think a tenant there could pay as high a rent per acre as Mr Milligan is paying?—I think he could.

25,846. Are there any other lands that you wish to mention?—I don't know whether the parish of Golspie is to go in for it or not; but there is land on the farm of Morvich.

25,847. Is that farm under a tenant at present?—It is part of the grazings belonging to the farm of Morvich.

25,848. Is that a grazing farm?—It is a grazing farm; and this land is about two miles beyond the arable of the farm.

25,849. It is the farm mentioned by Mr Maclean as having 3600 acres?—The place I mean is Aberscross hill.

25,850. Is the land there old grazing land?—Old grazing land.

25,851. Had it been in cultivation at one time or other?—It had.

25,852. And is it low-lying?—No, it is not very low-lying; it is almost in sight of the road coming up Strath-Fleet.

25,853. Is there a considerable extent of it there?—A considerable extent of the very best land in the county.

25,854. Suitable for grazings, or suitable for settlements?—Too good for grazing.

25,855. But good for settlements, would you think?—Good for being reclaimed again.

25,856. Then, are these all the lands you mention?—That is all the land I know of.

25,857. Now, you are speaking for this district of Rogart. You were appointed, I suppose, at a public meeting?—I was.

25,858. To represent the views of the district from which you come?—To represent the wants of the people.

25,859. Is there a general desire for additional land?—There is a general desire, and has been for a considerable time back.

25,860. Is there, in your opinion, a need for land?—A very great desire to get more land.

25,861. Yes, I understand that, but is there a need for it? Do they require land?—More grazing, and to relieve the congestion.

Golspie.

Alexander Bannerman.

25,862. Is the district you represent congested?—Not ours so much as other districts.

25,863. Are you a member of the County Council?—I am.

25,864. Of the county of Sutherland?—Of the county of Sutherland.

25,865. Do you occupy any other public position?—I occupy almost all the positions of importance in the parish; I am Chairman of the School Board, and a member of the Parochial Board, and I study the interests of the people as far as I can.

25,866. You go out and in a great deal among them?—Daily.

25,867. And perhaps I may say, no one in the district knows their feelings better than you?—I should know them as well as any man in the county of Sutherland.

25,868. *Mr Sutherland.*—You said that you did not belong to Rogart; how long have you been in Rogart?—I have been about twenty-six years in Rogart.

25,869. So as you have already stated, you have had abundant opportunities of knowing the feelings and wants of the people?—Thoroughly.

25,870. When you went to Rogart, you went from a small holding to a larger one, did not you?—I had four acres of land at Helmsdale.

25,871. And you got a holding of how many acres?—I got a holding of ten acres and some pasture; I had had no pasture at Helmsdale.

25,872. But you managed to improve your new holding to the extent you have indicated?—I am not ashamed of what I have done.

25,873. No, you need not be, I suppose. Your own case has a direct bearing upon objections that have been frequently urged before this Commission, and I want you to give us the benefit of your own personal experience. Is it not the fact that you left a very small and poor holding and went to a bigger one under rather unfavourable circumstances, and that you have made all the improvements you have told us about to-day,—is that not a fact?—I appeared before Sheriff Brand, when he was here before, and I put in a statement of the improvements made which came to £437, 17s. 9d. Sheriff Brand asked Mr Maclean if he agreed to my statement, and I am very glad to say that he agreed with every figure of it, and said that I left out what I should have put in.

25,874. So that you are in your own person an example of what can be done in unfavourable circumstances?—If the people had got the shadow of a chance they would have improved the county, and if the people had all along been left in their own holdings the county of Sutherland would have been worth twice the money to-day if it were to be sold.

25,875. So that, in your opinion, such an example as yours is worth more than all the abstract theoretical objections we hear?—I think it is the parties who do not know the people who would make such detracting observations upon them.

25,876. The rent put upon you was £16, 16s., I think?—Yes.

25,877. And the Crofters Commission reduced it to, how much?—£11, 8s.

25,878. That is a difference of £5 a year between the old rent and the fair rent?—Yes.

25,879. Do you think the rent could now with advantage, and with justice, be reduced a little farther than that even?—Yes. I pay a great deal more than any big farmer in the county of Sutherland.

25,880. Still?—And if big farmers in the county of Sutherland were to pay interest on the outlays for improvements on their holdings, they would be paying three times as much rent as they are doing, without paying anything for the land at all.

25,881. That is a point upon which I want to ask you some questions? When you went into your present holding at West Langwell did you find everything put in order for you,—house built, fences erected, drains made and everything?—Nothing at all.

25,882. And what is the custom in the case of the large farmer?—To the last nail that is required for a pig-stye he gets it done for him.

25,883. And notwithstanding all that he has had to get large reductions of rent?—Large reductions of rent. Just look at the big farm which Mr Cameron occupies just now. It cost the Duke of Sutherland, I think, £1800; his rent is something over £300, so that it will take six years before he will get a fraction of return from the farm.

25,884. So is it your opinion, that from the landlord's own point of view small holdings are more profitable than large?—More profitable, because they cost him very little to begin with, and there is no big farm in the county of Sutherland that he is getting a fair rent for, if you take into account interest on the outlay in reclaiming, fencing and building. All the profit he has is from the small tenants.

25,885. Then, you were asked a question with regard to occupation to profit. Do you not think it is an occupation to profit when a man is able to rear a family in comfort and decency?—The statement put in to Lord Napier, when the first Commission was round by the estate officials for the east coast of Sutherland, was that the crofters had on the average $3\frac{1}{15}$ acres.

25,886. Well?—Well, you said that for every sheep on a sheep farm in the county of Sutherland six acres were allowed for maintenance. I can prove that they are allowed ten acres.

25,887. That was admitted in evidence before us already?—Yes, and when the first sheep farmers took the land in Sutherlandshire, I mind very well of the latter end of the first lease, they paid only 1½d. an acre for it, and got a lease for nineteen years. I maintain that if the descendants of the evicted were to get the same advantageous terms, they are quite prepared to take the land and work it to profit without asking any aid from the Government or from the proprietor.

25,888. As a matter of fact, you got no aid from Government or the proprietor?—Never.

25,889. Well then, as to the question of cultivating to profit. The question I put to you was this, is it necessary for a man to have a balance at the bank in order to show cultivation to a profit?—We don't want balances at the bank if we can keep our families in comfort. One half of the people does not know how the other half lives, and I am ashamed to say here before Sheriff Brand that a great many of the people, for three or four months of the year, live God knows how.

25,890. And do you think the means for better subsistence than they have now lies at their doors?—Lies at their doors, because it would relieve the congestion, and give scope for energetic men.

25,891. That reminds me of a remark you made that Rogart was less congested than other parishes in Sutherland?—Yes.

25,892. But there are congested districts even in Rogart, are there not, take Muie?—Muie in particular.

25,893. Is there a desire among the people there for additional pasture?—Yes, for a long long time they have been quarrelling over it, I may say for forty years.

25,894. Wishing to get more pasture?—Yes, and been fighting ever since.

25,895. Do you remember any incidents connected with the desire of the people to get additional pasture?—I mind when we went to take possession of it; I, myself, was one of the men who went. [*The Chairman.*—And there was a little trouble about it?—Yes, about breaking the interdict.]

25,896. Is the question of occupation to profit by the tenant, not altogether a question of what rent he pays?—I, myself, have got only ten acres of land, and I pay £1 an acre for it, and 28s. for the outrun, calculating it that way, and I know that the best land that Cameron has does not pay 15s. an acre.

25,897. So that whether it is a profit to you or not it is a profit to the landlord?—It is profit to the landlord, and I must live by it.

25,898. And you are of opinion, are you not, that a great deal of land in the parish of Rogart is better fitted for occupation than what you occupy?—Certainly, I would exchange it for anything if I got the same extent of land in some of the places I have mentioned, I would leave all I have done, and begin a new life to-morrow.

25,899. What is the altitude of the place you occupy?—I think it is over 700 feet above the level of the sea.

25,900. Yes, it is verging on 800 feet I see by the map. Is your crop gathered in?—I had it in since a fortnight.

25,901. And it is not damaged by frost, is it?—Well, it was damaged by the heat of the summer, but I have the same quantity as in former years.

25,902. So you have no fear in making settlements in those places that were settled before?—Not the smallest.

25,903. But they would be under all the conditions that would lead to success?—I could live even better than I live now.

25,904. Do you remember Mr Greig who conducted the reclamations for the Duke of Sutherland in Kildonan?—Yes.

25,905. Do you remember, or have you read the statement he put in to Lord Napier's Commission about advances to tenants on new holdings?—I have.

25,906. I take it that Mr Greig would be held by all authorities to be a practical man, with regard to such matters?—As far as the statement went.

25,907. And you remember he saw no difficulty in getting guarantees for advances that might be made?—Getting guarantees, and the work left by the occupier would be sufficient guarantee for any advance.

25,908. Then, one question with regard to the estimate made in Mr Maclean's statement, of 300 arable acres upon the farm of Blairich. [*The Chairman.*—300 old arable, and 33 acres now or recently cultivated]. Is your estimate higher than Mr Maclean's?—My estimate is much higher, and would be still higher, but that when the people were reclaiming it they had no implements to assist them.

25,909. And it is no disparagement to Mr Maclean as a practical agriculturist that you should know such a thing just as well as he does?—To allow every manner of justice to Mr Maclean, I would allow him to make it as small as possible.

25,910. But you would place it much higher?—Because I could make a third or a half more in connection with every part that was reclaimed before.

25,911. Have you heard it stated frequently regarding people who lived there eighty years ago that they were very poor farmers?—I can prove—

25,912. Have you heard such a statement?—Yes, I have heard that it was stated in the House of Commons before you by Mr Chaplin.

25,913. Is it not strange then that the arable land should be estimated now on the amount of land that these poor miserable farmers did cultivate at that time? Do you see anything inconsistent in that?—It is very inconsistent, but I would not take it as a statement at all, because the man was prejudiced against the Highlands in general.

25,914. You say that the 300 acres there estimated is an under estimate of the land that could be cultivated now?—I maintain that a third or a half could be added to every part that has been reclaimed already, because when the men reclaimed the land there, they had neither picks nor shovels, and they worked a great deal of the land with the *cas-chrom*. It must be admitted that we have made very great progress in the science of agriculture, for we have advanced from the *cas-chrom* to the steam-plough, and from the teeth-hook to the reaper and binder. It is only a matter of giving the land to the people, and seeing what could be done with it.

25,915. And you are decidedly of opinion, after a long life's experience and practice, that that would be successful?—It would be successful, but if we believe the detractors of the people it would be no success at all. But I would not accept their view of the matter,

Golspie. Alexander Bannerman

because, in my opinion, they wanted to grip the Highlands, and keep it as a happy hunting ground for themselves. My lord, with regard to land, the question is generally asked how could the people replenish the holdings. The present Duke of Sutherland has a glorious opportunity of redeeming the past, and endearing himself to the people of Sutherland, and if he would open up now the resources of his country, and allow the descendants of the evicted to go back and occupy the places at one time occupied by their forefathers, he would then merit the title given to Titus of Aspasia, "the darling of the Highland race" all over the world. The estate of Sutherland is different from any other property in Scotland; I can walk from sea to sea and from end to end of the county, without putting a foot on sod that has been turned for the last eighty years.

25,916. *The Chairman.* Do you know about the Kildonan reclamations?—My father was born on the strath of Kildonan, and I was born immediately after the evictions took place.

25,917. Do you remember the reclamations?—I remember the whole of them, and I visited every inch of them purposely to see how it was done, and what way it was done.

25,918. Were these reclamations, in your opinion, carried out on a suitable subject?—They were carried out very foolishly, my lord.

25,919. Was the subject suitable? Was the land selected suitable?—They left the suitable subjects and took the worst that could be fixed upon.

25,920. The worst in what way?—The worst in quality and the worst in quantity. There is one farm in particular up at Achintoul occupied by Gordon Henderson. He has a farm of 8000 acres hill pasture, and 485 acres of reclaimed land, and he is paying only £110 of rent for the whole. If he paid 3½d. per acre for the hill pasture he would have the 485 acres of reclaimed land for nothing, and if he paid ¾ per cent. of interest on the outlay he would have the 8000 acres of hill pasture for nothing.

25,921. Would you say that these reclamations were carried on in a judicious way, or in an extravagant way?—No reclamations in the Highlands could be carried on in a judicious way for which £73 was paid per acre. I sat in a seat here when Sir Arnold Kemball told Lord Napier's Commission that every acre reclaimed by the Duke of Sutherland in the county cost £73 per acre.

25,922. *Mr Macaulay, solicitor.*—With regard to the farm of Achintoul, you have told us that there are 8000 acres there of pasture?—Yes.

25,923. How do you fix that?—I fix that, because I got it from the tenant himself; he said that was the extent he got when he took the lease.

25,924. Would you be surprised to find there is very little more than the half of that?—I don't know anything about it. [*The Chairman.*—The acreage mentioned by Mr Maclean is 4500.]

25,925. You stated here just now 8000 acres, and the fact is that there are only 4500?—I had it from the tenant himself, and I made the statement before Mr Maclean himself.

25,926. Now about your own place at Langwell, what is the acreage of your pasture, including the whole arable land in the township of East Langwell?—Mr Maclean gave us the acreage of 1300, including arable and pasture for East Langwell.

25,927. Now, what is the rate per acre that you pay all over?—I think it will be about 11¾d., or thereabout.

25,928. What is the total rental?—I cannot tell you.

25,929. Have you any idea what the rate is upon the Blairich farm that you talked of a little ago?—I know that the rent of Blairich farm has been reduced from £1050 I think to £433.

25,930. And a great portion of it was given away to crofters?—Not a very great portion.

25,931. There was a considerable portion on the Lairg Strath, was not there?—Yes.

25,932. But you don't know how your rent per acre, taking the arable and the pasture, compares with the rate upon the Blairich farm?

25,933. *The Chairman.*—It is not easy to make the comparison, Mr Macaulay, and as for the common grazing he only shares it along with six others. Do you want to compare his arable and his outrun?

25,934. *Mr Macaulay.*—No, I want to compare his whole holding, including arable and pasture, with the rent of a whole farm. I want to get from him a comparison between the rate per acre on the whole of East Langwell, and the rate per acre on Blairich. [*To witness*]. Do you know what it is?—I don't know the extent of Mr Menzies's farm.

25,935. But you told us that you thought the crofters would take Blairich farm at the rate which Mr Menzies pays?—Arable and pasture.

25,936. All over?—Yes.

25,937. Would you be surprised to find that there is very little difference between it and yours?—I am not very sure of that.

25,938. You don't know about that?—I don't know, but I don't think it is paying as high as we pay.

25,939. Were you offered, or have you got additional grazings at East Langwell recently?—Recently we did.

25,940. What is the acreage?—I am not very sure of that, because it was not measured, and we have not yet paid any rent for it. The Commissioners have not gone over it yet to value it.

25,941. Have you any idea of the acreage?—It is within a mile square.

25,942. Are you satisfied then that your grazings there are sufficient?—The grazings, of course, are larger than almost any other part but one or two in the parish.

25,943. You have a considerable amount of grazing now?—We have a considerable amount of grazing.

25,944. And how is the rent to be fixed?—It is to be fixed by the Commission.

25,945. Would you have taken the factor's rent if he had fixed it?—To-morrow, if he would have valued it.

25,946. You would be quite satisfied with Mr Maclean's valuation?—Quite satisfied.

25,947. How much per acre do you think it would take to reclaim these places at Sciberscross and Dalnessie?—There is so much that has been reclaimed already, and there is a good deal that would need nothing but to plough it up to give excellent crops.

25,948. But taking it all over? If you are going to set down new settlers there, how much per acre do you think it would cost to get these places reclaimed?—Would it be out of the way to ask the landlord to give the same advantage to the descendants of the evicted who got no compensation, melioration, and very little commiseration when they were deprived of their holdings, as the man who came from the border got.

25,949. *The Chairman.*—I am afraid Mr Macaulay could hardly answer that. [*Mr Macaulay*].—I am afraid I am not in a position to do so.

25,950. The question which Mr Macaulay would like you to consider is whether it would cost anything to reclaim that land of which you have been speaking, and if so how much per acre. He is referring to the low-lying ground that you have described to him?—I am referring to the low-lying ground, and I know very well that if I were to get some of the old arable I would begin reclaiming to-morrow.

25,951. The question he is putting is, how much do you think it would cost per acre?—I would take it at what it would cost myself.

25,952. Does it come to this that a good deal of it wants nothing but ploughing?—Nothing, but a good pair of horses and a plough.

25,953. *Mr Macaulay.*—It requires fencing too. What would it cost per acre to settle people down there?—To begin and pay for the whole of it at once maybe would be too much for a man; but he could settle down there, and begin with a little and gradually increase yearly what he would require for his own support.

25,954. Of course, it is well known that you have been a very successful man in Rogart, and probably the most successful man there?—I need not be talking of that.

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25,955. It is notorious that that is so. Do you ascribe your success to your holding alone?—I ascribe it to my enterprise, and not to what I have got from the Duke of Sutherland.

25,956. You told us a little time ago that on your holding you are able to make a living with the aid of your family?—Yes.

25,957. Your family I need not say have done very well indeed. Now, do you think any other man put into your position and allowed to work that place of yours with no family to help him would be equally successful?—I am not going to say what other farmers would do; but I know what the people are prepared to do if they got the land. [*The Chairman.*—He may regard that as a somewhat invidious question.]

25,958. It may be invidious no doubt. But there are very few crofters in the same position as you are?—I am prepared to say that if men got the shadow of a chance they would make positions for themselves of which they need not be ashamed.

25,959. When Scottarie was added to Sciberscross, is it not the fact that some of the old grazing was given to the Rogart tenants?—It was given to them.

25,960. Do you know how much additional grazing has been given to the Rogart crofters within the last five or six years?—I believe the Blairich people got about 700 acres and Inchcape and the south side of Strath Fleet may be got up to 1900 acres.

25,961. You got 600 acres?—We have got somewhere about 600.

25,962. And West Langwell 800?—West Langwell,—well, that was only lately.

25,963. Making upwards of 4000 acres one way or another?—One way or another.

25,964. That is really a very considerable extension so far as the crofters are concerned?—So far.

25,965. Do you consider that in getting that extent of additional grazing they have been well treated?—Not better than their deserts.

25,966. Well, at any rate, you think if they have got their deserts, they would be quite satisfied with that?—No doubt.

25,967. There is a place up at the heights of Rogart that was to let—the farm of Gruamach?—Yes.

25,968. It was given forth freely, was it not, that the place was to let?—I was not aware of it. But I know that on the portion immediately contiguous to the crofters' holdings, some additional pasture has been given to them since last term.

25,969. But you knew that the other portion of that farm was also to let?—The other portion would not suit them, because it would add too much to the land, and I am afraid they would not be able to take it all.

25,970. But would you not expect new settlers to come forward if there is this anxiety for holdings that has been talked of to-day?—You need not expect that you could get applicants for every part of the county, because some of the land is not so suitable as other parts.

25,971. Is not this farm of Gruamach a desirable farm for grazing?—Yes, but it is not the best for agricultural purposes.

25,972. But it is a good grazing farm?—Very likely it is.

25,973. How do you account for the dearth of applicants for it?

25,974. *The Chairman.*—How long has it been advertised? [*Mr Macaulay*].—Since Whitsunday.

25,975. *Mr Sutherland.*—Has it it been advertised? [*Mr Macaulay*].—It has been very well told in the district; every one knows of it.

25,976. Was it advertised in the newspapers? [*Mr Macaulay*].—It was not advertised in the newspapers, but it has been made very well known all over the place that it was to be let.

25,977. *Mr Macaulay.* [*To witness*].—Do you think that if this place is advertised there are people who will come forward?—Very likely.

25,978. You think then that the mere advertisement would induce people to come forward rather than the knowledge that the place is to let?—I was told that any man belonging to the district applying for it would require so much cash before his offer could be accepted.

Golspie.
Alexander Bannerman.

25,979. Naturally so?—Naturally.

25,980. And was it a reasonable demand?—You need not expect that very many crofters are able to show them banking accounts to amount to a certain sum so as to be under favour when they applied for land in the county.

25,981. So that the probability is that they were unable to take this place which carries 300 sheep,—they are not in a position to show capital which would enable them to stock this farm with 300 sheep?—Not to take the whole of what is at present offered to the public.

25,982. *The Chairman.*—What was the rent? [*Mr Macaulay*].—The rent has not been fixed.

25,983. What was the rent of the previous occupant? [*Witness*]—£135, my lord.

25,984. *Mr Macaulay.*—The whole farm was about £135, and there is only about a third left, the other two-thirds were given to the neighbouring crofters. There is more than a third.

25,985. Well, between a third and a half; so that the rent at the old rate would only be £60 to £70. Do you know that this place was offered at £40?—I never heard of it. In that case we will be expecting it cheaper than the last tenant had it.

25,986. Were you aware that the late Duke was in the habit of giving advances to crofters for reclaiming land?—That was done for a consideration; I never heard that he gave much without expectation of being remunerated for it.

25,987. Very few people do. But do you know as a fact that he was in the way of making such advances?—He was.

25,988. And at a moderate interest?—My lord, the "moderate" interest at one time was 7 per cent., but it was reduced to 5 and is now 4 per cent.

25,989. *Mr Sutherland.*—The late Duke of Sutherland was in the habit, I understand, in Rogart of advancing money for reclaiming land; was that the tenour of your answer to Mr Macaulay?—I never heard that he advanced any money for reclaiming land, but I heard of Mr John Mackay, Hereford, giving driblets of money to men if they could reclaim rocks with it.

25,990. I thought your answer to Mr Macaulay was that the Duke of Sutherland did advance money, or carry on reclamations in Rogart?—Never; I never saw any reclamation carried on by the Duke of Sutherland there; but if men stood in need of getting their land fenced or improved, the office advanced money for the purpose. I got a little advance myself.

25,991. May I ask the question of you, Mr Macaulay? Have you any official knowledge of the fact that the late Duke of Sutherland advanced money to crofters for reclamation purposes? [*Mr Macaulay*].—It is the fact that the late Duke of Sutherland did advance money to crofters in order to the improvement of their holdings.

25,992. Do you know then the amount per acre that was allowed by the late Duke of Sutherland to the crofters for improving land in Rogart? [*Witness*].—No, but my son-in-law applied for money for land he was reclaiming, and in applying to Mr Maclean, I believe he asked too much for the subject he was to improve.

25,993. Do you know how much per acre he asked for?—No, but I know Mr Maclean's answer; Mr Maclean said———

25,994. I have no desire to go into the details of that private affair. Do you know, as a matter of fact, whether the late Duke of Sutherland did advance money for reclamations in Rogart through the crofters; and if so, do you know what he allowed per acre for these reclamations?—I never heard what he allowed per acre, but I know that the crofters got a little money, some of them, when they asked it to improve their holdings.

25,995. But if he did, you rather think that such advances did not amount to £63 per acre?—No, nor to £9 per acre.

25,996. *Mr Gordon.*—With reference to this portion

Golspie.

Alexander Bannerman.

of the farm of Sciberscross, lying on the south side of the river, which was given over during Mr Scott's tenancy of the farm, I would like to get your idea more plainly than you gave it as to the number of holdings which you think could be placed there. Do you know the extent of ground there?—I should think there would be about 60 acres in it.

25,997. Of arable land?—Of arable land.

25,998. But it is more in reference to the hill pasture. Do you know how many sheep are on it?—I could not tell the number of sheep.

25,999. You mentioned something about two holdings; that is why I wanted to make the point clear. I believe there are now 1200 sheep on that side of the water?—Very likely.

26,000. How many holdings would you propose to put on the 60 acres arable, and where the 1200 sheep are?—This is only one part of it.*

26,001. This is a special part, and you referred to it yourself, that is why I put the question?—I know that one man getting the whole of it would have a very excellent holding.

26,002. But it is too big for one man, that would be beyond the scope of our inquiry?—Even although two had it, I know there are from ten to twenty worse subjects than what is included in that.

26,003. But what I want to get from you, please, is the number of people you think could be placed there in a position to be self-supporting?—It would support two families comfortably.

26,004. It would require to support more than that, or I am afraid you would place very few settlers in the county at that rate?—When there is plenty of land in the county of Sutherland I would not make the holdings so small that they would not be self-supporting.

26,005. Your idea is that only two could be placed there comfortably?—Comfortably.

John Sutherland

JOHN SUTHERLAND, Merchant, Pittentrail, Rogart (50)—*examined.*

26,006. *The Chairman.*—Are you a crofter?—No.

26,007. Were you appointed at a public meeting?—Yes.

26,008. Where was it held?—In the Free Church, Rogart.

26,009. You are appearing along with Bannerman and Robert Matheson?—Yes.

26,010. You heard Bannerman's evidence?—Yes.

26,011. And do you concur in it?—Yes.

26,012. Do you wish to make any addition to it, with regard to available land that we ought to consider?—I have got a short statement.

26,013. Read it please.—This statement embodies the opinions of Mr Matheson and myself. We beg to submit the following statement in respect to the parish of Rogart. The land devoted to sheep runs in our parish comprises the extensive farm of Blairich, part of the farm of Sciberscross and the farm of Dalnessie, and Knockan, the upper part of the farm of Grumby, and Kinauld and Eden. On these farms prior to the clearances there were a number of places occupied by prosperous and contented tenants. These are as follows:—On the farm of *Blairich*:—Blairich, four tenants; Achork, two; Cavlsie, three; Toskary, one; Lettie, nine; Ardiconcre, one; Torsaid, two; Torbreck, one; Badlurgin, one; Laid-an-rairidh, one; Lubien, one; Achtomlenie, two; Tighcraig, one; Braenault, one; Achillie, two; Wren, nine; and Merlie, one. On part of the farm of *Sciberscross*:—Grudy, nine tenants; Liabhad, two; Brae Grudy, four; Dalfensaig, one; Aultimoult, one; Corryfrose, one; Reanriabach, two; Bad-an-asntigh, one. On the farm of *Dalnessie* and *Knockan*:—Dalnessie, one tenant; Cornabruich, one; Knockan, one; Dalmore, three. On the upper part of the farm of *Grumby*:—Achnaluachrach, two tenants; Craigtown, three; Aultannasack, one. Two tenants and two old women were removed from Torbeck about the time Tressady Lodge was built, but those tenants got other crofts of inferior quality to those from which they were removed, and the women got the house accommodation generally awaiting such. Conjointly with the farm of Blairich is rented the holding in Achnaluachrach which was recently occupied by the late widow Walter Mackay. As regards the quality of the land we have no hesitation in saying that on these farms the old arable land and the pasture surpass the land occupied by the majority of the crofters in the parish. Kinauld and Eden may be regarded as most suitable for new holdings. We have evidence to prove that land high lying and exposed can be cultivated to advantage. In our parish, peat banks at a high altitude produce a fair crop, at a cost not exceeding £15 per acre for reclamation. When we compare with this our low-lying straths and glens, we find that hundreds of acres that were never under cultivation could easily by improved at less cost, notwithstanding the extraordinary cost per acre of the gigantic Lairg and Kildonan reclamations. These reclamations having turned out to be a failure is no positive proof that the people could not live in comfort on the land of their forefathers. The reluctance with which the people left their holdings at the time of the clearances and the strong desire on the part of their descendants to get repossession of the land of their forefathers are evidences that people could live on holdings of sufficient size to maintain them independent of unreliable outside work. No doubt the people are glad to find that the present Duke has been radical on the land question since the year 1885 and that at present he is favourable to the formation of small farms; but they must regret that no success attended the efforts of the Small Holdings Committee of the County Council to purchase or lease land for holdings for those who stand in urgent need of the same.

(Signed) JOHN SUTHERLAND.
„ ROBERT MATHESON.

Golspie.

John Sutherland.

26,014. *Mr Sutherland.*—Those places you have mentioned on the farms of Blarich, Dalnessie, and Grumbie as having had tenants before are now in your opinion suitable for making small holdings thereon?—Quite suitable.

26,015. And it was because you think so, that you gave as an argument in their favour, that all these tenants were there before, I presume?—Quite so.

26,016. How many were there altogether? There are forty-two on the farm of Blairich, and others in other places making seventy-three tenants, I think altogether who were on the farms of Blairich, Dalnessie, and part of Grumbie; is that right?—I may explain that I got the number of tenants from old people in the parish, but there might have been others that escaped their knowledge. There might have been a few more, or there might have been a few less; we are not bound to any precise figure.

26,017. But you got evidence of the existence of these tenancies from people who saw them?—Well, from old people within the parish.

26,018. Who either saw them themselves, or saw the people who had the tenancies?—Some of them are actually the children of those who were evicted.

26,019. And some, I suppose, you have no doubt found who were actually living in these places?—I cannot say that I have seen any who were living in them.

26,020. About what date were the people put away from these places?—About the time of the clearances.

26,021. That is about the year 1819?—Yes, and perhaps a little later on.

26,022. And you advance this as *primâ facie* evidence, that the land is suitable now for small holdings again?—I would be inclined to suppose that that land is more suited for small holdings than the land at present in the occupation of the crofters.

26,023. Then, I wish to ask you a word with regard to reclamations. Do you know what were the terms of payment to crofters in the parish of Rogart, for land

* Mr Bannerman has since written explaining that he misunderstood this question. He meant Scotarie for two holdings. The ground taken up with 1200 sheep extends for five miles along the river, and could be converted into 12 crofts of good size. Scotarie lies almost one mile back from the river.

reclaimed by themselves where there was a bargain between them and the proprietor for reclaiming land?—I cannot enter into that, because, in any knowledge that I have of land being reclaimed in the parish of Rogart, there was no special bargain between the crofters and the proprietor; but I give it as my opinion that the reclamation of an acre never exceeded £15.

26,024. That is your opinion, that any reclamation of land carried through by a crofter never exceeded £15 an acre?—In the majority of cases.

26,025. On the average?—On the average.

26,026. And is it your opinion that these lands could be put in order again,—the lands that were cultivated,—at £15 an acre, the arable portion?—The old arable land in our straths would not cost nearly £15 to put in order for holdings, for the simple reason that hundreds of acres there are ready for the plough, and all that is required is fencing, and perhaps in some cases a little draining.

26,027. But the subjects that were improved in Rogart by the crofters at (you state) £15 an acre, were not so favourable subjects to work upon as the land you are speaking of. What sort of land was it then?—In some instances the ground was even worse than being in a state of nature for the simple reason that for generations the people were cutting their peats there.

26,028. And that was the land they got to reclaim?—In a good many cases.

26,029. Now, of course, you will see the absurdity of my going to make any suggestion or your making any comparison between that and the rate at which the Duke of Sutherland reclaimed the land?—Yes.

26,030. Contrasting the two states of things, what is your general deduction from the fact that crofters can reclaim land at a cost of £15 an acre, while it costs the landlord £60 an acre? Is the discrepancy not so great that it calls for some extraordinary explanation?—Yes, an extraordinary explanation, I am of opinion myself that the men employed at the Shinness reclamations could reclaim the land with the pick and spade when at the same time they were all attending to the steam-plough.

26,031. But you would not be prepared to deny that the steam-plough was a great advantage? Have you seen the steam-plough at work?—I have.

26,032. Are you aware that it was stated that even after the farms were reclaimed and put in order, they were afterwards carried on by the estate through a manager, and if I remember rightly, some £22,000 were lost on that management during the interval?—I have no doubt of it.

26,033. I forget what the length of the occupation was, but does it not strike you as a very remarkable thing that a farm would be carried on at a loss of £22,000 for a number of years?—Probably, once gone into it would require to be carried through.

26,034. But this is the management of it after it was reclaimed, and the carrying of it on, after all the initial outlay had been already made?—Oh, yes.

26,035. What would be the general deduction you would make? What, in your mind, is the reason why there is this great discrepancy between the rate at which a crofter can reclaim land and the rate at which the landlord can reclaim land?—I would go farther than a crofter; I believe that even contractors could reclaim land at £15 to £20 an acre by having it on contract.

26,036. And having a profit out of the contract?—Yes.

26,037. Besides the subsequent rent?—Yes.

26,038. So that there is, in your opinion, something that calls for explanation in this transaction when the discrepancy is so great?—Certainly.

26,039. Would it be an unfair deduction to draw from it, that a landlord-managed business like this could not be so successfully carried on as by the crofters themselves?—That is one reason, certainly.

26,040. It is, in your opinion, a fair deduction to draw from the facts of this case, taking all the facts into consideration?—I would be inclined to suppose that it was a fair deduction.

26,041. You referred to the steam plough. Are you aware that the machinery which was used in the reclamation of the Duke of Sutherland's land was machinery that had to be designed and constructed for the purpose,—and that it was being improved by experience as they went on?—That was evident, because they made improvements as they went along.

26,042. And each of these improvements would require a great additional expenditure of money?—Yes.

26,043. So that the machinery used at the beginning might actually have been cast aside before the reclamations were ended?—Yes.

26,044. Did you, as a matter of fact, see that done?—Well, no, I cannot say that I saw that done, but I have been at the reclamations one day when a number of men were employed taking an engine out of a bog; and I believe, that during the time they were experimenting and taking it out of the bog, they could have reclaimed a good deal of land.

26,045. But you are not prepared to deny that the application of machinery to the reclamation of land, if done in a proper way, is a good thing?—It might do well enough where there was a wide stretch of land on which to operate; but without a long stretch I don't think it would be advisable to try the steam plough.

26,046. But as a matter of fact, it was upon long stretches of land?—Certainly it was, in Shinness.

26,047. Could not the same machinery have reclaimed a hundred times more land than was actually done?—Probably it might, but I am not very practical on the subject.

26,048. The machinery which reclaimed so many hundreds of acres at Lairg and Kildonan would last out the reclamation of an extent of land ten times as large?—The same machinery.

26,049. If the reclamations went on, would there not be a much greater acreage to give a return for the expenditure?—Certainly, there would be no expenditure in buying new machinery.

26,050. And would not that be a very important element in any calculation as to the cost of reclamations per acre?—Yes.

26,051. Was it from that point of view that you said the reclamations were not successful?—That, and the subject operated upon.

26,052. Are you aware that it was not denied that the experiment was tried upon the most unfavourable land; are you aware that that was openly admitted? [*The Chairman.*—It is stated by Mr Maclean to be on high and exposed land]. I made reference rather to remarks made by the late Duke of Sutherland, who knew more about the matter than even Mr Maclean, with all deference. Are you not aware that it was not desired to lessen the green area, by ploughing it at all, but they wanted to reclaim land, in addition to the land that was old arable? Have you ever heard that stated?—No, I cannot say that I have.

26,053. Have you seen any of the reclaimed lands lately?—Not lately.

26,054. Do you know anything about the crops that are raised from them now?—I cannot speak as to the crops now, but I have seen part of the reclamations a number of years ago, and they were fast getting into a state of nature.

26,055. They were allowed to get into a state of nature?—They were allowed to get into a state of nature.

26,056. But supposing they were occupied by small working holders, are you of opinion they would ever be allowed to go back into a state of nature?—The result would be that they would keep the land in rotation.

26,057. Do you know any crofters in Rogart who are allowing land to go out of cultivation?—Not to the same extent.

26,058. Or in proportion to their holdings?—Or in proportion to their holdings.

26,059. Is it not the fact rather that they are increasing their arable land? Is not the tendency that way?—Yes.

26,060. Now, may I put this general question to you, with regard to these reclamations, and I will be done. In your opinion, is the result to the landlord of these reclamations at Kildonan and Lairg any

Golspie. John Sutherland.

criterion at all of what it would cost to found new settlements on the lands you were talking of?—Not the least.

26,061. Not the slightest?—So far as I can judge.

26,062. Have they, in your opinion, any bearing whatever on the matter?—None.

26,063. That is your decided opinion?—That is my decided opinion.

26,064. Are you a native of this county?—I am.

26,065. Are you the son of a crofter?—I am.

36,066. Were you brought up on a croft?—Yes.

26,067. Have you laboured on a croft?—I have.

26,068. And know all about it practically, of your own experience?—Yes, from the time I was fourteen years of age.

26,069. So it is no mere theoretical knowledge you have on the subject?—No; experimental knowledge.

26,070. You are Vice-Convener of the county, I think?—Yes.

26,071. And you are prepared to point out to us those lands that you referred to if required?—At any time.

26,072. *Mr Macaulay, Solicitor.*—What is your occupation?—A merchant.

26,073. Are you a crofter?—No.

26,074. You have no land in your hands just now?—No.

26,075. How do you come to be able to speak in the practical way you have done?—I told Sheriff Brand, or rather Mr Sutherland that. I was engaged in farming along with my father when I was about fourteen years of age up till close on twenty.

26,076. Between fourteen and twenty years of age, and since then you have been a merchant?—Not quite a merchant since then.

26,077. What else?—I was a tradesman.

26,078. You have been a tradesman and a merchant since then?—Yes.

26,079. So that since you were twenty years of age you have had no direct work with the land?—No.

26,080. You referred to the croft of Widow Walter Mackay at Achnaluachrach?—Yes.

26,081. Are you aware that that croft was offered to several parties?—I am.

26,082. And why did they not have it?—Because they were of opinion that they should not take the improvements of another man.

26,083. That is the improvements of Mackay?—Probably, or the improvements of his father.

26,084. And even although offered this place, they refused to have it?—Probably, and perhaps quite justifiably.

26,085. Very well. Now, about Upper Gruamach, are you aware that that place was offered at a very moderate rent,—at the rent of £40 recently?—If the Chairman would allow it, I would answer that question by asking another. Did any apply for that part of Gruamach, and were they refused?

26,086. I ask you that question about Gruamach, because it is notorious that it was in the market. Are you aware that this place was offered, and that applications were not made for it; the people would not have it?—My lord, I will answer the question direct. Yes, I was aware, but I was told that parties applied for the farm, and that they were told that that part of the farm was all but settled, and that they need not further apply.

26,087. And that was the general idea in Rogart?—Yes, so far as I could collect.

26,088. That is your information?—Yes.

26,089. How much do you estimate would be required to put these lands that you referred to in a state for a crop, including fencing and draining?—Allow me to understand your question, sir. Do you mean in labour, or in money?

26,090. Whatever cost, supposing it was done by—By the crofter himself?

26,091. Well, by the crofter himself, we will suppose: his labour is the equivalent of money: I mean these lands that you referred to as having been cleared?—It might cost about £5 an acre, but I don't think it would exceed that.

26,092. Including fencing and draining?—Yes, but not houses. Golspie. John Sutherland.

26,093. What means have you got of fixing that estimate?—My knowledge of the locality, and of the ground.

26,094. How do you arrive at that figure?—The suitableness of the soil for crofters, to begin on it without making any improvements on the most of it, but merely taking the plough and ploughing it.

26,095. Do you mean to say it would only take £5 an acre to fence that land and drain it, and put it into a state of cultivation at once?—Very few drains are required; and if you had a farm of probably 20 or 30 acres, you would, in the first instance, have only the outside ring, and I think £5 an acre should put a very good outside ring on at all events.

26,096. What about the houses now?—I do not enter into that question.

26,097. What would they cost?—I am not prepared to say what they would cost; it would depend entirely on the quality of the houses built.

26,098. But if you are able to speak in that way about land, you, as a practical tradesman, could tell us about the houses, I think?—You could build a dwelling house probably at £100, and you could go as high as £300 or £400.

26,099. But a house that would keep a crofter and his family in moderate comfort. [*The Chairman.*—A house suitable to the holding]?—If the crofter was to buy the material and do the whole work, about £100 probably.

26,100. Would he do the mason's work there, do you estimate?—The whole.

26,101. He would do the building himself?—No, no.

26,102. Then you mean that he would let it out to contract?—Yes.

26,103. He could build a house that would keep him in moderate comfort at a cost of £100?—Yes.

26,104. How far does that include a steading, or does it at all?—No.

26,105. Well, how much do you estimate for the steading?—Probably £80 to £100.

26,106. Now, we arrive at £200. What would you consider a fair amount to have in hand of arable land?—If circumstances would admit, I would not have a croft smaller than 20 acres, from 20 to 30 as the case might be, and up to 35 acres; but I would draw the line at perhaps 30 acres.

26,107. And taking your own estimate of £5, that would be £150. We have got it up now to £350. What would you consider the value of a fair stock for a place of that kind?—I cannot enter into that.

26,108. You don't know that practically, I suppose?—No.

26,109. Would you say £100 or £500?—Probably.

26,110. That would bring you up to £500. Now, in your opinion, how many men are there in Rogart who would be able to take a holding of that nature at such a cost as you have estimated?—So far as those who would be prepared to take land in Rogart are concerned, a large number of those who are perhaps willing to leave their present holdings have got more stock already; and in a good many cases they would carry out many of these improvements themselves, so that actually they would not require to pay dry cash out of their pocket.

26,111. But their labour is the same as money, is it not?—Certainly.

26,112. You cannot go and say that that is not equal to money at any rate?—But if you are about to count in that way, their labour would be continued.

26,113. About £500 is what you estimate as necessary for the place you depict to yourself?—You have fixed the price of stock yourself.

26,114. Well, £350 apart from that?—Yes.

26,115. And you can give us no idea as to what demand there would be for a place of that nature?—Not in the meantime.

26,116. Do you think they would be able to do the labour themselves?—A good many of them, I have no doubt.

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26,117. What means have you of knowing that?—The people's own statements.

26,118. Is it not your experience that sometimes these are not very satisfactory?—I should not like to go into that matter,—to begin to induce the people.

26,119. *The Chairman.*—Speaking of those low-lying lands which you say only require to be ploughed up, how long would it be before they yielded a crop? Would they yield a crop the first year, and if not, when?—They would yield a crop the first year.

26,120. The markets of the spring in which they were applied?—Yes.

26,121. In some cases, however, I suppose, where the land is not quite so favourably situated, more than a year would be required to obtain a crop?—There is very little of that kind of land.

26,122. Not much?—Not much.

26,123. Speaking generally of the lands you have specified, occupied previously by these old townships and single tenants, the land would yield a crop after the first year's plough?—Yes.

26,124. That is your opinion?—It is a fact: the land is there quite green, and has only produced grass from the time it yielded a crop.

26,125. In the district of which you have knowledge, is there a demand for self-sustaining holdings?—Yes.

26,126. And do you think that those who so desire would be in the main prepared to enter upon such undertakings without outside assistance?—That is a question that I am not prepared to fully enter on in the meantime. There might be a number who could, but there might be a large number who could not.

26,127. Then, would you say, speaking generally, and as one having knowledge of the people in the district, that the majority would probably require some aid?—Yes.

26,128. *Mr Gordon.*—Following up the Chairman's question as to the desire of the people for self-supporting holdings, there would no doubt be a difficulty in finding men with sufficient capital to take a place of the size you mention. Now I gather from what you have said, that you are not in favour of crofting townships,—small lots?—Not too small.

26,129. Therefore, I suppose you would wish the Commission to understand your opinion is that in creating new holdings, they should be of a size to occupy a man and his family profitably during the year?—Quite so; that is my idea.

26,130 And not a small croft in which a man would have to depend upon labour to eke out his subsistence?—That is my idea.

26,131. *Mr Sutherland.*—With regard to the houses and stock I wish to ask you this. You were questioned theoretically about difficulties as to these?—Yes.

26,132. Now, we will take the practical fact. Are there houses and stock among the crofters of Rogart?—Yes.

26,133. Did they ever get public advances or public money for the purpose of erecting the one and getting the other?—With the exception of the assistance given by the proprietor, in perhaps timber and lime, I am not aware of any.

26,134. The ordinary rule that obtained on the estate of giving them the lime and the timber?—Quite so.

26,135. In virtue of which the proprietor claimed the whole house as his property?—Prior to the passing of the Crofters Act.

26,136. You think then, that that difficulty that has been advanced is not a practical one?—Not in my opinion.

26,137. You were asked the question if labour was not money?—Yes.

26,138. The crofter has labour?—Yes.

26,139. He does not require to borrow that?—No.

26,140. Now, is labour money, in your opinion? It is rather an abstruse question I daresay, but is labour money only when it is applied to something that will produce something?—Quite so.

26,141. And you think that the people have got the labour, but that they are withheld from that which would produce money if labour were allowed to be applied to it?—Certainly.

26,142. And your position, as I understand it, is that you desire to allow that labour be applied to a productive subject?—Certainly. Golspie. John Sutherland.

26,143. And the money will follow that?—Certainly.

26,144. Is that not, as a matter of fact, how the people established their homes after they were driven from the land?—Yes.

26,145. And you think the same process could be carried out again under better circumstances?—Yes.

JOSEPH MACLEOD, Brora (31)—*examined.* Joseph Macleod.

26,146. *The Chairman.*—Are you a crofter?—I am a sub-crofter.

26,147. A sub-tenant?—A sub-tenant.

26,148. Who is the principal tenant?—William Grant.

26,149. Do you pay him a rent?—Yes.

26,150. What rent?—£4.

26,151. Have you a written statement?—Yes.

26,152. Kindly read it.—At a meeting held representing the crofters, cottars, and others, in the parish of Clyne, I was requested to submit the following statement respecting the townships on Brora Strath, once the happy homes of a contented, vigorous, and pious race of people, who were cruelly removed from their houses and land to make room for sheep and sport. Although thus removed from their homes and land upon which they lived comfortably, no provision was made for them, although repeatedly asserted by those who now reap the fruits of eviction, that they were removed for the bettering of their condition. There are on Strath Brora sixty-two townships. On the south of Loch Brora, twenty-three, on the north, nineteen, on the south of the Black Water, thirteen, and on the north, seven. There lived in these townships over a hundred tenants, with an average family of five. There were in Garichill, three tenants; Duchary, two; Conrisgag, five; Ledoich, two; Rinn-Chaoill, one; Carrol, five; Laidmore, one; Kilbrare, three; Dalbhaite, two; Uarachail, one; Storal, one; Strath-Ruadh, three; Scottary, three; Badinelich, one; Aultmuilten, three; Baile-(Alister M'Kechan), Cill-chaluim-chille, Craigruadh-Rheannagaimh, Greanan (ministers' sheiling); Achoilemore, seven; Achoilebeg, three; Balnacoil, one; Dalpholly; Killean (shieling of laird of Uppat); Salachy, one; Bogag, one; Oldtown, two; Feaglais, three; Loanmuck, one; Ardchue, one; Rhean, one; Dalfluich, one; Brechue; Dalenacnuigag; Badlewis, one; Baddan, two; Foiche, one; Muiemore, two; Lubaig, one; Cnoc-Cauchoilach, one; Achemore, two; Corrifrose, one; Dalbreac, two; Amat, one; Dalbhadie, one; Achnacoile, one; Achnamian, one; Baddantighe, three; Cluaig, one; Rheanscaing, two; Achness, two; Chrislich, one; Gobernuisgach, one; Polly, one; Dalbhain, one; Craggienadaimh, one; Achnanighean, Sciberscross, Mearen, Cill-Pheadair-mor, Cill-Pheadair-Beag.

Strath Brora may be said not to be so large in extent as some of the other straths from which the people were removed in this county, but it is considered to be equal to any for growing crop as well as for pasture.

Mr Shaw is tenant of *Gordonbush* farm, and keeps the following number of shepherds and sheep:—Cnockan, one shepherd, 400 sheep; Polly, two shepherds, 700 sheep; Brechue, one shepherd, 400 sheep; Aschoile, two shepherds, 1000 sheep; Gordonbush, one shepherd, 160 sheep.

Mr Milligan is tenant of the *Sciberscross* farm, and keeps the following shepherd and flocks:—Kilbrare, one shepherd, 1000 sheep; Point, one shepherd, 360 sheep; Sciberscross, one shepherd, 360 sheep; Amat, one shepherd, 460 sheep; Dalbreack, two shepherds, 700 sheep. There are no crofters on all this extent of ground.

There are two shooting tenants—one keeps three gamekeepers and the other two. There is also the Carrol deer forest, which we believe to be capable of pasturing about 1000 sheep.

The crofters of this parish hold a club farm at Culean for grazing purposes, but it is found to be in-

Golspie. Joseph Macleod.

adequate and they desire an extension. They possess very small lots, and in the majority of cases these are of a very inferior soil, and they express the sincere hope that the visit of the Royal Commission may be the means of demonstrating to the present Government, in whom the Highland people have every confidence, that there is urgent need for immediate legislation for the Highlands, with a view to the descendants of a noble race being replaced on the lands of their forefathers.

(Signed) Joseph Macleod, Brora.
,, John Mackenzie, Brora.

The rental of the shootings in the parish is £2630, and that of the farms £1198.

26,153. Are you of opinion that the lands formerly occupied by these persons and townships are capable of reoccupation and recultivation to profit?—Yes.

26,154. You mentioned club farms; are you in favour of club farms yourself?—In some cases not; in this case it is desirable, because the grazing is so far away from the various districts of the parish of Clyne, that anything but a club farm would not suit. It is not adjacent to their holdings, and, therefore, it is better as a club farm. Had it been a common adjoining their holdings, it would have been different.

26,155. Could not a common adjacent to their holdings be worked more profitably on the club farm system than each individual looking after his own stock?—I could not say; I know some who have got a common, where each attends to his own stock, and they are just as prosperous as a club farm, if not more so.

26,156. You are of opinion that the advantages of a club farm depend on local circumstances?—Quite.

26,157. *Mr Macaulay, Solicitor.*—Who is the principal tenant of this place that you occupy as sub-tenant?—William Grant.

26,158. Do you know what rent he pays to the Duke?—About £3, 15s.

26,159. And have you got the whole of his holding in this sublet of yours?—I have this year: I hold a shop as well as the croft.

26,160. Is it a store?—Yes, a grocery shop.

26,161. Is the shop part of William Grant's holding?—Part of William Grant's. I do not hold the whole of the building; there are other two tenants occupying it, but the croft is in my possession.

26,162. What is paid for this other part of the building?—Probably about £6 or £9 more.

26,163. And you pay £4?—I pay £4.

26,164. Take it at £8 for the other part; then William Grant receives £12, does he, for his £4 holding?

26,165. *Mr Sutherland.*—Is it with the object of increasing the rent that that question is asked?

26,166. *Mr Macaulay.*—I want to find out the state of matters. [*Witness*]. If it is in order to answer it I should be glad to do so, but if you do not deem it a prudent question I shall refrain from answering.

26,167. *The Chairman.*—You can answer it or not, as you like, it is not quite relevant?—Then I shall refrain from answering it. But I might point out that in the Parish of Clyne there are a number of people desirous of having an extension of holding. For a long time they have desired so, and they made application to the Small Holdings Committee of the County Council. There were 47 applications, but it was found by the Small Holdings Committee that no land was available.

26,168. Did they apply for any specific land, or for land in general?—With very few exceptions, they each stated the extent and the places they desired for holdings. I for one applied for 48 acres.

26,169. *Mr Sutherland.*—You heard the statement that was made to-day with regard to that?—Yes.

26,170. *The Chairman.*—Pardon me a moment? Did you specify the locality of the 48 acres?—Yes.

26,171. You identified it?—Yes.

26,172. What answer did you get to the application?—No land available was the reply, except 48½ acres at Embo.

Golspie. Joseph Macleod.

26,173. Where were the 48 acres for which you applied?—At Aberscross.

26,174. Did any other applicants identify the lands that they desired to obtain for small holdings?—Yes.

26,175. A number of them?—A number of them.

26,176. Were these lands also at Aberscross?—No, in the parish which I represent myself, the parish of Clyne.

26,177. On what farms were these upon?—Some upon Gordonbush, some on Lothbeg, and some on Kintradwell farm, and others.

26,178. But the application has not resulted in any practical advantage?—There is no fruit flowing from it at any rate. It is unworkable so far as the Small Holdings Committee is concerned.

26,179. *Mr Macaulay.*—In connection with Aberscross, when was this application made to the Duke or his agent for the 48 acres?—It was made to the Small Holdings Committee of the County Council, not to the estate.

26,180. It was not made to the Duke of Sutherland?—We, as a Small Holdings Committee, intimated to the various factors or to Mr Maclean, who is factor for this side of that county, that there were a number of applications for holdings, but the reply which the Committee received was that no land was available except 48½ acres at Embo.

26,181. The application to the County Council then was in a general way, and not for this 40 acres or for any other land specially?—The Small Holdings Committee communicated with the estate, with the view of ascertaining whether land could be had for those applied.

26,182. It was done in a general way?—It could not be otherwise than in a general way, on the part of the Small Holdings Committee. We were acting on behoof of all the applicants.

26,183. *The Chairman.*—What we are anxious to get at is this; in the communication made to Mr Maclean, was there a specification of the particular lands desired by each applicant?—No, the clerk of the County Council intimated that there were applications from the various parishes of this county, and wanted Mr Maclean, or the estate which Mr Maclean represents, to say whether land was available for those who were now applying for it.

26,184. But it only got the length of trying to ascertain whether there was available land, without specifying the land which you thought was available, and which you localised; is that so?—I do not understand.

26,185. For example, take your own case. So far as the application bore upon your own case, was there communicated to Mr Maclean the fact that you desired a particular portion, a specified portion of a particular farm?—I am not prepared to say so, as far as I am personally concerned, but the fact was that nothing could be done as far as the Small Holdings Committee was concerned, because the reply to the whole, jointly, was that no land was available, except the 48½ acres at Embo.

26,186. But as I understand you to say, the communication to Mr Maclean did not say that particular individuals asked for specified portions of land?—No, there was none of that kind. It was sent as a whole from the various parishes.

26,187. *Mr Forsyth.*—Have you any knowledge of the general action of the Small Holdings Committee, with reference to any other estate, say to Skibo? Did they ask definitely for any particular land?—None in particular, just in the general way in which we applied to his Grace the Duke of Sutherland.

26,188. You just asked for land generally?—Our clerk was instructed to inform the factor or the estate manager, that there were applications for land on that ground, and the reply was that they could not in the meantime give the land.

26,189. But did you not think it advisable to ask for some special place? Are you a member of the Small Holdings Committee?—Yes.

26,190. Did you not think it advisable to ask for some specific places on which the estate could have decided absolutely whether it would grant the land or not?—Well, we considered that from the replies which we had received, it would be just as fruitless to specify the places as to write in the general way in which we have done.

26,191. But don't you think that a specific refusal even would have been much more definite than this general reply, and more desirable?—Well, the reply which was received from the estate of Skibo stated that the property being under trust they could not definitely say what could be done.

26,192. In that case you had a definite answer?—They could neither sell nor let.

26,193. And was it the same in the case of the Sutherland estate? Did they give you a similarly general refusal?—What they said was that no land was available.

26,194. But still you put your request in general terms only?—Oh, just in general terms.

26,195. *The Chairman.*—Were these 40 acres that you had in view for yourself?—Yes.

26,196. Was that just in your own mind?—For myself.

26,197. It was just in your own mind; it was not communicated to anybody?—As well as being in my mind, I communicated my desire for 40 acres to the Small Holdings Committee, at which time my application appeared in the public prints, probably on account of myself forming one of that Committee.

26,198. *Mr Sutherland.*—Would it not be easier, in your opinion, for the landlord that your application should be general? You did not want to tie him down to any particular part?—We did not want to tie him down to any particular part, and we thought that by applying in general terms he would suit himself.

26,199. Was that the object?—That was the object in applying generally.

26,200. So that if he had any land available anywhere you would be very glad to entertain any proposal with regard to that land, was that it?—Yes, we would. Of course, the people, my lord, in our parish, feel that the time has now arrived when something should be done with a view to getting the land; and as to the difficulty which Mr Macaulay has been putting in the way, I might point out to your lordship that we in Clyne don't consider any difficulty there, and we feel, at least I do, that the difficulty would not be so great to-day in taking these holdings as it was when the people were put down from the holdings which we now want to get back, and if we are allowed to build our own houses and reclaim the land a second time, we in Clyne think there is no difficulty in being allowed to go back on the soil and regain the inheritance which has been taken from us. If we had got the land handed down to us as our inheritance, the difficulty would be very easily overcome.

26,201. *Mr Macaulay.*—As to these small holdings I would like to ask whether it is not the fact that the factors, that the Duke's representatives, asked the County Council to specify what land they specially referred to.

26,202. *The Chairman.*—Is it the fact that the estate management for the Duke requested the County Council or the committee of the Council to specify the lands referred to in their application?—They were specified.

26,203. Was that question put on behalf of the Duke?—I am not aware. There are two County Councillors here who might probably be able to answer it if your lordship desires to put it.

26,204. Is it not within your knowledge that a request was made on behalf of the Duke to specify the particular lands which the committee had in view, if they had any?—I am not aware just now, but I know that some of the replies which came from Factor Maciver, in the north, were so very indifferent that we became disgusted with the whole question; we could get no satisfaction of any kind.

26,205. We will deal with anything regarding Mr Factor Maciver's management when we go there. Golspie.

26,206. *Mr Bannerman.*—With your permission I may say, as a member of the County Council of Sutherland, that the application was made in general terms and the answer in particular, stating that there was no land but what was under lease with the exception of this park at Embo. Joseph Macleod.

26,207. A general application followed by that answer? [*Mr Bannerman*].—And the answer was that all the farms or places suitable for holdings were under lease, with the exception of this park at Embo, which I may say was without a tenant.

26,208. Then, do you know, Mr Bannerman, whether any request was made by the estate to specify lands suitable?—The terms on which the land was to be granted were so enormous that we could not approach the estate any further, because £1 was asked for an acre there, and knowing that the rent of the farm in general was just about one-half of that, we could not agree.

26,209. Was any request made on behalf of the estate to specify particular lands?—We were told that all the land that should be available was under lease, and that it could not be granted.

26,210. That was the ultimate answer; but did the estate make any request to the committee to specify particular lands?—I don't think so.

26,211. Are you a member of the Small Holdings Committee?—I am a member interested in the land.

26,212. But are you a member of the Small Holdings Committee?—No, but I have attended all the meetings of the Council and know what was done.

26,213. Who is the chairman of the Small Holdings Committee?—Both the Convener and the Vice-Convener sit *ex officio*; the one sits in the absence of the other.

26,214. *Rev. John Murray, Brora.*—Perhaps you will allow me, as chairman of the County Council, to make a short explanation on the point. In the first place some confusion has prevailed between the Allotments Act and the Small Holdings Act. The land offered to us was offered under the Allotments Act. Mr Maclean, the factor, replied to us that so much of the land on Embo farm was available not for small holdings but for allotments for the fishermen, and he laid down conditions on which the land was to be given. These conditions were, in our opinion, so unreasonable that we could not look at them, and our reply to that communication was that in the circumstances we could not entertain his proposals, but the Act, in our opinion, allowed him to arrange directly with the tenants, and if he should do so we should be satisfied. I don't know whether any definite arrangement has been come to between the Duke of Sutherland and the fishermen of Embo. You will observe, my lord, that the land offered to us was to be possessed by the fishermen of Embo, and that we were to be in the position as County Council of being rent collectors from the fishermen, instead of the Duke of Sutherland. If we were going to buy land and have tenants under us, we would not like to begin with perhaps Embo, and how that question stands now I cannot tell you, but that is the upshot of that particular point. Now, as to the applications to the Duke for small holdings we were dealing with the whole county, and undoubtedly applications were sent to us from particular districts. I cannot say specifically whether we mentioned the districts, but, certainly, we led the factors to understand that applications were sent to us from various districts. I don't know whether we mentioned the particular spot and the particular acreage,—I cannot be definite as to that; but the reply was that there was no land available, and when we heard that we thought there was no particular use in saying very much about it. But our last communication to the estate, and I think to Mr Maclean here was to state in reference to any land which he would have, such as Embo or any other, whether he would be willing to submit it to arbitration, so that there would be no disagreement as to conditions or stipulations. To that communication we have received no reply to this day, and I hold that a courteous reply, at any rate, to these

Golspie. Joseph Macleod.

communications would keep matters smooth. Civility costs nothing, but it goes a long way.

John Mackenzie.

JOHN MACKENZIE, East Brora (63)—*examined.*

26,215. *The Chairman.*—Are you a crofter?—Yes.

26,216. Was your rent settled by the Crofters Commission?—Not yet.

26,217. What is your rent?—My rent is £1 now, but it was only 5s. before, and tramway and railroad went through it for twenty-four years, and we are paying rent to his Grace for that railroad and tramway land.

26,218. Can you tell us the extent?—About one and a half acres; it is all spoilt by the railroad and the tramway now.

26,219. One and a half acres altogether?—Yes, that we can cultivate now.

26,220. Arable land?—Yes.

26,221. Have you any outrun?—No.

26,222. Have you any stock?—I have one cow.

26,223. You heard the evidence of Joseph Macleod?—Yes.

26,224. And do you concur in it?—Yes.

26,225. I suppose it fully sets forth what you wish to tell us?—Yes.

26,226. Then, we may take you as concurring in his evidence. Have you anything additional to say?—Not much, except this that I hear it often said that the people are far better off since they were put out of the strath than they were in the strath. Now, I was questioning one of the men who were evicted from the strath. He was one of our Free Church elders, David Gordon, and he told me, himself, that if there were seven of a family, two lads might be out with the man working on the bit farm, one of the daughters would be teasing wool, another would be knitting, and another spinning, and the wife would be making ready the meat, and thus every one was taken in for the house. So if a stranger would come their way they would keep him a fortnight for his good company. Now, we will come down to where you are now. If a friend comes our way we need to go to the shop and buy things for which we may perhaps not be able to pay for a month. And I will defy them to say that they had arrears of rent at the strath. They did not hear of any one putting his parents or his sister or his brother on the parochial board; they could keep them themselves, and the sons and daughters were not needing to go away, as they could maintain themselves at home, but down here in the low land, whenever they are sixteen years of age, the daughter or the son must leave the parents and go away; and when the father comes to old age, or loses his power of working, he must go on the parochial board.

Alexander Mackay.

ALEXANDER MACKAY, Wester Clyne (44)
—*examined.*

26,227. *The Chairman.*—Are you a crofter?—My mother is the crofter.

26,228. You live with your mother?—Yes.

26,229. What rent does she pay?—£2, 16s.

26,230. The holding has not been dealt with by the Crofters Commission?—No, it has not been dealt with by the Crofters Commission.

26,231. Do you agree with the previous evidence?—Yes.

26,232. Have you anything else to tell us,—anything additional?—No, I have just been here to answer any question that may be asked.

26,233. Well, I think we have pretty nearly exhausted what we may desire to have laid before us, both with regard to Strath Brora and other districts. I have no question to ask.

26,234. *Mr Sutherland.*—Is West Clyne the same as Doll?—No, West Clyne is on the north side of Brora river. Doll is on the south side.

26,235. Have you then a share in Killean grazing?—Yes. Golspie.

26,236. *Mr Macaulay, Solicitor.*—You are connected with this Clyne grazing?—Yes. Alexand Mackay.

26,237. You are secretary of it I think, are you not?—Yes.

26,238. With what success has that undertaking been carried on? Has it been a success do you think?—More so since the rent has been reduced, but while the rent stood at the old figure it was not.

26,239. Do you find that the crofters work well together in this club farm? Are there any disagreements among themselves, as a rule, as to the management?—No, I am not aware of any in the meantime.

26,240. So upon the whole you found that the club farm worked well?—Oh, yes, it has been working well.

Angus Murray.

ANGUS MURRAY, Achrimsdale, Clyne (68)—*examined.*

26,241. *The Chairman.*—Do you concur in the previous evidence we have had with regard to Strath Brora?—Yes.

26,242. And does it express your views on the matter before us?—Certainly it does.

26,243. *Mr Sutherland.*—What rent do you pay yourself?—The croft that I am in now was only paying 10s. When my name went in another 10s. was put on. I was not able to build a house, and I applied to Mr Loch to build one for me, which he did. We settled that I would pay £1 of interest in the year, and we settled at the time when the house would be paid, that the house would be free to me. Now, it came on me that there were taxes to pay for this £1, and I went to Mr Maclean and asked him what was the reason that taxes were added to the interest. He said that it was on account of the rental. Now, there was another croft beside me that was vacant, and I got the promise of it from our present Duke when he was Marquis of Stafford; that if he would get a place for the tenant that was in it, viz., William Macglashan, I would get the whole croft along with my own.

26,244. Did Macglashan get another place?—Macglashan died, and I went for the half of the land. It was only the half I asked, and Mr Maclean said that I was too old to ask more land. But I said there was a family of mine that would rise and help me if I had more land. I had not three acres altogether, and I said I would be satisfied if I got four.

26,245. What became of Mr Macglashan's holding?—It was shared between me and Mr John Barr.

26,246. Did not you get then what you wanted?—No, I did not get but one and a half acres, and the half acre is under whins.

26,247. But you did not ask the whole of it?—No, I asked the half.

26,248. And did not you get the half?—No, but I got one and a half acres. That land was paying 30s. when Macglashan got it, and it was raised between me and John Barr to £3, 5s.; I, myself, paid the compensation, £4, for it.

26,249. To whom did you pay the compensation? To the ground officer, Machardy.

26,250. *Mr Macaulay, Solicitor.*—I suppose you quite approved of this croft being divided between yourself and your neighbour?—I am not satisfied, because I asked the rent of Machardy twice, and he was not able to tell me.

Robert Matheso

ROBERT MATHESON, Labourer, Rogart (35)
—*examined.*

26,251. *The Chairman.*—Are you a crofter?—No.

26,252. What are you?—I live with my mother on the croft.

26,253. Your mother has a croft?—Yes.

26,254. What rent does she pay?—£8.

26,255. Was that rent fixed by the Crofters Commission?—No.

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26,256. Does she hold from year to year, or under lease?—From year to year.

26,257. You heard the evidence I daresay of Mr Bannerman and of Sutherland of Pittentraill?—Yes.

26,258. Do you concur in their evidence?—Yes.

26,259. I suppose it fully sets forth the views you wish to submit. Have you anything additional to state to us?—No.

26,260. *Mr Sutherland.*—Would you be prepared to take a holding under the circumstances we have been talking about to-day if you had the opportunity?—I would.

onald
utherland.

DONALD SUTHERLAND, Burnfoot, Kinbrace (30)—*examined.*

26,261. *The Chairman.*—Are you a crofter?—We hold a piece of ground under lease.—

26,262. Who is "we"?—My brother and myself.

26,263. What is your brother's name?—William Sutherland.

26,264. You are joint-tenants?—Yes.

26,265. Under a lease for how many years?—Nine teen years.

26,266. And the lease is still current I suppose?—Yes.

26,267. What rent do you pay?—Over £37.

26,268. What is the precise rent?—I am not sure as to the shillings.

26,269. £37 odds you mean?—Yes.

26,270. You are anxious to obtain an addition to your holding. Do you think there is available land in the district which would make a good addition to your holding?—One thing that we know is that our holding in its present position does not pay.

26,271. And you think you could make it pay if it was made larger?—By pasture but not by arable land.

26,272. How much additional pasture would you like?—I am not prepared to say how much we would require to make it pay. But one thing is plain to us, that in the meantime the arable does not pay.

26,273. What extent of additional pasture would you like to get?—I am not prepared to say in the meantime how much additional pasture we would require, but probably double what we have.

26,274. What rent would you be willing to give if your pasture was doubled?—Just according to the quality of the pasture.

26,275. Would you be willing to pay a similar rate per acre as you are now paying?—Oh, no.

26,276. You think it should be cheaper?—Yes.

26,277. Then, is it your opinion that your rent is too high?—It would depend very much on the quality of the ground that we might get in addition to what we have. If the quality was good it would perhaps afford the rent we pay, but, of course, if not,—if it was black ground it would not do so.

26,278. You are in favour then of tenants of contracted holdings getting additions to their holdings if it can be done?—Any available ground; that means ground that is fit for cultivation to profit.

26,279. Or otherwise capable of being advantageously occupied,—that is the remit to us, to consider what land is capable of cultivation to profit or of being otherwise advantageously occupied?—Our experience is that the arable land we have in Kinbrace does not pay, we are not profited by it. We labour the land and yet we have to live otherwise; we have to work for our living outside the ground that we hold.

26,280. When did you begin your lease?—About nine years ago.

26,281. It paid some years, I suppose?—Not the arable.

26,282. But the holding in its entirety?—Well, it would be very hard on it to pay.

26,283. Have you been working at a loss for nine years?—Yes, at the arable.

26,284. But on the holding altogether?—Almost, if not totally at a loss. We had to seek work elsewhere to make ends meet

26,285. Has your rent been reduced since you entered?—No. Golspie.

26,286. Have you always paid your rent?—Yes. Donald Sutherland.

26,287. But you had to supplement the profits you got from the holding by labour done otherwise?—Yes, we had to labour elsewhere.

26,288. What did you labour at?—We hired. We did posting work, and we held a contract of the high road.

26,289. And by that means you were able to get along?—Yes, in every way we could get to win our living; we were always ready to do any work we could get, so as to make ends meet. But one thing clear to us, is that we could not live in our holding if we were depending on it entirely.

26,290. Is your arable a good quality, or a poor quality?—It does not yield crop.

26,291. Then, it is a poor quality?—The soil is fair to look at; but whether it is in the soil, or whether it is in the climate I don't know, but we cannot make it pay.

26,292. It is fair to look at, but it does not yield a good crop?—No, it does not.

26,293. Does it stand high?—I am not quite sure of the exact height, but it is not very high; it is at Kinbrace.

26,294. Is it near where the reclamations have been made?—Yes, it is reclaimed land we hold for our arable.

26,295. Is it exposed?—It has a northerly aspect.

26,296. And your crops are always late?—Always late, and always light.

26,297. And exposed to frost?—Always exposed to frost; we have never yet raised a potato since we went there until this year.

26,298. This is an exceptionally good year?—Yes, that is so. We never before raised a potato that was fit for human food; we always raised what potatoes we had down at the shore at Helmsdale.

26,299. Have you proposed since you entered on your lease to renounce the lease?—We would not renew our lease in the circumstances.

26,300. But have you tried to give up your present lease?—No, we signed the lease, and we were bound to continue the lease until it expires.

26,301. But perhaps the Duke might have agreed to relieve you?—Well, the Duke did not relieve us of the lease, and we have been striving to go on.

26,302. Did you make any application to be relieved of the lease?—No.

26,303. *Mr Sutherland.*—I understand that your position is that you would like more pasture ground?—So as to make our place pay, because in the present state of matters our arable land does not pay the labour spent on it. Whether the pasture would pay or the arable would not matter if only we could get ends to meet on our holding and not have to work outside.

26,304. You think that is a very undesirable thing on the part of people who pay £37 of rent? They should be on a holding that would afford them a livelihood without doing any outside work?—Most decidedly, whatever size the holding might be.

26,305. But especially one for which you pay £37 of rent? You think it is a reasonable thing to expect?—It is a reasonable thing.

26,306. Does the value of the grazing not depend upon the amount of land you have in cultivation attached to it?—Oh, I don't think so.

26,307. We have been hearing that everywhere?—There are plenty people who have pasture land without arable land at all, and they have to live by it.

26,308. But it is not what they can barely live by we are inquiring into, but what is best for occupation?—Well, that is one's experience.

26,309. Well, we have been hearing difficulties raised in the way of the occupation of the land at present, because there was too little arable land in proportion to the pasture. Now, you have got too much arable land in proportion to the pasture, and you want more pasture; is not that the position you are in?—We want what will pay, because our arable land does not pay.

26,310. But you don't farm the arable land apart from the grazing land? You don't separate them?—They are enclosed; the arable land is enclosed.

26,311. What I mean is that your farm is conducted not as arable land and as pasture separately, but as a whole, and you stated over and over again that your arable land did not pay?—No.

26,312. I could understand your saying that your farm does not pay, but I am bound to say I do not follow you in saying that your mere arable land does not pay.—Perhaps I could explain it to you. Our corn is not fruitful; our seed is not good. We cannot raise turnip, and there is our labour spent on these two things.

26,313. Is your land then different from the other land we saw up there?—That is our experience of the land, others can speak of their experience.

26,314. No doubt. But then you say that the crops are late?—Yes.

26,315. May I ask you if you have your crop in now?—Yes, but I have already stated that this is an exceptional year.

26,316. Quite so: it is exceptional everywhere.

26,317. *The Chairman.*—I see your rent is £37, 12s. 10d.?—I suppose so.

26,318. What is the precise extent of your arable land?—27½ acres.

26,319. And of your grazing?—I am not certain; I cannot put the grazing into acreage.

26,320 *Mr Gordon.*—How many sheep do you keep?—Varying from 70 to 80 ewes.

26,321. And how many cattle?—Three cows and three calves.

26,322. Have you 70 acres of pasture?—I could not say; but as to the arable land I have seen a statement that we had 35, whereas we have only 27½.

26,323. *Mr Sutherland.*—And for that you pay £37?—Yes.

26,324. So does it not come to this that your rent is far too high?—Well, we entered on the lease, and we promised to pay that rent, and as long as we are able to pay it—

26,325. *The Chairman.*—You must adhere to your bargain?—Yes.

26,326. *Mr Macaulay, Solicitor.*—You talked of the quality of your crops up there. If you could raise a decent crop on that arable land do you think you would be able to make the farm pay at the present rent?—A decent crop is money itself. We have done our best, and there is no person that can impute bad farming to us.

26,327. You are one of the three crofters up at Kinbrace there, on that reclaimed land?—My father was a crofter, but we never were crofters.

26,328. Well, you are one of the parties who have three holdings up there, yourself and Bannerman, and another?—Yes.

26,329. Now, is the quality of the crop that these other people raise, to look at generally, much the same as yours?—Of course, I cannot speak for other people, but one thing I can say from our neighbour, Henderson, he told me he did not thrash a sheaf since two years. And I suppose we are just as anxious to make a living as any one, and if there was money in it we would thrash it out.

26,330. To what do you attribute this failure, to the climate, or what?—Very much the climate. There is a good deep soil; anyone looking at the soil would say it was very good, and so it is; but it is very much the climate; it is too high and exposed, and is much taken with frost. I think it is two years ago on 1st May, but I am not quite sure,—at any rate, it was the year Mr Muir went to Badanloch, we sowed our corn in March, in the latter end of March, and it came out very fair and beautiful, but about the 16th of May, in a week, there came one storm of snow and frost that made every spot of our crop quite bare. Down on the east coast they did not suffer nearly so much.

26,331. Now, in the other parts of Kildonan, what is your opinion as regards the crops that might be raised there, say down from Kinbrace to Kildonan, and these places?—My father was born on the Strath, and I used to hear a great deal about it. It was a generally understood thing that the people were often in want and difficulty and poverty, owing to a good crop one year and a bad crop numerous years.

26,332. That is what your father told you?—That is the general thing we used to hear about it. Since you have referred to that subject, there is one thing I have to say. I am not sure whether it is two years October last or one year October last, but the men we took up with us to work along with us at the harvest I had to send home on account of the continuous wet weather, they were not getting any work done. And the whole Strath from some place under Mr Rutherford's parks until the parish school was all one flood.

26,333. *Mr Sutherland.*—What time of the year was that?—In October.

26,334. How often did that happen in your memory?—That was my experience in eight years.

26,335. *Mr Macaulay.*—One such flood in eight years will do a deal of harm?—If one met with such a total loss in eight years it would do for him.

26,336. Suppose you had this place for nothing, and were to do nothing outside your land, do you think you would be able to make a living?—No, and pay our rent, and I don't think we could live on it even with no rent at all.

26,337. As an arable place?—Our living will not grow on it.

26,338. But the grazing is fair?—I made no objection to the grazing.

26,339. It is the arable that you complain of; you cannot grow a crop up there?—Not to advantage.

26,340. And are you satisfied that any people settling down on that strath would be equally unsuccessful?—If they had eight years' experience as I have had, perhaps they will just find the same. When we took the place we thought we were getting a lift and improving ourselves, and we did our best but failed utterly.

26,341. Your expenses there would be comparatively small,—there is just yourself and your brother?—And a housekeeper.

26,342. You are quite a small family?—Oh, very small.

26,343. And you are not in the way of spending; you are always economising?—We are trying our best, or we could not have our rent paid.

26,344. And if it were not for the fact that you get work outside, at roads, &c., you would not be able to pay your rent?—No.

26,345. *The Chairman.*—Do you think if you had pasture that would carry 160 ewes instead of 80, you would be hopeful of carrying on the holding to a profit?—Considering the rent.

26,346. But with the present rent?—I could not say with the present rent and with present prices; prices are extraordinary low.

26,347. But do you think that if prices were better and you were paying a fair rent you could carry on the holding to a profit with 160 ewes on the pasture?—Well, 160 is a very small number.

26,348. How many would you require to have in order to carry it on to a profit?—300 is what would make work for one man. One has just the same labour with 160 sheep as with 300.

26,349. Then, you think if you had 300 ewes and land at a Fair Rent you would be inclined to stay with the hope of carrying on the undertaking to a profit?—Yes, that would be nearer the mark.

26,350. *Mr Sutherland.*—But as to the present holding, I suppose you would be anxious to get rid of it?—We would not renew our lease.

26,351. And upon the whole you are sorry you took it?—We would not take it to-day.

26,352. Now, with regard to the storms that devastate the fearful country you live in,—you know it very well?—Yes.

26,353. You don't deny that I also know it very well?—I think you should.

26,354. As well as you?—I cannot say that; I have lived there summer and winter.

26,355. But you will admit that I am not ignorant of the country?—I lived there a number of winters. Golspie.

26,356. So did I. But we have seen the crops that were raised there; we saw some of the finest turnips in Sutherlandshire there?—Well, you would have seen our turnips too if you had passed; I waited three days thinking the Commission would come, and our turnips were there for inspection. Donald Sutherland.

26,357. But we saw other turnips in the strath?—There is no person that would say but we do equal justice to the ground.

26,358. I do not question that for a moment. Do you know Kinbrace farm?—Yes.

26,359. Have you ever seen any of the crops raised by Mr Fraser there?—Yes.

26,360. Do you know the weight of the oats he raises?—I know the weight of a rig of barley.

26,361. I am asking you about the oats?—No.

26,362. What about the barley?—I have seen a rig of barley at his place, and it was quite unfit to be used for food.

26,363. What would you consider a good weight for a bushel of oats?—The standard weight.

26,364. What is the standard weight?—Forty-two.

26,365. And do you know if any of the oats raised by Mr Fraser were up to the standard weight?—I never was aware of it.

26,366. How far is his place from yours?—Barely a mile. But Mr Fraser's arable land is not the same as mine. There is a ditch between them, and Mr Fraser never as far as I am aware put a plough into the arable land beside us.

26,367. But he raises oats nearly up to the standard?—I am not aware of it.

26,368. Have you not been successful in raising turnips?—Fairly successful.

26,369. I thought you said in reply to a question that you were not successful in raising turnips?—No, I did not say that.

26,370. Are you aware that those who are responsible for the reclamations, part of which you occupy, have publicly stated that they answered the purpose for which they were made?—I have nothing to do with that.

26,371. Are you aware of it?—No, if I understand your question, I am not aware of it.

26,372. Certain parties who were responsible for these reclamations said in print that they were perfectly satisfied with the result?—I am not aware of that at all.

26,373. From where could the additional arable you want be got?—I made no reference to additional arable.

26,374. I beg your pardon,—additional grazing. Is there plenty additional grazing round about you?—It is all occupied.

26,375. So you see no prospect of getting an increase of the grazing land you want?—No, it is all occupied in the meantime.

26,376. So then, at the end of your lease there is nothing for you but to remove?—Well, we will not renew our lease in the present circumstances.

26,377. That is, at the present rent?—Well, perhaps the rent may be an item, but there are other matters. A lease is a thing that is signed privately.

26,378. But you are perfectly well aware that a great number of leaseholders on the Duke of Sutherland's property have got reductions of rent. We were told by Mr Maclean that there was a considerable reduction made; why did not you share in that reduction?—I don't know.

26,379. Don't you think you have a good case to go to the landlord with?—Well, a bargain is a bargain, and we just bargained with the Duke of Sutherland to hold the land for that time, and we have been provided for till now, whatever be the result after this.

26,380. *Mr Macaulay.*—You got an addition of grazings some time ago?—Yes.

26,380*a*. And there was no extra rent charged for hat?—No.

26,381. So that that was the form that your reduction of rent took?—Yes, but it does not pay all the same.

26,382. *Mr Sutherland.*—You did get addition of certain grazing?—Yes.

26,383. But it was not enough to benefit you substantially?—No.

26,384. *Mr Gordon.*—You have been eight years in the strath?—Yes.

26,385. What has been the average weight of the oats grown in your place since you went there?—It varied.

26,386. Give us the top weight?—From 35 to 40, but I never saw it above 40. Perhaps, as a rule, it would be about 36, but I don't think it made 35 last year.

26,387. Last year and the year before were bad years?—Yes.

26,388. And 1888 was a bad year?—Yes.

26,389. But in 1886 and 1887 and 1884, had you not good crops?—Fairly good, but always light crops.

26,390. You have been unfortunate in having a number of bad years lately?—Yes, and low prices.

26,391. The average weight of your crop would not come up to 40 lbs?—No, it never stood at 40 with us, as far as I am aware.

26,392. In any individual year, was the average weight 40 lbs?—Not that I am aware of.

26,393. And in some bad years it was less than 35?—Oh, yes.

26,394. You are a little lower down than Mr Bannerman, are not you?—Yes.

26,395. Is he higher or lower?—Probably lower, but not much; there is not much difference. [*Mr Sutherland.*—You are a little higher? We may be higher.]

26,396. Did Mr Gunn ever cultivate any part of Lochside?—I am not aware that he did.

26,397. How long has he been tenant there?—I suppose for five years.

26,398. Has he been in the way of sowing corn or turnips?—His shepherd did; I don't know whether Mr Gunn himself ever did.

26,399. But has he ever sown a whole field of turnips?—No, not to my knowledge.

26,400. He finds it more profitable to use the land for grazing purposes?—Yes.

26,401. He has very good sheep?—Fair.

26,402. They are extra good I think. If your sheep are as good as Mr Gunn's they will do?—Oh, no, they are not.

[Adjourned.]

TWENTY-SIXTH SITTING.

LAIRG, September 27, 1893. Lairg.

Present:—

David Brand, Esq., Advocate, Sheriff of Ayr, and Chairman of the Crofters Commission, *Chairman.*
Angus Sutherland, Esq., M.P.
James Noel Muller Forsyth, Esq.
George Gordon, Esq.
William Mackenzie, Esq., *Secretary.*

David Mackay, Crofter, Rheanbreck (50)—*examined.* David Mackay

26,403. *The Chairman.*—Was your holding dealt with by the Crofters Commission?—Yes.

26,404. What had your former rent been?—£1, 12s. 6d., or thereabout.

26,405. And what is your new rent?—£3, 8s.

Lairg.

David Mackay.

26,406. The blue book says—Widow John Mackay, Rheanbreck, 7 acres arable, 1 acre 1 rood 20 poles outrun, and a share in 3000 acres of hill ground divided into 44 shares, according to the rent. Present rent, £2, 10s. 3d. Fair rent, £3, 8s.; but the 3000 acres included 1800 acres of hill pasture added which was not included in the old rent. That is from the farm of Achinduich. A note in the book says—'The Duke of 'Sutherland enlarged these holdings of Torrobol, 'Rheanbreck, and Tomich by adding to them 1800 acres 'of hill pasture. The "present rents" apply to the 'old holdings, the "fair rents" to the holdings as 'enlarged by the addition of said pasture.' Have you a written statement?—Yes, a short statement.

26,407. Read it, please. — Without going into any formal remarks, I beg to point out at once such land as I am directed to call the attention of the Commissioners to. The first is a portion of Dalchork farm, in south end of said farm and within three-quarters of a mile from the village of Lairg, called the Upper Lairg parks. These parks were for some years under cultivation by Mr Graham, the then sheep farmer of Dalchork. The reason why it was put to grazing purposes was the distance it was from the farm steading. It yielded excellent crops of every kind. There is abundance of hill grazing attached to it. This arable land, with its hill pasture, is very suitable for two or three small holdings. The area of the arable is 48 acres. The next is Dulaich sheep farm, a portion of the Achany estate, which is surrounded on all sides by the Duke of Sutherland's property.

26,408. On whose estate is Dulaich?—Lady Matheson of the Lews. The extent of old arable land is about 160 acres, with about 8 acres of old birch wood, which is very good land and very easily improved. The land was once occupied by 13 tenants, all in good circumstances, who were turned out of their holdings without any cause whatever, only it was the landlord's will. Their names were Widow H. Ross, Donald Munro, Widow R. Ross, Hugh Mackay, William Mackay, John Macdonald, Hugh Macdonald, James Mackay, John Mackay, James Mackay, Hugh Mackay, John Mackay, and John Ross. All these tenants had to leave their holdings and their birthplace, which was perhaps more dear to them than we can imagine, in 1822. Tighcraig on the same farm had two tenants, Donald Matheson and John Matheson; and Loch Tighcraig one tenant. The whole of this small farm is well adapted for small holdings, and is recommended to the Commissioners as such.

The next place is Allt-breac, another portion of Dalchork farm. It had formerly two tenants, but there is sufficient land for three, and abundance of hill pasture.

I now beg to call your attention to three arable farms in Shinness, which are now put to grazing purposes, and which are considered by good authority to be well adapted for ordinary small holdings. Achadh-a'-phris, which comprises 350 acres or thereby, is pretty good land on the whole. It is quite true that some of it is not good land, and should never have been improved; but on the whole it is very suitable for small holdings. Achanaran, with 300 acres, is still better adapted for small holdings. The whole of this farm has a good exposure, with hard soil well adapted for all kinds of crops. Lubvreck, with 400 acres, is not quite so good as the other two farms. There may be 100 acres of this farm not suitable for cultivation, but very good grazing ground for sheep and cattle. The climate of the district will compare favourably with the rest of the parish in every respect, and the ground yielded excellent crops. The corn raised there will weigh as much as in any other district in the parish.

(Signed) David Mackay.

I may add that both the old arable land and the new land in Shinness is considered to be well adapted, as I have said, for small holdings, especially the arable land in Dulaich and Upper Lairg here. In fact, it is much superior in every respect, so far as climate and soil are concerned, to a great deal of the land now occupied by tenants in the parish. I may say that about seventy years ago the rental of the two townships of Rheanbreack and Tomich was only about £14; at present I should think the rental is about £80, though I cannot state it with certainty. That shows the great improvement made by the tenants of the crofter class, because when they entered it was all waste land, and the men were imported from other places because it was worthless. The holdings were at that time let for 10s. or 15s. to the people who were got to occupy them; and since then these great improvements have been made from time to time, so that the land has reached such a condition that there is scarcely an acre uncultivated.

Lairg.

David Mackay.

26,409. *Mr Gordon.*—How is this land occupied just now at Allt-breac?—Under sheep.

26,410. What farm is it?—On the Dalchork farm, Allt-breac.

26,411. Is that one of the reclaimed farms?—No.

26,412. Do you know the rent of Dalchork?—No, I did not make any inquiry.

26,413. You mentioned also this place of Dulaich. How is that land occupied?—As a sheep farm.

26,414. Who are the nearest crofters to Dulaich?—The township of Kinvovin on the south, and Shallovulbeg on the west.

26,415. What size of a farm is Dulaich?—Two hirsels, perhaps about 1000 sheep.

26,416. Does the pasture come in to the east of the arable lands at Dulaich?—The Duke of Sutherland's property and the Dulaich property join on the summit of the hill; there is a new fence erected there to the south of Dulaich.

26,417. Dulaich is part of the Duke of Sutherland's property?—No, it is Lady Matheson's.

26,418. Do you know what rent Dulaich pays?—I cannot say.

26,419. Is that little place called Torbreac within the farm of Dulaich or in the farm of Allt-breac?—Partly in both. There is a little plot of ground in Torbreac belonging to Lady Matheson's estate and the rest to the Duke of Sutherland's estate.

26,420–21. Does the burn form the division between the estates?—No, I don't think there is a burn dividing the estates, but there is an old dyke.

26,422. Can you tell us anything about what you would suggest being done with that land; is it for new holdings or for an extension of grazings?—For arable holdings, and the grazing attached to it would be, of course, as it is.

26,423. You would propose to break up the farms of Allt-breac and of Dulaich both?—Well, of course I did not mean the whole of Dalchork farm but a portion of it. Allt-breac and the parks I mentioned at Upper Lairg are in the same farm, the farm of Dalchork.

26,424. But you propose to form new holdings up there?—Yes.

26,425. Now, can you give us any idea what size of holdings you propose?—No, I could not. That depends entirely upon the nature of the land.

26,426–27. But you have mentioned this land? Take either of these places that you like, Dulaich or Allt-breac?—Well, I would fix the average at 15 acres arable.

26,428. And what pasture?—I am not prepared to say about the pasture, but I would suggest that the pasture should be corresponding, and rather above.

26,429. But would you propose that the pasture should be common pasture, or that it should be held by the individual tenants?—I think it would be better adapted to be held as common pasture unless there was an extension of it further than what is attached to the arable land in the meantime.

26,430. You would propose to have it in common between the two or three or more places that you might form there?—Yes, Dulaich, Tighcraig, and Allt-breac, because they are in the very centre of the grazing.

26,431. Have you any club grazings up there at all just now?—No.

26,432. Have you any knowledge of the working of club grazings?—We have plenty knowledge, providing we had the land to work on.

26,433. Are you a member of a club grazing?—No.

26,434. What is your knowledge of a club grazing?—Just that the flock of sheep would be held and regulated by a committee of management, and so forth.

26,435. How many would you suppose there would be in this club grazing; would there be enough for it to occupy a shepherd's time?—Scarcely, the lands that I indicated to you just now unless, as I said before, it would be still extended northward where there is sufficient land.

26,436. Do you think there are people up there that would take the new holdings and stock the places?—Not there; but they are to be found in the parish and elsewhere. I have not the slightest doubt at all that, if the holdings were once formed, there would be plenty tenants to take them up.

26,437. With sufficient capital to take them and stock the land?—There is some difficulty there, because no doubt people might be got with sufficient capital; but then, perhaps, these are the people that are not most in need.

26,438. The people who are most in need have least money, possibly?—Exactly.

26,439. *Mr Sutherland.*—Are you the tenant now?—Yes, of my own holding.

26,440. And you know the circumstances of the fixing of your fair rent perfectly well, do you?—Yes.

26,441. Did you work the croft before you became tenant yourself?—Yes, I have worked the croft for the last thirty years, since my father died.

26,442. Were you born at Rheanbreck?—Yes, and my forefathers before me.

26,443. How long were they there?—My grandfather was there anyhow, and they lived to a great age my forefathers.

26,444. Well, then, with regard to the fixing of the fair rents, the figures that have been stated bear on the face of it that your rent was increased?—Yes.

26,445. But that apparent increase of rent was due to the enlargement of your holdings?—We suppose so.

26,446. The two events are concurrent, are they not?—Yes.

26,447. The fixing of your fair rent and the enlargement of your holding?—Yes.

26,448. Would you kindly describe to us, in order to make it clear, how they came to be at the same time?—Well, we got this extension of grazing from his Grace the Duke of Sutherland.

26,449. In what year?—In 1885, I think.

26,450. That is before the Act was passed?—Yes, the previous year; and, at the time we got this additional hill pasture, the understanding was between the tenants and the factor then that the rent of this piece of ground would be fixed either by arbitration or by the Crofters Commission. The thing remained so till the fence was put up. There was a fence erected between the Achinduich farm and the tenants in the new march, and we got notice from the Duke's factor, some time afterwards, that the rent of this piece of land that we have got would be £52, 10s. Now, we objected to this on two grounds, first, that we thought it too dear, and, second, that it was not according to bargain that it should be fixed either by arbitration or by the Crofters Commission.

26,451. But was the result of it all that you agreed to leave it over to be fixed by the Crofters Commission?—Yes, that was the whole purport of it.

26,452. And that is how the apparent increase of rent came to be?—Yes.

26,453. How did the rent that was fixed by the Crofters Commission compare with the rent the Duke of Sutherland wanted at first?—As I said before, the Duke of Sutherland wanted at first £52, 10s., and, so far as we can ascertain, they have only got £35, 10s.

26,454. What they asked £52 for?—Exactly; that is according to the increase of the rent that we now have between the old rent and the new rent, as far as we can ascertain; the difference is that the Duke asked £52, 10s. and received £35, 10s., or thereabout. Of course, that is according to our own calculation; we don't know particularly as to anything.

26,455. The thing got so mixed up that it is difficult for you to ascertain?—Yes. Lairg.

26,456. What is your own opinion now with regard to the reduction of rent the Crofters Commission have given you?—We thought it was far too high. David Mackay.

26,457. I am talking of the reduction?—We have got no reduction, it was an increase.

26,458. But along with the extension of the grazing?—Well, even along with the extension of the grazing we thought the rent should not be raised.

26,459. Have you formed any estimate as to the amount of reduction you have got all over?—No, we did not.

26,460. Is it 30 per cent.?—I could not exactly say.

26,461. But is your rent higher than it was before?—Certainly.

26,462. How much?—To the extent I have mentioned. [*The Chairman.*—£2, 10s. 3d. against £3, 8s.]

26,463. Can you give us it for all the township?—No.

26,464. Could you give it for yourself?—Oh, yes.

26,465. Has your rent been raised or lowered?—I consider my rent has been raised.

26,466. Taking into account even the extension of grazing?—Yes.

26,467. Then, are you actually paying more than you did before?—Oh, yes, actually we do.

26,468. You, yourself?—Yes.

26,469. More than when you got the 1780 acres of pasture added?—Yes.

26,470. Well, what was your old rent?—My old rent was £1, 10s.

26,471. And what is it now?—£2, 10s. [*The Chairman.*—There seems to be some misapprehension about that. The rent in the blue book is £2, 10s. 3d. not £1, 10s.] *Witness.*—Yes, £2, 10s., and it is now £3, 8s.

26,472. You got 1800 acres among how many people?—Forty-two or forty-three people.

26,473. That is about 40 acres each?—Yes, it would just run about that.

26,474. Then, the land added to your holdings was from the parish boundary, was it?—Not altogether from the parish boundary. We had not it to the parish boundary before altogether, and then we got it now down to Allt-na-Fearna, as Allt-na-Fearna runs from the river up to Loch Cracail.

26,475. I want to know the extent and value of this addition of grazing you got. You say it extends to 1800 acres?—Yes.

26,476. That there are forty participants in it?—Over forty.

26,477. It gives you about 40 acres per holding?—Yes.

26,478. How much of that land will it take to graze a sheep? Do you know the rule as to that?—I suppose that 6 acres elsewhere of good ordinary land——

26,479. But do you know that 10 is the rule that has been laid down?—Of course, 10 of this would not do.

26,480. So, putting your extension of grazing in sheep, it amounts to about four sheep per holding?—Yes, that appears to be so.

26,481. And for the whole of that there was asked £52, but it was not got?—Exactly.

26,482. Have you benefited in any way by this extension of holdings?—We have benefited, there is no doubt at all about that.

26,483. So that the extension of a holding to the extent of four sheep per family is a benefit?—Yes.

26,484. Did you find any difficulty in stocking it?—Not in the slightest; but we find a great difficulty in keeping under our stock, because we must sell them.

26,485. What is the nature of the extension, is it the average pasture that a sheep farm has got on it, or is it above that, or below it?—I should think it is below it to a certain extent.

26,486. What makes it below it? Has it got much green in it?—Not very much. Some seasons of the

Lairg.

David Mackay.

year it is somewhat good; but taking the year all round it is not good: too much exposed and too cold, and a very bad subject as a whole.

26,487. Now you stated a remarkable fact, that, I think, some eighty years ago the rental of the townships —I take it the townships you meant were Rheanbreck, Torrobol, and Tomich?—Yes.

26,488. The rent was £14?—Oh, no, I made reference to Tomich and Rheanbreck. That was previous to my day, but I heard old people passing the remark, but probably there might not be above four tenants there, or five.

26,489. But that would not affect the rental in the slightest degree?—Not in the slightest degree.

26,490. £14 raised to about £80?—Yes, I think so.

26,491. Can you give us any idea of the amount of the expenditure that raised the value to that, that was made by the landlord?—Well, of course there was money advanced by the landlord.

26,492. To what extent?—I could not tell you, but it was charged, of course, at the rate of 5 per cent.

26, 493. As soon as it was made was it charged?—Exactly, as soon as we got the money.

26,494. As soon as you got the money the interest was charged upon it?—Yes. Say that we get the money at Whitsunday, the Whitsunday and Martinmas following we had to pay the half interest.

26,495. Immediately you got it you had to pay interest?—Exactly.

26,496. What rate was it at?—5 per cent. then; it is not 5 per cent. now, it was reduced.

26,497. When?—About six years ago; it was reduced to 4 per cent., but the first money that was given out by the Duke of Sutherland was considerably above the 5 per cent. During my time it was 5 per cent., and then it was reduced about six years ago to 4.

26,498. And there was no risk about it, it was paid as regularly as the rent?—Oh, there was no risk. Of course if there was a risk in the rent, there was risk, but it was paid along with the rent. Of course there is another thing, there are a few of the houses in the two townships, but very few that were built, the Duke advanced wood and lime for a few, but there are not above three or four.

26,499. So you think it was a very good investment for the landlord?—I think so.

26,500. A very safe one?—A very safe one.

26,501. The climate did not seem to affect it in the slightest?—Not in the slightest.

26,502. Nor early frost?—No.

26,503. Nor late harvest?—No.

26,504. Nor floods?—Nothing whatever.

26,505. It came regularly. You pointed out certain lands. I am simply going to ask you if you were satisfied in your own mind that those lands you call our attention to would be very suitable for the purposes for which we are here?—I am fully satisfied as to that, and besides, we called a public meeting in the month of March, in order to make arrangements to meet this Court when they would visit this parish. We discussed the matter there and then between ourselves in the public school-house over there. The meeting was quite a representative meeting of the whole place, and we discussed the question as far as we possibly could, and they were fully of the opinion that the grounds that I have mentioned and alluded to were quite suitable for small holdings.

26,506. Were you appointed a delegate at that meeting to lay these views before us?—The meeting appointed a committee of nine or ten gentlemen, with power to choose representatives from amongst themselves or besides themselves, and it appears I am one of them.

26,507. I think you expressed the view that the people here, who know the circumstances very well, would have no fear of taking the reclaimed land at Shinness and working it to a profit?—Yes, because it is not my own views I express here, but the views of those who sent me.

26,508. Now, I wish to ask you one or two questions with regard to these holdings. Are there any small holders at all on the Shinness reclamation?—Oh, yes, there are a few, not many.

Lairg.

David Mackay.

26,509. How many are there?—There will be eight.

26,510. What is the size of these holdings?—They vary in size, some of them have as low as 4 acres, I think, and some as high as perhaps 25 and 30 acres.

26,511. Are these crofters now?—Yes.

26,512. Statutory crofters?—Yes. They were crofters before the passing of the Crofters Act.

26,513. They could not have been crofters before the passing of the Crofters Act you know. It is the Crofters Act that made the crofters?—They were not under lease.

26,514. They were tenants at will?—I think so.

26,515. They were made crofters by the passing of the Crofters Act?—Probably.

26,516. I mean to ask if they are under the Crofters Act?—Oh, I think so.

26,517. Did you hear if any of them wished to give up their holdings?—No, I never heard; but I have often a complaint of the smallness of their holdings, especially the small ones.

26,518. And is their land now the average land representing reclaimed land?—Their land is on the outskirts, on the reclaimed land, and I can conscientiously say it is the worst land.

26,519. And you never heard of them being anxious to be relieved of their land?—No, I never heard anything of the kind. Of course they did have a grievance in regard to the rent; they thought they were too highly rented.

26,520. But do they cultivate their land still?—Yes.

26,521. Have they let any of it out of cultivation?—Not an inch.

26,522. Have you heard that the land on the large farms at Shinness has been allowed to go back into a state of nature?—I have heard it, and I have seen it.

26,523. But it is not these small holders that have done it?—No, not a foot.

26,524. Who, then, have done so?—The three large farms that I have indicated are under lease.

26,525. What have the farmers done with regard to the cultivated land, are they cultivating it still?—No, it is under grazing now, the whole of these three farms.

26,526. Is the net result of it this, that the large farmer has allowed the land to go out of cultivation, and the small farmer has kept it in cultivation?—That is a fact.

26,527. Within your own knowledge?—Within my own knowledge.

26,528. Which no person can gainsay?—Certainly.

26,529. *Mr Forsyth.*—You say there is no cultivation at all on the large farms on the whole of the reclamations at Shinness?—Oh, no, not on the whole. There is the arable farm of Coloboll still under cultivation, and the Western Shinness farm is partly under cultivation still. On the other three farms I have mentioned there is none whatever except there may be a very small plot on the Achadh-a'-Phris farm, which is under crop this year, but very little.

26,530. But by going back to waste, do you mean to say they are going back to heather or laid under grass?—Partly under heather and partly rushes and partly grass.

26,531. Is there any under grass at Achadh-a-Phris?—Yes, I think they are cutting grass there.

26,532. But under sown grass?—Oh, yes, there is some, because it is quite recently it was laid out.

26,533. And there is a good deal of crop this year there I think, isn't there?—Oh, yes.

26,534. And the whole farm of Coloboll is under cultivation?—Yes.

26,535. So that it only applies to a certain portion of the reclamation that they are under grass?—Exactly.

26,536. Then, you would confine your remarks more to Blairbuidh?—Yes, I do.

26,537. Blairbuidh is under grass, the whole of it?—Yes.

26,538. That is the highest one on the Strath Tirry side?—Yes.

26,539. And the rest is partly in cultivation and partly under grass?—Yes.

26,540. *Mr Gordon.*—Going back to this place of Dulaich, I now see the march on the map. That place bounds, as far as I can see, with four crofting holdings—Culbuidh, Culmailly, Balcharn, and Balindialish?—Yes.

26,541. Do you know how many crofters there are in these four townships?—One in Culbuidh, two in Culmailly, two in Balcharn, and six in Balindialish.

26,542. Now, suppose we were to find land there suitable, what is your opinion as to the benefit that would be derived by placing tenants on the ground, or giving it to these eleven people as an extension of their grazing?—My opinion is that it would be the best plan to put tenants on the arable land there.

26,543. How many tenants would you get on the arable land there?—As I have indicated already, I would fix the average at 15 acres.

26,544. But I wish to point out to you that in one case you expressed some difficulty about money?—Yes.

26,545. In the case of extension of grazings you would benefit eleven people without a single addition to their capital?—Yes.

26,546. They would be at once benefited by getting extension of grazings for their present stock, whereas in the other case you would have to erect buildings and possibly fences, and you would have to find money for the stocking?—Oh, yes; but I think in the case of those tenants their hill grazing could be extended, although the new tenants would be placed in the arable land of Dulaich.

26,547. But you would place the hill grazing farther away from the eleven people?—Of course, the hill grazing of the eleven people would extend to the new tenants, as it were.

26,548. Well, we need not discuss the details; but is it your opinion or not that the advantage would be greater and more immediate by extending the grazings than by placing new holdings upon that kind of land?—Just by placing new holdings.

26,549. You would prefer new holdings to extending the grazings?—Yes.

26,550. *The Chairman.*—You made a very pointed statement, and I have very little to ask. You mentioned a fence, however, that was erected at the time when these 1800 acres were assigned, and the valuation made by the Crofters Commission. At whose expense was that fence erected?—The proprietor's. We have promised to maintain the half of it.

26,551. You promised to bear your share of the upkeep?—Exactly.

26,552. But you had no share of the original cost?—No.

26,553. How do these 1800 acres compare in quality with the rest of the grazing on the farm from which they are taken?—They are inferior to the grazing of the farms from which they were taken; there is no doubt at all of that—inferior to a great degree.

26,554. Do they lie into your holdings?—Oh, yes; quite in proximity to the holdings.

26,555. *Mr Macaulay, Solicitor, Golspie.*—These farms that you mentioned here—Achadh-a'-Phris, Achnaran, and Lubvreck—these are the lands that were reclaimed by the late Duke?—Yes.

26,556. Now, you referred to the crops that are grown there. Have you any idea what was the weight last year of the oats upon the farm of Achadh-a'-Phris?—I have, and I have ascertained from a miller that the average weight of Achadh-a'-Phris and the whole of Shinness farm was about 40 lbs. per bushel.

26,557. Now, regarding these crofts that you referred to, do you know who erected these buildings, and put up fences, and put the place in order?—The proprietor.

26,558. None of that was done by the tenants?—No, so far as I understand.

26 559. Then, with regard to your own holding, you consider that the Crofters Commission has actually raised your rent?—Yes.

26,560. Then the view of the Commissioners apparently was that you held these lands too cheap?—No, no.

26,561. That they were undervalued at any rate. Your holding is dearer relatively than it was before the Crofters Commission was here?—Yes, that is the fact.

26,562. Then the only conclusion must be that they considered your holding too cheap, relatively again? [*The Chairman.*—You had better take these figures. The old rent, exclusive of the 1800 acres, amounts to £185, 13s. 6d.; the fair rent, including the 1800 acres, is the sum of £222, 1s.—the difference being £36, 7s. 6d.]—Yes, my lord, but I am referring specially to this man's own holding.

26,563. [*To witness*].—So that the only conclusion must be that the Commissioners thought you had your holding too cheaply?—Unless they have taken into consideration the extent of new grazing we have got.

26,564. Oh, yes; but even with that you consider that the rent has been raised?—Yes.

26,565. So that before the Commissioners came you held your holding cheaper than you do now?—Yes.

26,566. Now, as to the reclamations which were done upon some of these lands you referred to. Have you any idea of what advances were made by the late Duke of Sutherland to any of the crofters?—So far as I am concerned myself, about £25, or thereabout.

26,567. Do you know a party named James Mackay, Torrobol?—Yes.

26,568. Have you any idea what was advanced to him?—No, I could not say.

26,569. Probably between £80 and £100?—I could not say.

26,570. Now, do you know what his present rent is; what was the fair rent fixed?—Something about £3.

26,571. That is the sum?—I am not going to say.

26,572. That is the fact. Now do you consider that is a fair return for the advance of £80 *plus* the land?—No, I don't consider it a good return. The subject was not what it ought to be, because it was not at all a fit subject to be improved.

26,573. But even in your own case you got about £25?—Yes.

26,574. Now do you consider that £3 is a fair return for that sum *plus* the land in the state in which you got it? Do you think it cheap, or do you think it a good return for the proprietor?—I think it is a good return for the proprietor, because that is all his outlay.

26,575. But you had the land besides the £25?—Yes.

26,576. So that the fact is your first rent was £2, 10s., and you got some £25, so that you got some ten years' rent to reclaim these lands?—Yes.

26,577. What return had he for that £25, which you consider a good investment?—Certainly; because by this time the whole of that money is paid up again.

26,578. But you paid that rent before?—Yes, I did.

26,579. So that your original rent must only have been about £1, 6s., and you are paying interest on £25?—The original rent of the holding has been 15s., but then there was no land reclaimed except an acre of land.

26,580. So that taking 15s. from £2, 10s., the balance is 35s., so that you paid 35s. for your advance?—Yes.

26,581. Now you said that some of these farms were going back to a state of nature?—Yes.

26,582. Do you remember these lands before the reclamation?—Perfectly well.

26,583. What sort of lands were they?—Some very good, some very bad.

26,584. Were they good subjects for reclamation?—Some were so.

26,585. And some very bad?—And some very bad.

26,586. When you use the term 'state of nature,' do you mean to say that they are going back to the same state they were in before the reclamations?—Well, not actually so. I find some of the land reclaimed then is even worse pasture than it was before.

26,587. But speaking generally?—Well, speaking generally, they are not, as yet, as bad.

Lairg. David Mackay.

26,588. So that when you say that these lands are practically now in a state of nature, it is not the fact? [*The Chairman.*—He makes the statement subject to the observation he has now made upon it in answer to your allegation].—[*Witness*].—Yes, my lord. Of course, in the course of time, there is no doubt that by letting the farm still out of order, they will be getting worse and worse every year.

26,589. Do you mean to say that they will get back to the state they were in before this reclamation?—Yes, to a certain extent.

26,590. What was the state before: were they not bogs?—Some were so.

26,591. They will not go back to that extent?—Yes, that part that was bog before will go back to the same bad state.

26,592. But it is not the fact they are now in the same state as before the reclamation?—No, it is not the fact.

26,593. There are certain lands that have been sown down; these are still practically in rotation, are not they?—Yes.

26,594. They have not been in grass for years?—No.

26,595. They are practically now in rotation?—Yes.

26,596. May I ask how many sheep you have on your own holding: we heard a little ago something in regard to the number of sheep this new land would hold?—The number allowed for my holding is nine sheep.

26,597. And that is the number you keep?—That is the number I keep, only I have a share of my neighbours to the extent of eight sheep, that is all my stock.

26,598. And what other stock have you besides?—I have two cows and one horse.

26,599. And your rent is £3, 8s. You did not refer to any lands at the Dalchork farm-house, did you?—No.

26,600. *Mr Sutherland.* — I wish to make this clear. You said that your estimate of what you paid for the additional grazing that was given to you was £35. The best estimate you could make of what you were charged for that separately was £35?—Yes, so far as we could ascertain.

26,601. And what the landlord wanted was £52, 10s.?—Exactly.

26,602. Well, then, with regard to the advance that was made to yourself, how much did you say it was?—About £25.

26,603. And for how many years did you pay interest on that at five per cent.?—Up till now?

26,604. No, I think you said it was reduced?—For sixteen years I think it would be.

26,605. For sixteen years you paid five per cent. upon the £25?—But the money was not taken out all at the same time: there might be £5 at one time, and £10 at another.

26,606. And for all the time you had got the landlord's money you paid full interest?—Oh, yes.

26,607. Then, as to the value the croft had before this money was advanced, who gave it that value?—Myself, and my father, and my grandfather.

26,608. You are of that opinion?—Yes.

26,609. The Duke of Sutherland gave it no value whatever?—No value whatever.

Alexander Shaw.

ALEXANDER SHAW, Farmer, Balindialish (67)—*examined.*

26,610. *The Chairman.*—What rent do you pay?—£23, 12s.

26,611. Was your rent dealt with by the Crofters Commission?—No, I am under lease.

26,612. For a term of years?—Nineteen years.

26,613. And when does it expire? — There are twelve years to run. I have been seven years there.

26,614. Have you any written statement?—No, none.

26,615. Are you appearing as a delegate appointed at a meeting, or as an individual witness?—Just an individual witness for the quality of the soil. Of course, my holding has got nothing to do with the statements given. Lairg. Alexander Shaw.

26,616. What is it you wish to tell us with regard to the quality of soil?—I am perfectly well acquainted with Dulaich and Craggie, and it is good quality of soil, I think preferable to some that is reclaimed in our straths.

26,617. Reclaimed by crofters or by the landlord?—Well, of course, I believe there is part of both.

26,618. But you say it is better than some that has been reclaimed?—Yes.

26,619. Both crofters' reclamation and landlords' reclamation?—Yes.

26,620. And suitable for occupation?—Yes.

26,621. Could settlements be made on the lands to which you refer, in which the crofter could earn a sufficient livelihood without labouring elsewhere?—Yes, I think they could, because it is superior soil to some that is under crofters at present.

26,622. And could he do so, even in these times?—If they are pulling through in the hard barren ground in these times, I should think they would do better in the fat land.

26,623. You heard the evidence given by the previous witness, Mackay?—Partly.

26,624. And does it express your views so far as it goes?—Yes, I think myself that his statements are quite correct with regard to the quality of the soil.

26,625. And with regard to the land which he thinks available for the purposes of our inquiry?—Yes.

26,626. You don't ask our attention, I take it, to any other lands than those he specified?—No, of course I am not acquainted with any of the rest of it except what lies in beside ourselves.

26,627. And what about the land that lies in beside yourself, what land is it?—That is Dulaich and Craggie.

26,628. Are you in favour of extension of grazings, or of new settlements, or both?—New settlements.

26,629. Rather than extension of grazings?—I think so, I think it would be more profitable.

26,630. Then do you say that the crofters here have in the main sufficient hill grazings?—Well, on the whole, I believe they have, according to the size of their holdings, they are not so ill off for grazing. The grazing is not so needful as new holdings are. Of course, there are some that very much require extension of grazing.

26,631. There are some exceptions?—Yes, there are some.

26,632. Would you place some of the tenants that have very small holdings in this neigbbourhood upon the new holdings you are referring to?—I would, I would take one out here and there and put them on the new holdings, and give their patches to others.

26,633. Consolidating the vacated holdings with a neighbouring holding?—Yes.

26,634. And do you think that would operate a substantial relief?—I think it would: I think it would be more satisfactory to the tenant and to the proprietor.

26,635. *Mr Sutherland.*—You are, of course, speaking from your knowledge as a practical farmer, and from your experience of your own holding?—Certainly.

26,636. You said, I think, in reply to his lordship's question, that some of that land which you refer to, and which Mr Mackay pointed out, was better land than even you had yourself?—Yes, it is.

26,637. Did you find the farm you have now when you went there in a very good state?—I did not.

26,638. And had you to make improvements on it yourself?—Well, I make improvements every year on it, because there is a deal of it that is very wet, and a deal of it full of stones, and there are stones always coming up.

26,639. And you have been improving that since you went?—Certainly, a good deal.

26,640. So that you know something about improving land by personal experience?—I have had personal experience of improving land ever since I could do it.

26,641. And you are not talking merely as a theorist with regard to that?—It is by practice I talk, because I have been amongst the land.

26,642. In fact, you know experimentally what you are talking about?—Yes, of course; I have no statement, but am only speaking by experience.

26,643. And you think that new holdings could be formed on this land that you have referred to in the glens without any fear of failure?—I have not the slightest doubt in saying that, because the land is a better quality than a good deal of what is under cultivation. Of course, when the straths were all bare first, those straths that are barren now were the first that were taken up, so there is no mistake, but it is a clear evidence that the best was reclaimed first.

26,644. You think the natural order would be to take the best land first?—Yes, that is what I would expect anyone going to occupy a strath would do,—go to the best of it first.

26,645. He would leave the worst land to the last?—Yes, that is what I would do myself, and I think any other would do the same.

26,646. So that you think it is the natural order of things that the land we see green now was the best land, because it was so selected by the people when they settled there?—Yes, I think so.

26,647. *Mr Gordon.*—Where is your farm?—About 1¼ miles from the Inn.

26,648. Is it in Achinduich way?—No, it is away the Golspie way.

26,649. At the top of the railway there?—Yes.

26,650. What is the name of the township?—Balindialish.

26,651. You mentioned some land as being specially well suited. Mr Mackay mentioned a good many places. Do you refer to Dulaich?—Yes.

26,652. Is that good land?—Yes, and Allt-breac, that is good land.

26,653. Allt-breac is a green spot, something in the middle of the farm of Dalchork?—Yes, but there is very good soil about it.

26,654. Is there any access to it, a road or anything?—No; there is a road, but the road I think is about half a mile distant from it.

26,655. The public road is a mile and a bit?—Oh, yes, the public road, but there is a road that goes in through the strath that shepherds use, a sort of track, not a proper road.

26,656. Do you know the farm of Dulaich?—Yes.

26,657. Is it under cultivation at all, or all under pasture?—All pasture, with the exception of a small bit round the shepherd's place.

26,658. Is the tenant resident on it?—No.

26,659. It is practically a grazing farm then?—Oh, yes, this good number of years.

26,660. Who is the tenant of it?—Peter Robertson.

26,661. Is it flat land, or is it naturally dry land?—It is naturally dry; it is in the flat down on the level, but it rises up and down; it is not level.

26,662. Undulating?—Yes.

26,663. It is not very high, 400 feet I think?—It lies low from the hills, but it rises up and down; it is not a dead level and is not ill to keep dry.

26,664. There is a considerable extent of land there seemingly; is there a road to it?—There is a road goes through the end of it, a shepherd's road, but there is no road through it itself. It lies to the east of the road, the most of it.

26,665. Yes, I see, south east. We will see it ourselves.

26,666. *The Chairman.*—Have you your lease with you?—No.

26,667. Were there advances made by the landlord under the lease?—No, I don't think there were. Of course, we got an extension of grazing.

26,668. Where was that?—Balindialish.

26,669. What extension was it you got?—I think about 700 acres, or thereabout.* Laing.

27,670. Does that go to you alone, or do you share it with others?—There are eight in it. Alexander Shaw.

26,671. You are one of the eight?—Yes.

26,672. Possibly you have a larger share in it than some of the others?—I don't know.

26,673. Have you been able to meet your rent under the lease, or has it had to be reduced?—The rent has not been reduced since I came there.

26,674. The rent has always been exacted and you have paid it, is that so?—No, there is a difference. The hill is a common, and, of course, I always reckon that the hill is too much stocked and that I never get up the quantity of stock that was put on me for the rent, and there is a difference always betwixt the factor and me for that.

26,675. But has any reduction been made on the rent of your croft, apart from this common grazing?—No.

26,676. What I mean by reduction is, has there been any abatement given?—Yes, we got an abatement twice, a reduction twice.

26,677. What was the extent of that reduction?—I think it would be about 25 per cent.

26,678. And in what years was that reduction given?—I don't exactly remember.

26,679. Was it recently?—Yes, within three or four years.

26,680. Was that owing to bad times?—Yes.

26,681. *Mr Macaulay, Solicitor, Golspie, Agent for the Duke of Sutherland.*—In making the statement you have made, I suppose you speak as a practical farmer?—Yes.

26,682. And when you state that you believe the people in holdings on these lands you referred to should succeed, you are judging, no doubt, from your own success, are you?—Yes.

26,683. Now, what is the acreage of your arable land?—25 acres.

26,684. And you have outrun, haven't you?—Yes.

26,685. How many acres outrun?—I believe close on 1400 acres.

26,686. That is of hill grazing?—Yes.

26,687. And you have your share of that?—Yes.

26,688. How many crofters are there in it?—Eight.

26,689. And how much rent do the other seven pay? What is the addition of the other seven rents can you tell us?—I could not tell you.

26,690. Will it be as much as £25, the other seven put together?—Yes, and three times that.

26,691. Perhaps £50, or will it be £75?—There are some I think £16, and some of them £15 and £8, 10s. and £8, 12s., and I expect some of them down to about £4, 12s., or so. I think they range like that.

26,692. You pay £23, 12s. of rent. When you went into this place were your buildings put in order?—No.

26,693. Was there nothing done to them?—Yes, the carpenter came up and——

26,694. They were repaired?—They were not repaired.

26,695. They were repaired?—The carpenter came up and made a slight repair, merely for the time, and said he was coming back, but he never came back.

26,696. When were they rebuilt can you say?—The last of it was rebuilt by myself after I went there, that was knocked down, but I could not say what was the actual time of it either.

26,697. Well, in speaking of the success you expect, you are judging by your own success. Now, how far have you fulfilled your obligations to the landlord; have you paid your rent?—I did not.

26,698. And how much are you in arrear?—I stated that I did not pay my rent for the hill grazings.

26,699. You did not pay it for the hill grazings. How much are you in arrear then, because I want to bring out your own success? [*The Chairman.*—He

* Shaw has since written that the extent should be stated at 300, the 700 acres including the old and new pasture.

Lairg. — Alexander Shaw.

says he has a dispute about the stock].—*Witness.*—I have got no success, I tell you I am in dispute.

26,700. So you have not been successful?—Certainly I have not been successful myself.

26,701. Well, then, how do you expect these other people to be successful?—I expect the other people to be put on a different footing.

26,702. What footing do you expect them to be put upon?—That they will get the proprietor to equalise their grazings or holdings to give every man a proper share—to let every man know what he has.

26,703. And would you expect him to put up buildings on these new holdings?—Well, I would expect him.

26,704. And to fence them?—I don't know.

26,705. In fact, to put them in shape for any man to go in, just as was done in your case?—Well, that would depend of course upon the agreement between them.

26,706. Well, do you think they would be able to do that themselves?—Some might be able, and some would certainly require assistance.

26,707. What proportion do you think would be able to stock these places, have you any idea of that? Would you be able yourself to go into a place of that kind and stock it?—No, not in the position I am in at present.

26,708. So that you have not been a success, it appears?—I should not have done as far as I have done without getting money from other places.

26,709. So that, though you are speaking as a practical man, you are speaking as a man who has not been successful?—I have not been successful, because I have not had the chance to be successful.

26,710. You entered into a lease?—Yes.

26,711. And you have not done what you undertook to do when you went in?—No.

26,712. Did you get everything you expected when you went into the land? [*The Chairman.*—He imputes his want of success to this overstocking of the common ground. That is the position he takes up, and you must accept the way he puts it.]

26,713. Was it not after you went to your place that this addition was made?—Yes.

26,714. So that, if any overstocking has taken place as regards that, it is since you entered on your lease?—Of course, it is since I entered on my lease.

26,715. So that it must be you or your neighbours who must be overstocking, it is not the proprietor?—I don't think the proprietor puts stock there, it must be the tenants themselves. I don't see any of the proprietor's stock there.

26,716. So that your tenants are to blame for this, not the proprietor?—Well, of course, each tenant puts on exactly what he likes; it is not my place to dictate to the Duke of Sutherland.

26,717. So that your neighbours are the ones to blame for your want of success, is that the case?—Certainly, it is those that have the stock.

26,718. Did it not suggest itself to you that you should get the stocks regulated under a recent Act of Parliament—under the Grazings Act? Did you not consult with your neighbours as to getting your neighbours' stock regulated under the recent Act of Parliament?—Yes.

26,719. And did they join with you?—No.

26,720. They refused?—Yes.

26,721. *Mr Sutherland.*—I want to make this point clear. You say you have 25 acres of arable land?—Yes.

26,722. And that you have an eighth share of 1400 acres of hill pasture?—I think that is about right.

26,723. Well, for the 25 acres of arable land and the keep of 19 sheep, because that is what it amounts to, you pay a rent of £23, 12s., do you?—Yes, that is the rent.

26,724. And that is the rent you have not got reduced?—No; I got a reduction once or twice. I could not exactly say how much.

26,725. But you did not get a permanent reduction?—No, no.

26,726. So that the rule that has been intimated to us of reductions of 26 to 30 per cent. does not apply to you?—Well, of course, I never got under the Crofters Act.

Lairg. — Alexander Shaw.

26,727. You have had no permanent reduction given?—No, and I never got under the Crofters Act. Of course, the only difference with us was the regulating of the stock.

26,728. Well, I wanted to ask you a question about that also. Then, you are practically paying about £1 an acre, or nearly so, for your land?—Yes.

26,729. And is that one of the reasons why you are not more successful, do you think? Would you be more successful as a farmer if you paid less rent?—No, if I could get the stock on the grazings—if the thing was regularly made up and I could get my stock on—I could pay it, hard as the times are.

26,730. You could pay even that?—Yes.

26,731. Even with the 19 sheep?—Not 19.

26,732. But you have only land for 19 sheep?—But I have a share in the hill.

26,733. Is not the whole of your hill pasture 1400 acres among eight of you?—Yes.

26,734. That gives you 195 acres each. Divide that by 10, and that only gives you 19 or 20 sheep, according to the rule that is given for the large farms. It could not vary more than 5 to 10 per cent.?—Well, we have a good advantage. We take the sheep in, and the only success I have in sheep is by taking in lambs on the arable land and rearing them through the winter, and then selling them off in spring.

26,735. But do you not consider that nearly £1 an acre is much too high a rent for that land you have got?—Well, it is that; but then, of course, the hill is included in that.

26,736. But the hill rent is included in all these calculations?—But still, if the thing was put right, I believe I could live on it after all.

26,737. You heard the difficulties that have been urged against the power of the people to stock land, have not you?—Well, yes; of course, I have.

26,738. But does this overstocking of land look as if there was any difficulty?—There is a great want for pasture with a good few, because there is a good many fit to double stock it if they could get it.

26,739. What we are complaining here of is overstocking, isn't it?—That is the whole cry, that it is overstocked.

26,740. But you hear, on the other side, the cry that the tenants cannot stock?—Yes; but I say this, I would take out some of the tenants and put them out into the new buildings and enlarge their holdings, and that would allow their stock to get on better.

26,741. But I am only talking about objections that are being urged against having new holdings, and that is, that the tenants cannot supply more stock; but what you are complaining of, and I have no doubt rightly complaining of, is that there is too much stock on the land?—Yes, of course, there is too much stock on the land.

26,742. So that the stock difficulty is, that they are complaining of the absence of it, on the one hand, and the presence of it on the other hand. Then, are you responsible for not putting the estate rules into effect?—I don't know.

26,743. You understand that the estate management has given you a lease, has it not?—Yes.

26,744. That, according to the terms of that lease, or under the estate management, it is the duty of the management to make regulations, is it not?—Well, I appealed for that, and, of course, they told me that they could not do it.

26,745. It was put to you that you are not successful because you had not your proper share of stock. Is it your duty to enforce the estate regulations; or is it for the estate management to do it?—Well, of course, I appealed to the estate managers.

26,746. And did they give you the justice you ought to get?—No, because it is rather difficult.

26,747. Was it not their duty, in your opinion, to do that?—It is rather difficult to do that.

26,748. I grant you that, but it is not your duty, but theirs?—Well, certainly, I have suffered through it.

26,749. But it is the duty of the estate management to put the rules into effect and not yours, don't you think so?—Well, of course, it is the estate manager's place to put things into the proper state, if it is possible.

26,750. *The Chairman.*—What stock have you got at present, how many cows?—Three cows.

26,751. And how many followers?—A heifer and four calves.

26,752. Have you horses?—Yes, I have got two.

26,753. How many sheep have you?—I have thirty-five sheep.

26,754. Are these ewes?—No, lambs; they are all on the arable land.

26,755. You mean thirty-five hoggs?—Yes, this year's lambs.

26,756. Have you any other sheep?—Yes, I have got two, but I can't get them, I don't know where they are.

26,757. Suppose this common grazing put under proper management as to the carry of the ground, would you consider your present rent a fair rent even in these times?—Oh, I would manage it.

26,758–59. You would not complain of the rent in that case?—No.

26,760. Now under your original lease what was the rent; before you got the share of the common hill?—£20.

26,761. And the addition made when you got the common grazing is £3, 12s.?—Yes, £3, 12s.

26,762. What additional stock have you been able to keep since you got the common grazing?—Oh, I have no stock on the grazing, because we differed about the grazing.

26,763. But do you not put stock on the grazing?—No, I have put no stock this summer on the grazing.

26,764. Had you any last summer?—I had a few sheep a while, and I took them off; we were disputing about it, and I wanted to clear off.

26,765. It was on account of the dispute about this regulation of the grazing that you took the stock you had upon it away?—Yes, because it was overstocked.

26,766. And you endeavoured to get your friends who share the grazing to put the Grazings Act in force, but you did not succeed?—Yes.

26,767. *Mr Gordon.*—How many sheep are there on the common?—I could not exactly say.

26,768. How many sheep do you think it would keep?—It would keep about 250, or between 250 and 300 sheep alone; but it is very different when there are horses and cattle and sheep. Reckoning it all in sheep it would keep about that.

26,769. Would it be more advantage to you and the other crofters if there was nothing on it but sheep?—No, I don't think it would.

26,770. You want to graze your stirks and horses on it?—I think horses and stirks would do.

26,771 Don't you think the horses do a good deal of harm to sheep?—No, but you cannot live without them.

26,772. You might live without some of them?—But you cannot work the land properly without them.

26,773. Supposing you had a sufficient amount of ground for a hirsel, would you approve of keeping the sheep on a club-farm and avoid the dispute?—Yes.

26,774. The only alternative to give every man fair-play is to put it under a club, and let the sheep belong to nobody but the corporation?—It would be honest.

26,775. I believe it would?—It would, and it would save many disputes, because there are many people who would always overstock, and that would keep down the stock.

26,776. The stock would be fixed by a committee of management, and they would regulate the number of stock, and the dipping and clipping, and so on, but you would require enough land to employ a shepherd before you could have a club farm worked properly?—Yes.

26,777. *Mr Macaulay.*—The acreage here is 1400 acres, and this gentlemen says he estimates it would carry 300 sheep. The result would be that on this ground less than 5 acres would do for a sheep. I only want to compare that with the statement that was made by one of the Commissioners. Lairg.

26,778. *The Chairman.*—Of course, it compares itself. Alexander Shaw.

26,779. *Mr Macaulay.*—Yes, if that is clearly brought out.

26,780. *Mr Gordon.*—The quality, of course, differs very much. *Witness.*—I remarked that when we took our stock in to the arable land in the winter, it did not keep all that stock,

26,781. *Mr Macaulay.*—Have you got a park for horses fenced?—Yes.

26,782. Who fenced it?—That is a hard question to me to solve. The proprietor fenced part of it, and I did my share of it.

DONALD MACLEAN (46), Factor for the Duke of Sutherland at Dunrobin (recalled)*—*examined.* Donald Maclean.

26,783. *The Chairman.*—You are prepared to answer any questions which may be put to you on the subject of the paper you read before us at Helmsdale?—Yes, I have attended here to-day with that object.

26,784. You mention in your statement that there are thirty-three sheep farms, and in the document entitled "Classification of Sheep Farms Area" you mention as being under 1500 acres six holdings?—Yes.

26,785. What is the average rent of these?—I can hardly say offhand.

26,786. What is the rent of the highest rented?—Under 1500 acres?

26,787. Yes.—£50 I think.

26,788. And going as low as what?—Going as low as £36. I am just quoting from memory; it is something like that.

26,789. You say that 'since 1882 the sheep-farming 'rental, owing to depreciated value of wool and stock 'and increased cost of wintering, has depreciated 37 per 'cent. and the arable farm rental has fallen 26 per cent.' May we take it that this year the depreciation is even more?—There has been no reduction since the statement that I made.

26,790. There has been no average reduction, but has there been a reduction in any individual case?—Not since I made that statement.

26,791. You submit a plan showing all the sheep farms, deer-forests, and cleared ground. Has there been any additional afforestment of land within the last twenty years?—Oh, certainly. In this district the land afforested within the last twenty years is confined to Corry Kinloch and the several cleared pieces of Dalnessie, Shinness, Borrobol, and Balnacoil; that is so far as I remember just now.

26,792–93. These have been afforested within the last twenty years?—Yes.

26,794. Can you say what was the addition to Corry Kinloch by afforesting?—The whole of the Corry Kinloch farm was afforested, and the area is given in my statement.

26,795. The area I see is given as 10,800 acres. The whole of these places, Corry Kinloch and the cleared pieces of Dalnessie, Shinness, Borrobol, and Balnacoil, have been turned into forests within the period I have mentioned?—Yes.

26,796. Perhaps you could explain how that came to be?—It arose from the fact that they were unlettable as sheep grazings. There was only one, I may say, that could have been let as a sheep farm—Corry Kinloch. That might, at a very considerable reduction of rent, have been let as a sheep farm, and it is the only case, so far as I know. Of course, some of those cleared places were cleared before I came to the county, and I am not particularly conversant with the exact facts as to their afforestment.

26,797. Is this your meaning—that these lands were afforested because they could not be put to any other purpose?—Yes.

* See above, p. 599.

Lairg.

Donald Maclean.

26,798. You mentioned Badanloch and Gearnsary, and you say 'those portions of land (Nos. 2 and 4) are 'not fully stocked, the wedder ground being kept 'mostly cleared of sheep.' Is that forest land at present?—It is not under sheep except at certain times of the year. It is not regularly under sheep.

26,799. What is its main purpose—for what is it kept mainly?—For deer, I suppose; that is a matter entirely with the tenant. They are let as sheep farms, and it is the tenant who deals with the matter. I don't know exactly what parts of those farms are afforested or what parts are under sheep.

26,800. They are let as sheep farms?—Yes.

26,801. You say that none of that cleared ground is adapted for small holdings?—Not in my opinion.

26802. May I ask why?—They are at too high an elevation for one thing; the climate is against it.

26803. What is the elevation?—You will see by the map.

26804. Yes, we will find that from the map. Are there any other causes besides the elevation?—Because of the fact that there is very little arable land on it for one thing.

26,805. Is there not a considerable tract of ground that could easily be put under rotation without undue expenditure?—No doubt it could, but it would not do to put it under cultivation.

26,806. Are not some considerable portions of it more suitable for reclamation a good deal than parts of the land reclaimed by the late Duke?—Of those particular cleared places, I think not.

26,807. Take the immediate neighbourhood of Gearnsary; is not there a considerable portion of land there more suitable for reclamation and rotation of crop than many of the lands reclaimed by the late Duke?—I don't think so.

26,808. Don't part of these lands at least stand at a lower level?—Gearnsary, I think not; Gearnsary must be higher.

26,809. Is not Gearnsary at a considerably lower level than much of the reclaimed land at Kinbrace, near the shepherd's house, and along at Truderscraig?—It *may* be at a lower level; but I should say it is about the same level.

26,810. But is it not much lower in level than much of the reclaimed land?—I don't think so.

26,811. Well, we can find that out for ourselves, I dare say. You say 'there can be no better illustra-'tion of the absurdity of cultivation to any extent in 'high lying and exposed situations than that afforded 'by the late Duke of Sutherland's reclamations.' Were these reclamations mainly made upon high lying and exposed situations?—The greater part of them are high; Lairg is the lowest, I would say.

26,812. What you say therefore, speaking generally, is that much of these reclamations were carried out on subjects which, from their high altitude and their exposure, were not well suited for the object in view?—And also the nature of the ground; the climate and the exposure.

26,813. And the altitude?—I don't make so much of the altitude.

26,814. I am only asking because you mention it here; you say 'high lying.' Then at the end you mention a very important matter; you say 'In conclusion, I 'have the authority of the Duke of Sutherland to say 'that he is favourable to the formation of more small 'farms in this district, in localities well adapted for 'them, and where there is every chance of making a 'living; and as certain lands fall out of lease they will 'be broken up and offered to crofting tenants.' May I ask where these lands are?—I do not think it is desirable to state just now where these lands are, or what particular farms it is intended to break up, as it might be injurious to the future tenants if I did.

26,815. But we may take it that there are considerable tracts coming within this description?—You may.

26,816. You say these lands will be broken up as they fall out of lease 'and offered to crofting tenants 'who are known to be industrious and persevering and 'who are in a position to occupy larger holdings.' You mean persons with a certain amount of capital?—Yes, and who have done well on their present holdings.

Lairg.

Donald Maclean.

26,817. Is it your view that such holdings as are pointed at here could not be undertaken with fair prospects of success without considerable capital in possession of the incoming tenant?—It is.

26,818. You also say:—'Landlords as individuals 'and owners who wish to make the most of their land 'will as necessity arises offer stronger inducements than 'now exist to tenants to remain on the land and for 'the investment of capital in it; and no doubt an 'increase of small farms or holdings may be one 'inducement.' What other inducements do you refer to when you say 'stronger inducements'?—Inducements in the way of fair rents to meet the times, and inducements also in the way of buildings to meet the agricultural requirements of the times and the age.

26,819. You mean buildings by the landlord?—Yes.

26,820. And fencing too, I suppose?—And fencing too.

26,821. You are, therefore, of opinion that a landlord would act wisely in forming small holdings and encouraging an incoming tenant by means of these inducements?—Certainly, in situations which are adapted for such holdings. I am a very strong believer in small holdings myself.

26,822. And it is part of the policy of the estate management as indicated in this paper, whenever opportunity arises, to encourage and assist the formation of such holdings?—Yes, consistently, of course, with other interests.

26,823. And upon ground suitable for the purpose?—Certainly.

26,824. Therefore, not upon such ground as formed the subject of the late Duke's reclamations?—No. That has already been offered for small holdings and been refused.

26,825. You say 'small holdings in situations 'where there is a ready outlet for the smaller industries 'or products, dairy produce, poultry, &c., may pay.' Are these the main sources of advantage in the creation of small holdings? Do you look mainly to dairy produce and poultry for the success of these holdings?—Dairy produce and poultry, with cattle and sheep; the whole taken together.

26,826. These holdings to which you refer are holdings, as I take it, on which the occupant would be able to live without outside labour?—Yes.

26,827. *Mr Sutherland.*—You stated, I think, in regard to your paper that for the latter part of it you have the authority of the Duke of Sutherland. That does not, I presume, imply that the former part has not his authority?—Certainly not, the whole statement has his authority.

26,828. It is merely a phrase that has no bearing on the former part of the paper; is that so?—It is part and parcel of the statement.

26,829. You mention specially in the latter portion "In conclusion, I have the authority of the Duke of 'Sutherland to say so." That does not imply in any way that you have not his authority for the former part of the statement?—Certainly not.

26,830. Then you gave the acreages of the sheep farms and the arable farms,—that is, the large arable farms, with the numbers of the holdings: but you have not given us the number of the small holdings?—No, because that has already appeared in evidence in the Crofters Commission Reports. I state what the alternation has been pretty well on the crofts, but I have not repeated anything which appeared in the Crofters Commission Reports, or in the evidence given to Lord Napier's Commission in 1883.

26,831. I miss their presence, because it would enable us to make some comparison between the rentals charged for the different classes of holdings?—Well, of course, the comparison can be got by referring to the evidence of 1883.

26,832. Then, you stated that since 1882 the rentals of the large farms have depreciated to a certain extent?—Yes.

26,833. I presume you mean that you have found it necessary to give reductions to that extent?—Yes, I refer to the permanent reductions, not temporary abatements.

26,834. To permanent ones,—in fact terms of new leases given to new tenants?—No, most of these reductions are on current leases, not new leases. The new leases are, of course, taken into account also in cases where they came into existence.

26,835. But did you give any reductions during that time to the crofters?—There were temporary reductions given.

26,836. But not permanent ones?—Yes, a great many.

26,837. Permanent by agreement with them?—A good number, I have with me a statement of fifty cases in which I myself reduced the rent before the Crofters Commission came into existence.

26,838. But fifty out of such a large number of crofters is not so high a percentage as in the case of the large farmers?—It was the first year I came here.

26,839. What year was that?—1885. I was instructed to adjust any cases of over-rent which I might find to exist where complaints were made, and I think in every case where complaint was made I did adjust the rent.

26,840. You are aware, of course, that all these reductions to the crofters began in 1885,—they never heard of any before that?—No, I don't think they did.

26,841. That year was co-incident with your coming here?—I certainly know that their first reduction was given in 1885, because I had something to do with it.

26,842. So I understand; but is that not evidence then of the smaller reductions of rent necessary to crofters,—that the small tillage has been more successful than the large? Would it not be reasonable to take that view, because you found it necessary to give fewer reductions, therefore the crofter is more successful than the large farmer?—The reason is that we believed that on the whole the crofters were very much lower rented than the large farmers.

26,843. But it need not be left as a matter of belief?—It is the fact.

26,844. Can you tell us what is the average rental of the large sheep grazier over all?—About 8d. per acre.

26,845. And what of the crofters do you know?—But I should ask first, why do you compare the crofter with the sheep farmer?

26,846. Because the one is the smallest holder and the other is the largest.—But why don't you compare them with the *arable* farmers?

26,847. Give us an instance of the large arable farm in Sutherland?—There are fifty of them.

26,848. Give us one, if you please, so that we can have a standard of comparison.—Allow me to refer to the list. [*Mr Gordon.*—Skelbo?]—Skelbo, if you like.

26,849. Is Skelbo an average representative of the arable farms in Sutherland?—I don't think that it is quite a fair representative, but take any other farm you like.

26,850. Well, take the biggest farm we find on the east coast,—is that not Crackaig?—Yes, I daresay.

26,851. How much grazing land is held in connection with it?—The grazing land is held separately from the arable.

26,852. But take them together. Why do you wish to separate them, when you do not separate the crofter's grazing from his arable?—You are making a comparison, I understand, between the sheep farmer and the crofter.

26,853. Certainly?—But we don't look upon crofters as sheep farmers, we regard them more as arable farmers than as sheep farmers, and, therefore, you must make the comparison between the arable farm and the croft, not between the sheep farm and the croft. Take the arable farm and its outrun, and compare that with the croft and its outrun.

26,854. Is it not the proper way to take one man's total acreage and another man's total acreage and make the comparison between them?—Certainly not. A sheep farm is entirely different from an arable farm.

26,855. A large farm has got arable land and pasture, and a crofter has got arable land and pasture; why not compare them?—Very well; compare them.

26,856. How does the comparison as to the rental come out?—I cannot tell you per acre, but I should say off-hand as a comparison between the arable farmer with his outrun and the crofter with his outrun, that the former is paying double as much as the latter.

26,857. How much does he pay per acre?—From 25s. downwards to 15s.; some of them are lower even.

26,858. Take the case of Mr Dudgeon of Crackaig, who holds a larger proportion of arable land than any other sheep farmer here; how much does he pay for all the land he holds in Sutherland?—That I cannot tell you, because I have not worked it out.

26,859. Do you mean to assert that he pays 15s. per acre?—Not over all, taking the arable farm with the sheep farm; but taking the arable farm alone.

26,860. But why do you break them up? I wish to compare acreage of the sheep farmer with the acreage of the crofter.—Take the case of Langwell in the parish of Rogart. Take the arable land which they have along with the hill and work it out per acre, and you will find that they pay to a fraction exactly the same as the sheep farm of Blarich. That is one instance.

26,861. Could you not mention one large farmer (it would be a very small matter if you could) where putting both his sheep farm and his arable together and dividing it we could find out how much he pays per acre?—Yes, I daresay I could.

26,862. I don't wish to detain you just now to perform that operation, but that is the reason why I regretted the absence of these figures. I could find it no doubt by going through the various processes you have indicated, but I have not had the time. I have no doubt, however, that you are aware of the statement that was submitted by Sir Arnold Kemball to Lord Napier's Commission, in which he calculated the rate paid by the crofters in the management you preside over as 8s. 9d. per acre?—Very likely, but I am afraid that is far short of what some of the arable farmers pay, taking in their hill along with their arable.

26,863. He has them altogether here?—These are the crofters altogether.

26,864. What I wish to know is how much a large farmer on the Sutherland estates pays for both his arable and his pasture together?—I think I could give you many instances where they are paying double that.

26,865. But you did not put before us in your statement the data by which we could easily arrive at it?—I can arrive at it and give you the result probably before you leave the room.

26,866. You stated, with regard to sheep farms, that the proportion of the arable to the hill land is exceedingly small?—Yes, very much lower probably than that of the crofters.

26,867. But who made the crofters land arable?—I have no doubt a great portion of it was made by themselves.

26,868. Do you know of a sheep farmer making land arable to any extent?—Yes, I think I do.

26,869. Where?—Take the farm of Culmaillie.

26,870. Did the farmer do it there, or did you do it for him?—It was done by the farmer, a large portion of it.

26,871. At his own expense?—At his own expense.

26,872. Do you know any other case where a farmer did it at his own expense?—I don't remember any other just at present.

26,873. What I wanted to know particularly was, what had you in your mind when you spoke of the proportion of arable being larger in the case of the crofter than in the case of the farmer. Did you mean what was cultivated of old, or what might be cultivated now?—Both.

25,874. But if it was not intended to take away tha arable land from the sheep farm, would it remove any of your objections to making small holdings?—If what?

26,875. If it was not proposed to pick these arable

Lairg. — Donald Maclean.

pieces out of the farms, would that overcome any of your objections?—That would depend upon how you intended to deal with the whole thing.

26,876. Your statement is:—'It will be seen from 'the statement as to the area of the sheep farms that 'the proportion of arable to hill land is exceedingly 'small. Diminish this area and you at once seriously 'injure the remainder of the grazings, and render 'immense tracts of land unlettable for either sheep or 'deer.' What I want to know from you is, provided these pieces were not picked out, but the land taken in entities as it stands, in farms or deer forests, would that overcome your objection?—It would to a certain extent, provided the whole was taken.

26,877. Was it present to your mind that there was a possibility of picking and selecting out of these farms when you made that statement?—Certainly.

26,878. And if it were not proposed to do that, but to take the land in farms or forest, that would be part of your objection taken away?—Certainly.

26,879. Then I take it, that you admit, or rather it is implied in this sentence of yours, that it is necessary to find arable land to maintain deer in deer forests?—Certainly, it is necessary to have green ground and better pasture than can be got on the higher hills.

26,880. And the same for sheep farms?—The same for sheep farms.

26,881. And is the value of a sheep farm considerably added to by the fact that it has a high proportion of that old arable in it?—Certainly.

26,882. And is it a fair inference that a great deal of the present value of the sheep farms depends upon the amount of old arable in them?—The value does depend to a certain extent upon the amount of green ground, low ground pasture.

26,883. A great deal, does it not?—Yes.

26,884. Was it the large farmers who gave that value to them, do you know?—Probably not.

26,885. I don't want to put it in any invidious sense, but is it not a fair inference that the value was given to it by its former possessors?—Certainly.

26,886. And, in your opinion, ought not some consideration be given to that in any redistribution of the land,—the fact that that injury was done to them before, and their labour confiscated,—does it not constitute a claim now upon the consideration of any one who has anything to do with the distribution of the land?—That is a great question, which I am not prepared to enter upon.

26,887. I do not press you with regard to it. Now, I think you stated in reply to a question by the Chairman that those lands that were reclaimed by the Duke of Sutherland were offered publicly for small holdings?—I have offered them to many myself.

26,888. What means were taken beyond verbal communications by yourself to let the people know that you were desirous of letting that land in small holdings?—No other means since I came into the county, but over and over again have tenants applied to me for land, and I have referred them to this land and offered it to them.

26,889. Do you mean the Shinness farms for instance,—the Shinness farms as they are at present, I mean of the same extent; or did you offer to sub-divide them?—They were sub-divided at that time, and we offered to sub-divide them further.

26,890. Was that intention on your part known to the people of Lairg, do you know?—I think the Lairg people have applied to me for holdings, and they have been offered to them. I cannot bring any particular instances.

26,891. If it was not known before, may this meeting take it, and may the public take it, that you are willing to let this to small holders?—They are let now: they were in hand then.

26,892. But whenever they come in hand?—I have no doubt the present Duke would be quite prepared, should they come in hand again, to consider the question of breaking these farms up.

26,893. You see you have made statements there from which it would be a natural inference that there is no demand in Sutherlandshire for small holdings; would you admit that?—I have not stated that. Lairg. — Donald Maclean.

26,894. But you have made statements in this paper from which it is a fair inference that there is no demand for small holdings?—Not in these outlying districts.

26,895. What I want to know is, are you justified in giving us to understand that? Are you justified in saying that with regard to the parish of Lairg and the Shinness reclamations?—Certainly.

26,896. You are of opinion that the people of Lairg knew that you were willing to let the Shinness reclamations in small holdings, and they did not take advantage of it?—I don't say that, but I say there has been no expression of a demand for holdings on these reclaimed lands.

26,897. It is the fact, is it not, as stated here by Mr Mackay, that the small holdings that already exist on Shinness were occupied as soon as they were ready?—They were, by labourers.

26,898. And have been continuously occupied since?—Yes, and enlarged.

26,899. Is that by practically the same people?—The same people.

26,900. Whereas the larger ones have not been occupied continuously, and have not been kept in cultivation?—Some of them were never occupied by tenants at all.

26,901. They were, I understand, carried on by yourself under management?—Yes.

26,902. You made a remarkable statement,—I have no doubt at all as to its veracity, but it was a remarkable statement—that you carried them on for a number of years at a total loss of £22,000?—Yes.

26,903. How many farms did that refer to?—That referred to three in particular, you may take it, Shinness, Lubvreck, Achdaphris. Those farms, I may say, were advertised over and over again; they have been advertised at least three times since I came to this district, without success.

26,904. And are you carrying them on still?—No, they are let.

26,905. Did you get a person to take them?—Yes.

26,906. Who is the present tenant?—Mr Campbell and Mr Sanderson.

26,907. Is that Mr Campbell the previous manager?—Yes.

26,908. And has Mr Campbell taken a farm which he himself carried on at a loss of £22,000 for a number of years?—Yes, he and Mr Sanderson together, have taken the three farms, but under very different conditions from those under which they were carried on by the estate.

26,909. In making these calculations against these farms, were you allowing for rent?—Yes, but not for interest on capital.

26,910. Merely a rent according to the other rents?—Yes, reduced according to the average reductions that were given over the whole district.

26,911. And you maintain your general statement that the reclamations of the late Duke of Sutherland were not a success, I presume, from the rent point of view?—I do.

26,912. You have heard, no doubt, a few questions that were directed by myself among others, to finding out if we could the causes that in your opinion led to that. Were they, so far as you heard them, just, or do you think any of them overstated in any way?—That led to what?

26,913. That led to this expenditure being so large in these reclamations; *e.g.*, was there not a great expenditure of money on reclamations that were not carried out as far as the machinery and other apparatus could carry them?—There was a very large expenditure, of course on machinery, which is included in that statement.

26,914. And could not that machinery have done a great deal more reclamation if it was found that you had land to work upon?—Probably it would.

26,915. And would that not increase unduly the amount that would go against the reclamations per acre?—Certainly.

26,916. So that the huge expenditure per acre was due to causes like that, as much as to anything else?—I have no doubt that if the area reclaimed had been double, the expenditure per acre might have appeared less.

26,917. And the machinery was perfectly capable of doing that, and perhaps three times the quantity?—No doubt, but the wear and tear was exceedingly heavy.

26,918. But it would not be so much as the initial expenditure of making the machinery?—It was estimated at 5 per cent. on the cost, but I am afraid it was more like 30 per cent. for maintenance.

26,919. But even with 30 per cent., would not the amount per acre have been lessened if more work had been done?—Certainly.

26,920. So that the Duke's reclamations form no criterion at all, do they, of the amount per acre at which land could be reclaimed?—A very large area was reclaimed for the machinery that was at work.

26,921. But not so much as the machinery could do?—Probably not.

26,922. Was the machinery not changed very much during the progress of these reclamations?—Some of the initial implements I think were changed, but after the first year or two, I don't think they were much changed.

26,923. There were a great many improvements made on the machinery during the course of the reclamations. Were you here during the time they were being carried on?—I was not here as factor, but I visited the improvements long before I came to Sutherland.

26,924. But you heard that the first machinery was purely tentative, and that all the improvements that were made as they went along were incorporated in the machinery, necessitating in many cases a total change?—But I am afraid the great cost did not apply to that machinery.

26,925. But then you heard the comparisons made as to the cost per acre, and the cost of the crofters' reclamations?—I heard a statement made at Helmsdale of £9 per acre, which I consider ridiculous. I could give you many instances where crofters have reclaimed at £40 per acre.

26,926. Would you be surprised if I could give you far more instances where it has been done for £9?—It all depends on the character of the land.

26,927. And on who carries them on?—And who carries them on. But I have no doubt the cost of a good part of the lands which the Duke reclaimed, would not at particular places exceed £8 or £9, even with the machinery.

26,928. That is quite possible; I don't deny that. But you heard the statements that were made, and you, yourself, admit that it depends very much on who carries on the reclamation?—Certainly, it does to a certain extent.

26,929. And if there were £180,000 given to the crofters of Sutherlandshire to reclaim land, don't you think they could reclaim a hundred times as much as could be reclaimed by machinery?—Not within the same time.

25,930. Possibly not, I don't say that, but it could be done; you see no reason to doubt that?—Anything can be done by hand labour, of course.

26,931. By industry?—By industry.

26,932. I do not desire to go into these matters at any great length, but you gave certain instances of offers of additional grazings that were made to crofters, particularly about Helmsdale, and were not availed of?—Yes.

26,933. I presume you wish us to infer from that, that because these were not carried out in the way you intended, there was a probability that any arrangement that might hereafter be made, might not be carried out?—Do you refer to Elderable?

26,934. Yes, particularly.—The offer of grazing was made there—

26,935. What were the objections that were urged against this? What was one of the reasons attributed for not taking the land?—It was not extensive enough: that was the only reason given. Lairg.

26,936. Did you ever hear it stated also that the land stopped short at the place where it became good?—That was never alleged. Donald Maclean.

29,937. Did you hear that they objected to the proposed rules for the management of it that you laid down?—It was never stated to me. I will put in the correspondence in connection with that.

26,938. I have it here, thank you: if you wish to hand it in formally I have no objection. And furthermore there was an application for it to the Crofters Commission?—That has still to be dealt with, of course. This is the correspondence connected with Elderable, and the present application to the Commission. (*Produces document*). [*The Chairman.*—If you wish to put it in we shall take it]. I may say that these applications are limited to 19 tenants out of nearly 100; and we are not aware whether it is only the 19 tenants or the 100 tenants who want this additional grazing.

26,939. Do they apply on behalf of the individual signatories, or do they apply for the whole of them?—The individual signatories, of course, so far as we can judge from the application.

26,940. You said also something about the County Council,—that there were no applications, specific applications: I think you objected to these not being specific enough under the Small Holdings and the Allotments Acts?—Yes.

26,941. You also heard what was said by the witnesses regarding that?—Yes.

26,942. But whatever informalities there may have been, Mr Maclean, from your knowledge of the county, you would not say that if land were offered on favourable conditions to the people, it would not be taken advantage of?—If they were offered in certain situations they might be taken advantage of.

26,943. May I ask what you would consider a favourable situation in which to give them land, supposing it was available?—The lower-lying portions near the sea coast.

26,944. And in the neighbourhood of the villages?—And in the neighbourhood of the villages certainly: but that would be more of the nature of allotments.

26,945. But there were applications made to you, were there not, under the Allotments Act?—Only one.

26,946. 'The Allotments (Scotland) Act, 1892: 'Petition by ten fishermen, Lower Brora, for land ad- 'joining Lower Brora and Brora village.'—I understood you were referring to the County Council application.

26,947. Yes, that is what I am referring to?—There was no application from them through the County Council that I am aware of.

26,948. 'Petition by the inhabitants of the village 'of Embo, parish of Dornoch,' is that the one?—That is the one I referred to. I may be wrong, but I don't think there was one from Brora.

26,949. You remember the Embo one?—Certainly.

26,950. Is it likely that the others would reach you through the same channel as the Embo one?—The Embo one so far as I know is the only specific one for allotments, because I referred to it particularly, and if there had been another I think it would have been referred to in my correspondence with the Council; but the correspondence is here and will speak for itself. I write 'The only land available just now for allotments 'is a large field on the Embo farm, near the fishing 'village of Embo, and extending to 48½ acres.'

26,951. That excludes all consideration of the others except Embo: is that not so?—There may have been another; I refer to the correspondence.

26,952. Have you the letters of 31st January and 3rd February?—I have the letter of 3rd February, but that of 31st January has gone amissing. On 3rd February, in regard to allotments, the letter from the County Clerk states as follows:—'As mentioned in my 'letter already referred to the petitioners for allotments 'under the above Act state that there is available land 'in the immediate neighbourhood of the villages of 'Brora and Embo suitable for allotments.' Now, there

Lairg — Donald Maclean.

was no land in the immediate vicinity of Brora suitable for allotments at the time so far as I know.

26,953. It was a difference of opinion between you as to what was available or suitable land?—The land that was let under lease we considered was not available for allotments at the time.

26,954. So that all these applications then, in your opinion, do not show a desire to have land; is that it?—There is a desire for allotments.

26,955. You do not deny that there is a desire for small holdings, do you?—I have not received specific applications for small holdings through the County Council.

26,956. Is not there a letter from yourself, dated 23rd March 1893, in which you offered land in Embo?—For allotments.

26,957. Did that application for Embo come to you along with other applications under the Small Holdings Act?—It is under the Allotments Act from the County Council.

26,958. Yes, it is: I beg your pardon. Can you tax your memory whether those other ones came along with that?—It came to me through the County Council, and the letter I have here is dated 3rd February. There was also one of 31st January, copy of which I have not got just now, but I will read my reply, dated 2nd February, in which I said 'I am in receipt of your 'letter of the 31st ult., which is very indefinite. It 'gives no information whatever as to whether the 'council propose to acquire by purchase or lease land 'for small holdings and allotments in the several 'parishes named; nor is any indication given as to the 'extent and situation of the land which the Council 'after inquiry through their committee under Sect. 5 'of the Act considers it desirable to acquire for small 'holdings, or of the extent and situation of land 'required for allotments. Full particulars must be 'furnished with a formal application before the matter 'can be dealt with.'

26,959. Had not you a reply to that?—This is the reply I received:—'3rd February. I am favoured 'with your letter of yesterday's date. Before the 'committee appointed by the council under Sect. 5 'of the Small Holdings Act, 1892, is in a position to 'report to the council, as to whether part 1 of the Act 'should be put into operation, it is necessary to know 'whether his Grace the Duke of Sutherland is prepared 'to give lands in all or any of the parishes mentioned 'in my letter of 31st ult., for the purpose of provid-'ing small holdings, and in the event of his Grace 'agreeing to do so, please state alternatively the terms 'on which the land may be obtained, either by purchase 'or on lease, and also the extent of same. On receipt 'of the above information, the committee will be able 'to report to the council in terms of the Act, and also 'to recommend the best mode of acquiring the land. 'From the number of applications already lodged, the 'committee is quite satisfied that there is a demand for 'small holdings in the county,' and then the letter proceeds, as I have already said, to refer to the Allotments Act. My reply to that was dated 4th February, and was as follows: 'I have your letter of yesterday, 'which is vague and indefinite, and with the information 'you give it is quite impossible for me to represent in-'telligibly to the Duke what the council wants. How-'ever, the matter will be laid before him.'

26,960. Did it end there?—No, the next letter was on the 23rd of March to Mr Argo, 'Referring to 'your letter of 31st January and 3rd February last, 'which have been submitted to the Duke of Sutherland, 'I have now to say with regard to (1) small holdings, 'that the farms in the parishes named are let on 'lease, and the land is not, therefore, available for 'breaking up into small holdings: but as leases fall 'out his Grace will consider the question of divid-'ing farms. (2) Allotments. The only land available 'just now for allotments is a large field on the Embo 'farm, near the fishing village of Embo, and extending 'to 48½ acres. It has just been arranged that the 'executor to the late William Gordon shall be relieved 'of the tenancy of Embo farm at Whitsunday next, 'and the field named can be let to the council for 'village allotments on the following terms, viz:—

Lairg. — Donald Maclean.

1. 'Lease for nineteen years from Whitsunday 1893.

2. 'Rent £48, payable half yearly at Whitsunday and 'Martinmas, the first half year's rent being payable at 'Martinmas next.

3. 'The council to take over from the outgoing tenant 'at valuation the waygoing crop of corn on about 24 or '25 acres of the land, and also pay for the young grass 'on the remainder of the land. I am not sure of the 'exact areas under separate crops in this field, but this 'can be ascertained from the tenant.

4. 'The land to be properly cultivated, and at all 'times kept in good heart, and thoroughly free of 'weeds, and clean in every respect, and the system of 'cultivation to be such as not to exhaust the land in 'any way.

5. 'Fences to be maintained in good order and 'condition.

6. 'No buildings of any kind to be erected on the 'land. I shall be glad to hear, with as little delay as 'possible, whether the council agree to take the land 'on these conditions.'

26,961. Had you any reply to that?—The reply was that the council could not agree to take the land on these conditions, and asking whether the applicants for the holdings had been dealt with by the proprietor. As a matter of fact, no applications were made to the proprietor by these applicants for allotments.

26,962. So the obstacle, according to the County Council, is the conditions upon which the land was to be given?—No; the obstacle which the County Council raised was that the proprietor must first himself deal with the applicants. As a matter of fact, no applicants came forward to the Duke. The applications were made to the County Council, but not to the Duke.

26,963. The committee instructed the clerk to state in reply to the above letter that they regretted there was no land available for allotments, except the park at Embo of 48 acres, for which you wanted a rent of £48?—And for which the farm tenant had been paying £1, 0s. 6d.

26,964. And apart from that they were to fulfil all these other onerous conditions?—Usual conditions, not onerous at all: usual and ordinary conditions.

26,965. And that seeing that was the case, and that they could not see their way, they recommended the landlord to deal with these people?—Yes, and I have no doubt we shall be able to deal with them on perhaps a little more favourable terms.

26,966. But that was practically the outcome of the whole of their applications for small holdings?—It is.

26,967. Do you think that is very encouraging for the County Council to take any action in future?—I think I said in the last letter which I read just now, that as leases fall out his Grace will consider the question of dividing farms.

26,968. And are we to consider that statement in the light of the transactions between the County Council and yourself?—It will be then, when the land falls out of lease, for the County Council to renew their applications.

26,969. The statement implies that under such contingencies you will consider the question?—Certainly.

26,970. It will be as open as before?—Certainly; a little more open.

26,971. But you see no reasonable hope of changing the conditions which you laid down to the County Council in this case?—For allotments?

26,972. Yes, with regard to allotments?—I don't know what condition you refer to particularly.

26,973. Will you impose the like conditions at any future time when the matter again comes up?—I have no doubt we shall ask a fair rent.

26,974. Of £1 an acre?—And we shall condition that the land be kept in good order.

26,975. Was it proposed by the County Council at all to buy?—No, I asked them that particular question, whether they proposed to buy or to lease.

26,976. Might the same statement you made already,

with regard to leasing, be taken to apply to purchase, as well if they saw their way to do it?—I have no doubt, in certain situations.

26,977. But the Duke of Sutherland himself would have to select these situations?—Certainly.

26,978. I don't hold you to deny generally, Mr Maclean, but that there is land on the Sutherland estate suitable for the making of small holdings such as are included in our remit?—There is.

26,979. And you think that under certain conditions and limitations which you have endeavoured to put before us, it would be safe to do so?—Certainly.

26,980. And you only differ from the witnesses who have been before us hitherto as to the extent perhaps?—The extent and the situation.

26,981. The extent to which they could be made to advantage?—That implies a good deal.

26,982. Yes, no doubt: but the general difference between you is that, is it not? It is not one of principle, but of degree?—One of degree mainly: but a degree which affects situation and climate, and capital and several other things.

26,983. Doubtless; but it is a great advance to get a man in your position to admit the principle?—I think most people in my position will admit the desirability of a proper gradation of holdings.

26,984. No doubt, and it is no reflection at all upon you that you are actuated in this matter by a desire to conserve the landlord's interests?—And I think I am also actuated by a desire to benefit the tenants.

26,985. I have no doubt that you feel you are doing a good turn to both landlord and tenant, but naturally you are more in the position of serving the best interests of the proprietor?—Of course, I have that position, but I wish also to benefit the tenants.

26,986. So far as that does not conflict with the interests of the landlord?—Yes.

26,987. But you state generally that you are of opinion that such a condition of things as we contemplate in our inquiry could to a certain extent be carried out in this neighbourhood?—To a certain extent.

26,988. In fact, the management of the Sutherland estate has already shown it?—Yes.

26,989. *Mr Forsyth.*—I would like to get some further information with reference to this field which Mr Sutherland has just been mentioning. Did the Small Holdings Committee of the County Council propose that the estate should deal with the tenants in the matter?—They did.

26,990. Then, it was simply to be a bargain between the estate and the tenants with the County Council intervening?—No, the County Council seem to have washed their hands of the affair.

26,991. That is the point I want to get at.—The County Council said apparently,—You have not dealt with these tenants who are applying and these people who are applying for allotments: we cannot do anything with them till you are done with them.—But, as a matter of fact, we had no applications from the tenants themselves.

26,992. Had you not rather supposed that the intention of the Small Holdings and Allotments Acts was that the County Council Small Holdings Committee was to make application for specific pieces of land to the proprietor, and then having obtained them by agreement with the proprietor to make the arrangement with the tenants?—Certainly, that is what I understood by the Act; that is what I understood the Council should have done.

26,993. Then, in this case the Small Holdings Committee of the County Council made no application regarding themselves as possible tenants, but were merely intervening between the estate and some tenants who might be selected?—Yes.

26,994. Do you know if that has been the case elsewhere in this county? Have there been any other applications made by the Small Holdings Committee of the County Council for land?—Not that I am aware of, except an application to the Duke from the west coast: none for allotments.

26,995. Was that application made in the same form, do you happen to know, although it is not, I think, in your province?—Exactly, in the same form: there is no specific land named.

26,996. Does it not appear to you that that is likely to bring to an end and terminate any negotations for land that might otherwise be successfully carried out?—Yes the tendency is to bring that about.

26,997. And you cannot suggest any reason for that?—No.

26,998. *Mr Gordon.*—This matter of small holdings is hardly within our province to deal with; however, we are very anxious to do some good if we can. Now, I would like your idea in regard to a larger subject, *i.e.*, the sub-division of some of the bigger farms. Into what size of holdings would you suggest that they should be divided if they were to be divided at all?—If you have a subject that is worth dividing, I should certainly not divide it into areas of less than 30 to 40 acres of arable, with corresponding extent of hill ground.

26,999. Possibly, a hirsel of sheep?—Well, even less than a hirsel, unless you have the grazing in common.

27,000. Have you many tenants paying rents of from £30 to £70?—We have a good number: there are over twenty at any rate.

27,001. Do you find that that class of rents is as regularly paid as the larger rents?—In good situations they are as well paid.

27,002. And in some cases holdings of that size if they could be found would, you think, be as sure rent-payers as holdings of a larger size?—I think so; that is supposing the tenants entered on the holdings without borrowed capital. If there is borrowed capital that alters the circumstances altogether.

27,003. No doubt it does. There are doubtless certain situations in this country where such holdings could be entered on more cheaply than others, but in most cases they would require new buildings; that is the greatest difficulty?—This is a very great obstacle.

27,004. Another thing is this: in making suggestions as to these sub-divisions (which do not strictly come within our province I may tell you) it would be a great matter if the division could be done in such a way as to necessitate the least possible amount of fencing,—employing natural boundaries, watersheds, or burns as the case might be, because in sub-divisions of that kind fencing often becomes as serious a subject to cope with as buildings?—Yes.

27,005. But it is your idea that the larger farms might be sub-divided without loss to the proprietor?—Some of them might.

27,006. *Mr Macaulay, Solicitor, Law Agent for the Sutherland estates.*—With regard to this Elderable farm, what was the proprietor's reason for not giving this further extension that was asked? The reason alleged for refusing the extension is that the ground was not sufficient, and I want to get at the reason for not complying with the request of these crofters for further extension?—One of the main reasons was that a very short time before that we had had the experience of grazing on Suisgill where 6000 acres of land had been let to small tenants and had proved a failure; they had to ask the proprietor to relieve them of it.

27,007. Had they the Suisgill place on favourable terms as regards rent?—They had it at exactly half of the rent paid by the neighbouring sheep farmers.

27,008. What was the result of that?—The result was that the whole thing was a failure, and in less than five years they asked the proprietor to relieve them of it, which he did, and remitted the last half year's rent.

27,009. Did they appear satisfied with their bargain to begin with?—They did.

27,010. And did they appear pleased with having got it?—They were pleased to begin with, but very anxious in the end to get rid of it.

27,011. You have copy of the correspondence that took place?—I have copy of the minutes of proceedings of the association after it was established: extracted minutes.

27,012. You might read these. [*Mr Gordon.*—It would not prove anything. It does not follow that other cases would fail because that failed. *The Chairman.*—We have still a great deal of ground to

Lairg. Donald Maclean.

go over: would it not suffice if you put in the document?]—I will put it in.

27,013. As to the matter of education and people not being so much inclined to take land, what is your experience as regards the tenantry for the last eight years?—My experience is that all the young men are moving from the county. I have had almost daily experience of that.

27,014. And who are taking up their holdings now principally?—Unfortunately, nearly half of our crofting tenants are now females: out of a little over 900 tenants we have over 400 female tenants. [*Mr Sutherland.*—You are able to tell me the number of crofting tenants now?—I quote from memory: it is something like 900. You were asking a number to enable you to make a calculation, which is a different thing altogether. I do not pretend to state the number with any accuracy.]

27,015. Then, as regards these holdings which you offered in Rogart, the farm of Grumby for instance, what was the result of offering that place to the crofters in the parish?—I had one application from a crofter and three applications from arable farmers: another man applied for a small portion, but only one crofter applied for the whole.

27,016. And was it well known that this place was in the market?—The ground officer got explicit instructions to make it well known in the parish of Rogart that this place was to let to any enterprising crofter who was prepared to relinquish his holding in order to take a larger one. [*The Chairman.*—What was the rent of it to be?—The rent was not fixed, but I daresay it would have been somewhere between £30 and £40.]

27,017. And what stock does it carry?—It will carry up to 300 sheep.

27,018. Another place was mentioned as being in the market—Achnaluachrach—and you will probably remember the reason alleged was that no man would go into lands from which another man had been evicted, and take advantage of his improvements?—Yes.

27,019. What was the state of matters as to this man that had just left his place?—He was over seven years in arrear of rent: his rent was £22.

27,020. The fact being that there was nothing due to him in any way as regards improvements, but rather the reverse?—Nothing.

27,021. *Mr Sutherland.*—You mentioned the Suisgill farm?—Yes.

27,022. Do you know of personal knowledge the circumstances connected with that farm?—I know from the later correspondence, because I was here when it was given up.

27,023. Are you aware of the circumstances under which that association was started and the circumstances that led up to its formation?—I know by the lease, yes, and by the minutes.

27,024. You don't know the concurrent events immediately previous to it, do you, of personal knowledge?—Not from personal knowledge.

27,025. Would you be astonished to learn, if you did not know it before, that the committee of management was made for and not elected by the people?—In answer to that question I may just refer to the correspondence and the minutes, and that will perhaps lead me to read the whole minutes, which may take some time.

27,026. Were you aware of this from your personal knowledge: was the committee of management elected at a public meeting of the members of the association?—I understood it was: I refer to the minutes, for I was not here at the time the association was formed.

27,027. How many crofters were on the committee of management?—Allow me to refer to the correspondence or to the minutes. I see a minute of meeting, dated 12th Oct 1882, which says:—"At a public 'meeting of the cottars of Kildonan and Loth held on '10th inst., your offer to let Suisgill to them as a 'grazing farm at a rental of £100 a year was duly 'considered and accepted: and we, the committee 'appointed to intimate the result to you, desire on 'behalf of the meeting, to express our thanks for the 'interest you have shown in the matter; and we also 'beg of you to make known to his Grace the Duke of 'Sutherland that his tenants much appreciate the 'benefit he has thus conferred upon them.' This is a letter addressed to Mr Greig, and entered in the minutes of the association.

Lairg. Donald Maclean.

27,028. Who signs that letter?—Alexander Ross, Alexander Macleod, William Macdonald, who gave evidence at Helmsdale the other day, and others.

27,029. Is that the minute?—It is the letter which appears in the minutes.

27,030. Does it give us any information regarding the formation of the committee?—The first minute, which I have got an extract from, is dated 5th Oct. 1882, and is in the following terms:—'Mr Greig 'concisely stated to the meeting that the Duke of 'Sutherland desired that his tenants should have ample 'summer grazing for their cattle, horses, and sheep 'apart from the grazing near to their present holdings, 'and he invited those present to consult with him on 'the subject. He stated that the grazing at Suisgill 'was to let and that he had several good offers for it, 'but that he would lease the farm for a much less sum 'to the small tenants than he had been offered for it, 'viz., at a rental of £100 a year. Great satisfaction 'was felt at Mr Greig's statement, and those present 'were much gratified at the manner in which Mr 'Greig explained the matter.'

27,031. That was Mr Greig, the Duke's manager of the reclamations?—Yes. Then, again on 7th November 1882, Mr J. Hill, banker, in the chair, 'The meeting 'was a large one, the schoolroom being crowded, and 'all were much interested in the proceedings, all or 'mostly all of the principal crofters, cottars, &c. of both 'parishes, and a large representation of the feuars of 'Helmsdale were present.'

27,032. What about the formation of the committee?—I don't know that I have anything here about the formation of the committee; that will be given in the Articles of Association which I have put in.

27,033. You are not aware, as a matter of fact, that the committee was not elected by any public meeting, but was presented to them by Mr Greig?—No, I am not aware of that.

27,034. What is the rent at which Suisgill was let to them?—£100 a year.

27,035. And what is it now let for?—£100 a year.

27,036. The same amount?—The same. It could have been let for very much more, but I may say that it was let to Mr Bruce who had been very kind to the tenants when they got into difficulties with the grazing. It was let to him on the special condition which the correspondence shows, that he should at any rate for the first two years of his tenancy provide grazing for the tenants, and by that time it was hoped that some other arrangement would be made by which the tenants would have additional grazing.

27,037. You understand, and I have no doubt you know, that it was the outcome of an application that was made to the proprietor to furnish summer grazings instead of the summer grazings of which they had been deprived at Griamacharry?—Possibly it was.

27,038. And that they were deprived of that grazing, because it was said to be required for the work of reclamation, and it is now practically a deer forest?—I believe it was.

27,039. And the circumstances cannot be judged properly unless all these conditions that led up to it are known?—The circumstances as to the success or the non-success of this grazing can be judged of by the results.

27,040. That is your opinion?—Yes.

27,041. It is not mine. Having a full knowledge of the circumstances personally and locally I may say that of the committee of management that was brought forward and given to them, and which the people naturally understood was one of the conditions upon which the grazing was to be given to them, there was only a small representation of crofters; the others were merchants, hotelkeepers, bankers, and other people who were not crofters at all?—Well, the minutes there state most distinctly that the feeling was most unanimous.

27,042. Furthermore, are you aware that they bought stock?—I am.

27,043. And that they were charged five per cent. interest, which was a very high rate at that time, and that stock was bought at a time when prices were high?—I am not aware what they were charged.

27,044. And they did everything under the most disadvantageous conditions, and the people always complained that they had not a direct voice in the management?—I never heard that; I think they had a very direct voice in the management.

27,045. Then, with regard to the question of education and the result of it, I do not want to open up the subject of education in all its bearing at present, but do you think it is a sign of education that people should leave their native country?—Certainly, if they cannot get suitable occupations in it.

27,046. Don't you think that education may be the means of enabling them to get occupation in their native country?—I think education is not tending just now towards the improvement of the agricultural industry; it does not tend towards keeping the people on the land, but just the contrary.

27,047. That reminds me of an expression in your statement to the effect that legislate as you will, you cannot prevent the people from going from the rural districts to the towns. Am I quoting you aright?—Yes, I think so.

27,048. You say here that education tends that way and that legislation cannot prevent it?—Yes.

27,049. Is that your opinion?—That is my opinion. Education tends to take people away from the land rather than otherwise. [*The Chairman.*—You mean it gives them other ambitions?—Certainly.]

27,050. Higher ambitions than to cultivate land?—Certainly.

27,051. Better ambitions?—I don't know that they are better altogether; I am very sorry to see so many people leaving the land.

27,052. Do you admit that it is legislation that has driven the people to the towns?—Yes.

27,053. And cannot legislation take them back?—I don't think so.

27,054. It can do the one but not the other?—You would require to have a very different kind of education.

27,055. And a very different line of legislation?—Probably.

27,056. Then, regarding Achnaluachrach, you stated that as crofts became vacant the consolidation process was carried on with regard to them?—Yes.

27,057. That is one way of enlarging holdings, is it not?—Yes.

27,058. But is it the most desirable way, do you think?—The tenants themselves are very anxious that it should be carried out as far as possible.

27,059. That is because they know the holdings cannot be enlarged in any other way?—Not always.

27,060. You enlarge the crofter at the expense of the crofter. You have heard of the operation of feeding a dog on his own tail, have you not?—Where a croft becomes vacant, I can assure you that the neighbouring crofters are in very many cases ill-pleased, because it is not divided among them, but is let to the successor of the previous tenant.

27,061. That is the operation of what is known as the land hunger I suppose?—I suppose so,—the hunger for their neighbour's land.

27,062. But it is a natural hunger, is it not?—No doubt.

27,063. It does not indicate a larger hunger than that of the man who has got a million and a half acres, and who is not satisfied with that very often?—That does not apply in the present case.

27,064. With regard to this croft of Achnaluachrach, was that principle carried out?—It was not.

27,065. Where is Mackay's holding now?—It is let along with the Blarich sheep farm; and why? Simply, because the crofters would not take it. And it is let with the special condition that when it could be let as a separate holding, or along with the neighbouring holding to which it was proposed to be added, the sheep farmer should give it up at once.

27,066. But it is now incorporated in the large sheep farm of Blarich?—It is. Lairg. Donald Maclean.

WILLIAM BLACK, Crofter, Gruids, Lairg (45)—*examined.* William Black.

27,067. *The Chairman.*—You hold under lease I think?—No, I was before the Crofters Commission; I was a yearly tenant then. I hold under the Commission.

27,068. Have you a written statement?—Yes.

27,069. Read it, please.—On the estate of Achany, now the property of Lady Matheson of Lewis, there were four townships out of which the crofters were cruelly evicted without any compensation for their improvements, their crofts being put under sheep and remaining so up to the present date, for which the landlord has been receiving large rents on account of their improvements. The evictions took place about seventy years ago. The quality of the land is good and must have been productive, as shown by the quality of grass which it still produces. The townships and the old arable land suitable for cultivation are as follows:—Balfuir—old arable, 178 acres; wood and heath pasture, 123 acres; land suitable for cultivation, 70 acres. Braemore—old arable, 100 acres; suitable for cultivation, 100. Cluanail—old arable, 65 acres; wood and heath pasture, 32. Sallachy—old arable, 25 acres; suitable for cultivation, 40. Glenhead—old arable, 25 acres. Total 393 acres, old arable; and 210 acres, suitable for cultivation. I leave out the wood because it is enclosed. Balfuir and Braemore are leased by Messrs. Dobie & Martin, Thornhill, Dumfries-shire, whose lease expires in May 1896. Clunal and Sallachy are leased by Messrs. Bethune & Nicoll, whose lease expires in May 1895. Achany Glen, including Glenhead, is in the possession of Mr Alexander Mackay, Inveran Hotel, as a yearly tenant. The whole of the sheep farm of Messrs. Dobie & Martin was in possession of the tenants evicted from the said townships, also the crofters still residing in Gruids. They had it all in common and used it for shielings for their stock.

I have been a ploughman in Ross-shire and Nairnshire for a number of years, and I have been a crofter in this parish for the last twenty-one years. This is one of the highest lying parishes in the county, and I am in a position to know a good deal of what a croft ought to be, and the amount of acres and stock each crofter should have. In most cases a croft should not be under 15 acres nor exceed 25 acres arable, with hill pasture capable of carrying from 50 to 100 sheep. In my opinion a variation of crofts would be necessary to suit different parties and the situation of the ground. The number of stock each croft should carry may be stated as follows:—a 15-acre croft—2 horses, 4 cows, 6 followers, 100 sheep. 20 acre croft—2 horses, 5 cows, 8 followers, 100 sheep. 25 acre croft—2 horses, 6 cows, 10 followers, 100 sheep. In some districts the sheep stock could not be so large for want of pasture. The following is a list of crofters evicted from Cluanail:—George Ross, Kinloch; Paul Mackay, Skeog; Thomas Ross, do.; John Murray, Knockandunan; Murdo Murray, Torantoul; John Macleod, do.; Robert Munro, Badeneckan; John Grant, do.; David Campbell, Senabhal; Hugh Matheson, do.; Hugh Mackay, Lurganach; John Ross, do. District of Pitfour—Thomas Mackay, Auchnonaig; John Grant, do.; John Murray, Droman; John Murray (Buie), do.; John Graham, Coul; Widow Calder, do.; Alexander Ross (Bain), Pitfour; Widow John Machuistan, do.; Finlay Macleod, do.; Widow Macleod, do.; Donald Ross (Bain), do.; Widow William Logan, do.; Murdo Macleod, Tighnacoil; James Campbell, do.; Donald Macleod (Oag), do.; Donald Sutherland, Plaid; James Grant, Runachrosh; John Macleod, Eudan; Widow Macleod, Torabea; John Mackay, do.; Murdo Murray, do.; Donald Murray, Schoolmaster, Dreamdevan; Neil Mackay; William Macleod, Runadeig. From Glenhead, 3; Braemore, 2; Sallachy, 1.

Lairg.

William Black.

The above facts were got from Donald Macleod and John Murray, Free Church elders, both well up in age.

(Signed) WILLIAM BLACK.

27,070. Is that statement all in your own handwriting?—All in my own handwriting, and I have signed my name to it.

27,071. Are you a member of the County Council?—Yes.

27,072. And are you a member of any other public body?—I am a member of the School Board of Lairg, and I am also one of the committee on small holdings, on the Council.

27,073. I understand, taking the matter generally, that all these places to which you have specially called our attention are suitable for our consideration under the remit?—Oh, yes.

27,074. The whole of them?—The whole of them.

27,075. *Mr Forsyth.*—You say you are a member of the Small Holdings Committee of the County Council. Can you tell me why your Small Holdings Committee did not ask for some definite pieces of land specifically?—Well, for the reason that they thought the applicants were the best judges of where they wanted the land.

27,076. But did not they think it was their duty to go to the applicants and find out what land the applicants wanted first?—I may say that I have stated the land that the applicants in my constituency wanted.

27,077. To the Small Holdings Committee?—Yes.

27,078. Then, did you try and get your Small Holdings Committee to mention these lands to the proprietor as a committee and ask specifically for them? Did you endeavour to get them to do that?—There were two or three letters on the head of that correspondence which we as a committee considered unsatisfactory, and we thought we would be wasting time for no purpose if we were to continue the correspondence. It says there was no land to be given.

27,079. Did you endeavour to get your Small Holdings Committee to ask specifically for the land which certain people had mentioned to you as a member as likely to be available or to be useful to them if obtained?—I think that has been done.

27,080. You say that they have asked specifically for this special land?—Yes.

27,081. Is that the piece of land referred to before in our evidence?—That is one of them.

27,082. Did they make any specific application for any particular places?—Yes, it is my opinion they have.

27,083. Whom did they ask?—The channel through which they tried to conduct their correspondence was, of course, the factor or officials of the Duke of Sutherland; there was no other way, and all the correspondence came through them.

27,084. Do you know if your Small Holdings Committee made any attempt to find out the specific pieces of land that people might want? Did they go over any ground or look at any?—No, they did not do that individually.

27,085. Or collectively?—Or collectively.

27,086. They did not go about the county at all?—No.

27,087. They did not make any inspections or make any inquiries from individuals as to where they might like a piece of land if they could get it?—Oh, yes, certainly it is well known, and they pointed out where they wished to have land if they could get it. There are applications from this parish pointing out the land they want.

27,088. But the Small Holdings Committee took no steps to satisfy themselves whether these lands were suitable and fit?—Oh, they had no doubt but what the land was suitable if it could be got on fair conditions.

27,089. But they did not go and look at it?—Well, they understood from the correspondence and the price put on the Embo land that it was too much either to buy or to lease; they did not want to give the ratepayers' money away.

27,090. That is not the point. I am asking if they took any trouble to look at the land the people were speaking about?—No.

27,091. *Mr Sutherland.*—Have you seen this letter from the Duke of Sutherland's agent that was read here to-day? Mr Maclean has just read a letter to us in which it is stated under the heading of small holdings. 'Referring to your letters of 31st January and '3rd February last which have been submitted to the 'Duke of Sutherland, I have now to say with regard 'to (1) small holdings, that the farms in the parishes 'named are let on lease and that the land is not there-'fore available for breaking up into small holdings?'—That is it.

27,092. Did your committee think that it was unnecessary to go farther in the face of that declaration?—They went farther.

27,093. Even in the face of that declaration; and with regard to allotments it was stated in the same letter that the only land 'available just now for allot-'ments is a large field on the Embo farm near the fish-'ing village of Embo and extending to 48½ acres?'—That is so.

27,094. You were distinctly told, with regard to small holdings, that there was no land available?—Yes.

27,095. And with regard to allotments that there was only 48½ acres?—Yes.

27,096. That you considered to be the answer of the Duke of Sutherland?—Yes.

27,097. Now, with regard to the lands, you have stated that you have no hesitation in saying that these are all suitable places for making new holdings or giving additions to present grazing?—Oh, I think they are well adapted for new holdings.

27,098. What place in your estimation is best adapted of all the places for forming new holdings?—Where the tenants cultivated before the old arable land, it would be there; and then, according to the ground, if they were placed there, the land that I have mentioned would take thirty tenants with 20 acres apiece.

27,099. Of arable?—Of arable, and they would require the whole grazing farm of Messrs. Dobie and Martin, even at less than 100 sheep each.

27,100. How does the farm of Dobie & Martin extend—where does it begin?—At Achany.

27,101. Does it border with Mr Mackay of Inveran?—Yes.

27,102. It goes down to meet his march. Then where does it go,—does it follow the parish boundary along the top of the hill?—Yes.

27,103. How far does it go in that direction?—To the upper end of Loch Shin.

27,104. And does it there march with the forest of Corrykinloch?—Yes.

27,105. Do you know how many sheep are on it?—I could not say.

27,106. How many shepherds have they got?—They have got four or five shepherds.

27,107. And if there were new tenants planted in these places, do you think they could, with advantage, take over the whole of that grazing?—I think they would require it, and they would not have the stock of 100 sheep to each crofter.

27,108. Supposing there were holdings of the size you have indicated with 100 sheep each, would you recommend that it should be managed as a club farm or as individual farms?—Well, certainly, I would approve of it being let as a club farm, with a committee of management elected from the crofters. That would make it most likely to pay, because having that extent of land they would require a shepherd, so that each interest would be looked after equally.

27,109. And is the arable land that you have in your mind in one place, or is it scattered up and down through the grazing?—It is not scattered up and down.

27,110. It is in one place?—No, it is in three places; Braemore and Balfuir and Claonail.

27,111. Is that Balfuir lying between Gruids and Achany?—Yes, between Braemore and Gruids.

27,112. *Mr Gordon.*—How is Claonal occupied just now?—It is occupied as a sheep farm.

27,113. Is it part of Dobie and Martin's land?—No, it is Messrs. Bethune & Maccoll.

27,114. How far up do they go?—To a burn on this side of Arscaig.

27,115. Is that Allt-a'-Bhuin Mor?—Yes.

27,116. How is Arscaig occupied?—By one of Dobie & Martin's shepherds.

27,117. Is not there a little farm at Sallachadh?—That is Bethune and Maccoll's.

27,118. Then Dobie & Martin's goes up to the north west of that; they come down to the loch when you pass that farm?—Yes.

27,119. There is a hill there called Cnoc Imireach right above Glencassley. Is that upon Dobie and Martin's land? Do the two farms march on that hill?—Yes, as the run of the water goes.

27,120. Does the burn there that lies between Braemore and Balfuir, form the march between Sallachadh and Dobie & Martin, up towards these lochs? Do you know Loch-na-Caillich?—Yes.

27,121. Is that upon Dobie & Martin's place?—I think it is just about the march.

JOHN SUTHERLAND, Doirecha, Rosehall (61)—*examined.*

27,122. *The Chairman.*—You are on the Rosehall estate?—Yes.

27,123. Was your holding dealt with by the Crofters Commission?—No.

27,124. What is your rent?—£11, 10s. for my croft, and I have grazing in partnership with other eleven crofters, for which I pay £1, 2s., and I hold hill pasture as a sub-tenant along with other two crofters, for which I pay £4, 13s. 4d.

27,125. Your total rent is £17, 5s. 4d.?—Yes.

27,126. Have you a written statement?—No, I have not.

27,127. Do you ask us to consider any lands under the remit, on the Rosehall estate?—Not much on the Rosehall estate as it is now, because in 1870 Rosehall estate was divided into three estates, viz., Glencassley, Glenrossal, and Rosehall.

27,128. Is there any available land on the Glencassley portion of the original estate?—There is land on the Glencassley estate where crofters were situated about the latter end of the last century: they were removed by the proprietor, General Baillie.

27,129. Do you know what were the names of the townships?—Dalteamhar, Dulfhad, Langwell, Bad-an-t-sagairt.

27,130. Do you remember how many tenants altogether occupied these townships?—No, I don't remember.

27,131. But you ask us to consider the lands where these tenants lived?—Yes.

27,132. How is that land used now?—As a sheep farm.

27,133. It is in the form of a permanent grazing?—Yes, in the proprietor's hands.

27,134. But is it more suitable for new settlements or for additional grazing?—For new settlements.

27,135. What number of new settlers might be accommodated there?—Perhaps about half a dozen, but I believe they would require principally to depend upon the hill pasture, because there is very good ground there along the river Cassley, but sometimes the river Cassley overflows that ground and causes loss.

27,136. Of course, you would not put them on land subject to frequent flooding?—Well, we find crofters upon land that is frequently flooded doing pretty well, but sometimes they have losses with floods.

27,137. How many tenants would you put upon that land on Glencassley?—I would think half a dozen tenants could be put there.

27,138. Suppose you had half a dozen new tenants, what extent of arable would be available for each, taking it roughly?—There would be 40 acres, I believe, of green pasture, of green meadows.

27,139. How many would you give to each?—Forty to each: I believe there are over 240 acres there, and I am sure I am far below the mark in saying that. Lairg. John Sutherland.

27,140. And do you think holdings could be formed there which might be cultivated to profit with fair chances?—Well, I understand that the tenants that were there were doing pretty well, and I know the crops raised there are pretty good. Oats can be seen that were grown there and came to maturity.

27,141. Is there a demand for new holdings in your quarter?—There is in our quarter, and all over Sutherlandshire.

27,142. But confining your answer mainly to the district of which you know most, you say there is a demand for new holdings in your quarter?—Yes.

27,143. Are the crofters in your district congested?—They are.

27,144. And their holdings too small?—Too small by far.

27,145. Is the land exhausted?—No, they are good crofters and keep the land in very good order.

27,146. Do they cultivate it in rotation?—They keep it under a five-course rotation.

27,147. The whole of them?—The whole of them.

27,148. And the desire there, as I understand you to indicate, is for new holdings, rather than extension of grazing?—Extension of grazing is required,—there is only one crofter township on the Rosehall estate, and there is great necessity for extension of grazings for that township.

27,149. What township is that?—The township of Altas.

27,150. So that you are suggesting additional grazing for the township of Altas, and new settlements upon these lands that you have mentioned?—Certainly, because I am told that the township of Altas, about twenty years ago, was shorn of all their pasture: there was a great deal of pasture taken off them. The estate was sold in 1870, and it was bought up by a company of land speculators, and they cut off all the hill pasture, and settled crofters there, and raised their rent double after doing that.

27,151. What was done with the pasture taken from the crofters?—The hill pasture was formed into new crofter holdings; there were about 17 crofter holdings formed there.

27,152. And are these men now under the Act or under lease?—They are under lease.

27,153. Have these lease-hold rents not been reduced since they got them in 1870, or about that time?—When they got this land these land speculators that bought the land would not give leases, or would not allow the people to remain as tenants at will; but there was one, Mr George Grant Mackay, who was the acting partner of this firm, and he insisted upon giving feus.

27,154. And were these feus accepted?—The old crofters were compelled to accept them, because if they did not they would be removed, as was the case with some of those who rejected them.

27,155. Are a good number of the tenants on the Rosehall estate under feu charter?—Not now, because the feus were charged so high that the people could not possibly pay.

27,156. And what became of the feus?—They had to renounce their feus and give up their holdings to the proprietors or to the bond holders, and they got leases instead. Their holdings were valued by one of your honourable Commission, Mr Gordon.

27,157. And did he put the rents up?—No, he reduced them. Upon the new holdings he reduced them to the one-third, and upon the old holdings to about the one-half, and still these people were all rented upon their own improvements, because Mr Gordon's instructions were, although some of these people that improved the new holdings improved from 5 to 35 acres of barren moor and built houses and everything, they had to forfeit all that when they gave up their feus without any recompense for it except a year's feu-duty, or I believe there might be a place

Lairg. John Sutherland.

that might be more than a year's feu-duty in arrears, and this was cancelled. But all the rest were valued upon their own improvements. Certainly, we require to admit that Mr Gordon, as far as he was concerned, had done justly, but the people thought it hard, of course, to have improved new ground and only got fourteen years of it, and paying 5s. to 6s. an acre all that time, and at the end of that time to be rented on their own improvements. But they did not blame Mr Gordon, because he was authorised by the proprietors to look upon all the improvements as theirs, and the buildings.

27,158. He gave very substantial relief?—He just reduced to about one-third, I think, the new holdings, and the old holdings to about one-half.

27,159. Then, passing from Glencassley to Glenrossall, is there land there that you think we should consider?—There was a township in Glenrossall where there was one tenant at least, perhaps two. I suppose they were evicted out of that at the same time they were evicted out of Glencassley; that was about the latter end of last century. These places were about the first places in Sutherlandshire to be made into sheep farms.

27,160. What extent of land will there be in Glenrossall?—I suppose, there will be under the plough perhaps ten acres of old arable land, but I am not certain.

27,161. Scarcely large enough for a single holding?—Well, there is a great deal that could be improved advantageously along with that. The estate of Glenrossall is about 2600 acres in extent.

27,162. What would you say is the total area at Glenrossall of old arable, of the kind you have been describing, which might safely be assigned to crofters for new settlements?—There could be 80 acres improved I would say.

27,163. Improvable land?—Yes, lying quite low.

27,164. Not at a high elevation?—Not more than 150 or 200 feet above sea level.

27,165. You also mentioned Rosehall; is there land there?—Most of the land there is possessed by the crofters, and there are two large arable farms upon it, one paying about £70 and the other £100 of rent.

27,166. What are the names of these farms?—One is Achuirigill and the other is Little Altas.

27,167. Is there any grazing land on these, or are they all arable together?—Achuirigill farm was once under crofters, but they were removed, and it is now all under rotation.

27,168. Does the same remark apply to Little Altas?—On Little Altas there is a good number of acres of land on the meadows close to the Kyle of Sutherland that were once improved and are now lying as pasture.

27,169. Is it suitable?—It belonged to the crofters in Altas, but this is a part of which they were deprived in 1870 and added to the Little Altas farm.

27,170. And how is it being dealt with now?—This is occupied for grazing, but the Little Altas farm itself is improved and kept in proper rotation.

27,171. Were you appointed at a public meeting?—I was appointed at a public meeting to give a general statement for the Rosehall district.

27,172. As a delegate?—As a delegate.

27,173. And have you mentioned all the lands that you ask us to consider, or are there other lands?—Well, on the Rosehall estate there is no land except about 900 acres that is enclosed for deer, in a deer park, and part of that was at one time arable land held by crofters. I am not sure if crofters were situated there, but the land extended to that, because crofters might have been situated in the farm of Achness quite close to it.

27,174. The deer park is fenced round, I suppose?—Yes.

27,175. Is it kept exclusively for deer, or for deer and sheep?—Exclusively for deer; the half of it especially is under fir wood, perhaps more.

27,176. And the other half is grazing, is it?—Part of the rest is old arable land and part old birch wood and oak.

27,177. May we say then that the whole of it has wood upon it, or is there a part of it clear of wood?—Where the bits of arable land are is clear of wood, the patches of arable land.

Lairg. John Sutherland.

27,178. *Mr Sutherland.*—I understand you referred to Glencassley as a suitable place?—Yes.

27,179. Do you know it personally?—Yes.

27,180. You have been over the land?—I have been over the land.

27,181. And I think you have stated in reply to his lordship that, in your opinion, it is suitable for putting people there?—Yes.

27,182. There are shepherds along the banks of the Cassley, are there not?—There are, on both sides.

27,183. How many houses?—There are only two shepherds on that place, but on the other side there is the estate of Balnagown.

27,184. Take the valley, both sides of the river?—Duchally, there is no shepherd there; Dail-nan-cliabh, which was a crofter township at one time; Dalfhad, Glenmuick, Bad-an-t-sagairt, Croich.

27,185. These are all distributed up and down the glen?—All up and down the glen.

27,186. Have the shepherds who live in these places crops, do you know?—They have, the highest of them.

27,187. Do they raise all kinds of crops?—I understand they do; I have not seen them, but I have been told that the shepherd at Dail-nan-cliabh has over 150 stooks of very good corn.

27,188. That is one indication that justifies what you have stated, is it not?—Certainly. I am aware that the shepherd at Dail-nan-cliabh has raised as heavy corn there as was raised on Invercassley. [*Mr Gordon.*—He might do that this year]. Not this year only, but former years.

27,189. What height is that above the level of the sea?—Where I live is 450 feet, and I would take these to be about the same level.

27,190. You are above the mark I may say?—I am only giving an idea.

27,191. Here you have got a long glen like this with arable land and grazing adjoining?—Yes.

27,192. What is your opinion of the nature of the grazing that is round about there?—The grazing on the Glencassley farm is good grazing. There is a splendid stock of black-faced sheep kept there.

27,193. And you have no doubt in your own mind that if holdings were made there under favourable conditions and reasonable conditions they would thrive there?—I do expect they would.

27,194. Is it a more favourable subject to work upon do you think than the land the feuars got in Rosehall?—They would think themselves lucky if they got the one half of that, because that was quite a different subject altogether. Some of them had not a square yard that there was a blade of grass growing on.

27,195. It was all black heather?—All black heather, and peat bogs; and, in reference to that, I may state it as an example of what energy will do for crofters, I have seen crofters there work very hard. There are about seventeen crofters there who took new holdings, and they have improved, I suppose, close upon 300 acres there.

27,196. In Rosehall?—Yes. In about twenty years or less. I have seen them work so hard, that I have seen them working in winter with lamp light, trenching and draining. They worked under great disadvantages, because for this ground they were paying 5s. an acre.

27,197. In a state of nature?—In a state of nature. Some of them took 100 acres and were paying £25. Now, that was not worth above fourpence an acre; there is not a sheep farmer in the country would give that for it.

27,198. They had to build?—To build everything, they got nothing from the proprietor.

27,199. They had to reclaim the land?—Everything.

27,200. Without any assistance?—Without any assistance.

27,201. And do you remember the time these lands, such as you describe, were thrown open, was there a general rush to take them?—No man could think of the rush that was there, because I mind of this that

there was a great number that were punished by the proprietors by forfeiting their improvements, and some had lost twice over what was improved, I don't say in this country, but Aberdeenshire and other places, and they thought there was fixity of tenure there, and that has been the cause of the improvements.

27,202. You think then that it was the confiscation, or the improvement by tenants in previous times, that made these men rush in and give so much?—Certainly, and even there are some who have so little faith in the law or in landlords, that although they are paying 5s. an acre, they are afraid that at the end of the lease the landlords will turn them out of it. [*Mr Gordon.*—How many are there?—Four.]

27,203. And you think that if men who overcame the difficulties in this situation in Rosehall got an opportunity on the better land you are describing there would be plenty people who would be very glad to take it?—If these people who came and took this land at 5s. an acre, had got the land at prairie value, they would have succeeded pretty well, but as it was they had great difficulties and great losses. I have no doubt that if land was thrown open to the public under favourable circumstances, the crofters would get on.

27,204. You have heard, I have no doubt, what was stated with regard to the Duke of Sutherland's improvements and reclamations?—I have.

27,205. Shinness is not very far from Rosehall?—No.

27,206. They can easily be compared?—I believe the lands at Rosehall—I am not sure, but perhaps they are as high from sea level as Shinness, and I have seen the ground at Shinness before it was improved. I have seen it during the time it was improved, and I have seen it after being improved, and the land that has been improved at Rosehall was quite as difficult and perhaps more so than the land at Shinness. The whole has been done by the people themselves, and I don't think the reclamation cost above £15 an acre on the average.

27,207. And they are not half a dozen miles apart from each other, are they?—Oh, yes.

27,208. About that?—Well, taking it right across as the bird flies, I don't know if it is more than that.

27,209. Here, then, you have got an instance of small holders reclaiming their own land at, you say, £15 an acre, when in the other case where it was done by the landlord on a large scale, it cost £65 an acre?—Yes, but the improvements at Rosehall are made quite as good as the improvements at Shinness are. I don't say that the buildings in every respect are so good, but the land is improved quite as well.

27,209*a*. And it is kept in cultivation?—Kept in cultivation and proper rotation.

27,210. We heard a good deal about flooding of lands. You mentioned a piece of land that is subject to flooding?—Yes.

27,210*a*. Really, there is no doubt about this?—No doubt at all.

27,211. Do you know any other place that is subject to flooding as much as the Kyle of Sutherland?—I know the best lands in Sutherland all flood, because all west from Bonar Bridge it covers and does harm to them there, as well as at the top of the glen.

27,212. But you never heard of them wishing to put the land out of cultivation on that account, have you?—Oh, no, I have not; and another thing, at one time the lands of Inveran held by Mr Macarthur and Mr Mackay, hotel-keeper, and there were orders from the estate office at Dunrobin, I believe in 1854. That land was occupied by a Captain Clark, and it was divided between Messrs. Macarthur & Mackay, hotel-keeper, and at that time they would not be allowed to cultivate that land, because the estate authorities were afraid it would be flooded and carry away the soil. But, however, as Mr Mackay told me, at one time, he met Mr Gunn, who was factor at Dunrobin at the time, and reasoned with him, and they consented to allow the thing to be improved and cultivated, and it is now cultivated to advantage.

27,213. And now it bears good crops, doesn't it?—The best crops.

27,214. The Kyle of Sutherland is subject to flood, because the tide comes up?—The tide comes up and meets with the rivers, but not at Glencassley; it does not come up past Rosehall.

27,215. The tide does not come up Glencassley?—Certainly not.

27,216. So that it is not nearly so subject to flooding as the lands lower down?—I would expect not, but I have not been there during a flood to know how rapidly it rises.

27,217. About the farm of Little Altas, who occupies that?—Mr Mackay, hotel-keeper.

27,218. Did you say it was small holdings that had been made into a large holding?—Yes, about fifty years ago, but not for Mr Mackay.

27,219. Then, the deer park that you referred to of 900 acres, what is that attached to?—It is attached to the mansion house of Rosehall.

27,220. Is it to the right hand side of the road when you go down?—It is to the right hand of the road as you go up to Glencassley. It commences almost immediately after turning the road to Glencassley, at the Cassley Bridge down from Rosehall.

27,221. And you think that a part of that would be very suitable for enlargement of holdings or grazings?—I certainly think it might do.

27,222. Well adapted for that purpose?—I think so. Certainly, the water going over it is not so favourable.

27,223. In view of what you know, and what you have seen yourself of what people can do in the improvement of land, it is unnecessary for me to ask you any questions in regard to it?—Oh, no.

27,224. You are not in the region of doubts or theories at all?—No, because I have tried it myself. I have taken a new holding myself where the tenants were evicted in 1837, and which was then made into a sheep farm, and it was opened up in 1870, and I have taken a new holding there because I got 10 acres, perhaps, of old arable land, without which I could not have carried through, but it is a great advantage for any crofter to have part of old arable land.

27,225. In fact, you look upon all these objections that have been urged against the formation of new holdings as absurd?—Certainly, they are absurd.

27,226. *Mr Gordon.*—We saw this land yesterday, and while I don't quite agree with you as to the extent that could be cultivated, I believe there are 240 acres of green ground. But there is a very considerable part of those 240 acres that is so low that it would be very difficult to drain, is that so?—Well, probably there may be that.

27,227. Are you well acquainted with that country?—Not very well acquainted.

27,228. You have seen some of the shepherd's places under crop?—No, but I have heard of it.

27,229. Because you spoke of the weight of the oats?—I was told of it.

27,230. Would not you be a little afraid of frost for your corn and potatoes up the waterside?—Perhaps for potatoes, but not for corn. It might injure the potatoes, because always beside water it is apt to do that.

27,231. The whole of the green land is practically on the water bank?—Yes, but on the other hand between Bonar-Bridge and Rosehall all the land there is on the water bank, on the Kyle of Sutherland, and I find there that it is not very much injured by frost.

27,232. But the frost is not so hard when you are within the influence of the sea-water?—That may be.

27,233. You speak about holdings of 40 acres?—Yes, but I could not be confident regarding that.

27,234. Less then 40 acres would do, or else you could not put many people there. Suppose your suggestions were to be carried out, if you took 40 acres of the green ground for each man, I am afraid you would fill the glen with many tenants. There is no doubt there is a considerable extent up in that glen of very good hay ground, if they were fortunate enough to get it taken out of the way before a flood came, but there is no doubt the water was all over that haugh within this last week?—I am aware of that.

27,235. And if it had been under crop the pro-

Lairg.

John Sutherland.

bability is that a good part of the crop would have been in the German Ocean by this time?—Oh, certainly, and there is a good deal between that and Bonar Bridge was carried away.

27,236. Between this and Glenrossal there is no green land except 10 acres that I saw?—Well, the rest is mixed with heather and some green to the east of it.

27,237. I did not see anything that ever had been in cultivation except that spot?—Not in cultivation. I think you would have seen on your right hand a park there that was improved about eight years ago.

27,238. Is that near the keepers?—West a good bit from the keepers, half a mile, and fenced.

27,239. Is there any old arable except the park?—Not old arable except the park.

27,240. Do you know anything about Strath-Oykell, is there anything there?—Yes, I know that place.

27,241. You have not mentioned any place there?—No, we came on the length of Croich.

27,242. Perhaps some other delegate may speak about that?—That is all the length we came on with that glen, that is the Invercassley farm.

27,243. Below that there is no green ground till you come to Invercassley?—Not of any consequence.

27,244. Perhaps a small patch?—Yes, I think so. Merely a few acres, but I think it was once cultivated.

27,245. And the ground upon both sides of the water there is rather hard. The hill pasture is harder and drier than it was farther up?—Well, I am not sure of that. I think the lower down the better the pasture is.

27,246. I would differ in my opinion as to that?—Well, I am not sure.

27,247. *Mr Forsyth, representing Rosehall Estate.*—I think you mentioned that some of the crofters had trenched land to the extent of 35 acres. Who did that? [*Mr Gordon.*—I will tell you one that did, the old man Strachan.]

27,248. He is a feuar? [*Mr Gordon.*—Well, he is a small holder.] *Witness.*—The other is James Brown.

27,249. He was a feuar?—Not now.

27,250. Would you mention how much land you hold yourself?—The extent of my holding is 50 acres and 169 acres of hill pasture. Twenty acres arable, and 30 acres in one section, that is the part that I first took, and 169 acres and 50 acres, and 20 acres of that is arable. And then, as I said before, I join with other eleven in holding pasture for which I pay £1, 2s. as my share, and I hold hill pasture as a sub-tenant along with other two, for which I pay £4, 13s. 4d. [*The Chairman.*—You brought that out quite clearly. For one part of your holding you pay £11, 10s., for another £1, 2s., and for a third £4, 13s. 4d. Your total rent is £17, 5s. 4d., but you described this quite clearly in the first part of your statement.]

27,251. *Mr Anderson, Factor for Balnagown.*—Unfortunately, I did not hear the very commencement of this witness's evidence, and I am a little at sea as to what he is advocating, but I gather from what I have heard that he advocates the removal of the Rosehall crofters to Glencassley?—No. [*The Chairman.*—You can hardly put it in that way, but if you have any questions to put I will be delighted to hear what they are.]

27,252. I would ask Mr Sutherland what he knows of his own personal knowledge of Glencassley. (*To witness*). I think you said already that you did not know very much about the effect that the floods had upon the arable land?—I was never present there during a flood.

27,253. I think you also said that at some remote period there had been crofters there?—Yes.

27,254. How much arable land would you imagine would be at the various places you mentioned?—I cannot answer the question, how much arable land was there, because I have not gone over the ground to look to the arable land, but looking at it green, I would say that there is over 240 acres on the Glencassley or north side.

27,255. If there were crofters at one period in this particular glen, what was the reason, do you imagine, why they are not there now?—Well, I will tell you that. [*The Chairman.*—We can imagine the reason.]

Lairg.

John Sutherland.

27,256. No, my lord, I am afraid I can't?—They were removed as I said, about the latter end of last century by a General Baillie. The estate was bought early in this century by Lord Ashburton, and he meant to remove some of the tenants from Rosehall and replace them in Glencassley, had he outlived the lease of Glencassley, but he did not see that.

27,257. What I want to be at is this, that if crofters could live there at one time, I don't care how very remote or how near it is, how many do you honestly imagine could live there now and thrive?—Upon which part do you refer to?

27,258. Well, Dail-nan-cliabh?—I would say that one would live at Dail-nan-cliabh.

27,259. You don't know, as a matter of fact, what the effect of the floods are. Do you know what sort of condition they cut their corn in for the most part?—I know that sometimes it is flooded.

27,260. But when there are no floods?—I do.

27,261. Do they not cut it in a very green condition?—If they cut it in a very green condition I don't think the weight of the corn grown there could be 44 lbs.

27,262. *The Chairman.*—I must say I think the material portions of that have been brought out already. The witness has been asked a great deal by the Commissioners about flood, and we have seen the ground, remember that. [*Mr Sutherland.*—And we have seen the crop, remember that.]

27,263. *Mr Anderson.*—I simply wanted to bring out if he knew of his own knowledge how many people could live there. I know something about the history of the glen, and I have no history as to any people having lived there beyond a shepherd?—There is no doubt at all, but there were people there at one time.

27,264. *Mr Sutherland.*—Are the marks of the old cultivation and the marks of the old houses there to this day?—Certainly, they are.

MALCOLM MUNRO, Achintoul, Rosehall (42)—*examined.*

Malcolm Munro.

27,265. *The Chairman.*—You are a crofter?—Yes.

27,266. Are you under lease?—No, we got the benefit of the Crofters Act.

27,267. Was your rent fixed by the Crofters Commission?—Yes.

27,268. What was the rent previously?—£12.

27,269. And when the rent was dealt with by the Commission what did it become?—It was reduced to £6.

27,270. You have no written statement?—I have not. I have been elected by the crofters on the townships of Achintoul and Toppachy to represent them and to state their grievance.

27,271. Are you on a croft that was occupied by Widow Donald Ross?—I am.

27,271*a*. And are you her son-in-law?—I am her son-in-law.

27,272. You heard the evidence given by Sutherland?—I did.

27,273. And do you agree with that evidence?—I quite agree with it, but I would like to make it a little more conspicuous as regards the east side of the estate, —that is, the two townships that I represent here to-day. The late G. G. Mackay took over the estate of Rosehall, and up to that time the crofters on the estate enjoyed conditions that are strange to them now. Up to that date I may say that they had the run of considerably over 1200 acres of hill pasture. Each individual crofter had also attached to his croft meadow pasture and brushwood pasture I should say to the amount of from 12 to 18 acres each. The first thing that was done when the late G. G. Mackay got the estate was to cut off that 1200 to 1300 acres of hill pasture, and also to cut off the meadow and brushwood pasture. The meadow and brushwood pasture was part of their crofts as will be seen to this day; the marches

stand there until now. Before the reduction of pasture took place they paid on the average £7 to £8 for the whole, crofts and pasture, and G. G. Mackay after depriving them or fleecing them of the pasture almost doubled their rents. He raised their rents, so that instead of £8 the feu-duty they had to pay him was £12, that is *minus* the meadow pasture and the hill pasture. Now, the grievance of the districts that I represent is the loss of the meadow pasture. They cannot very well get to the hill pasture under the circumstances, but as to the meadow pasture I think it is quite easy for them to get it again, because it was added to the farm of Little Altas, tenanted by Mr Mackay, Inveran, and it is very evident that the meadows were not necessary to the forming of that farm, because they take in graziers. In fact, I, myself, have paid as high as 10s. a month for grazing a colt there on the meadows that originally belonged to the crofters.

27,274. Can you give us the extent of the land put into the farm of Inveran which you say would be useful for the extension of crofters' holdings? [*Mr Gordon.*—The farm of Altas Beg].—There would be about 42 acres between meadows and brushwood pasture.

27,275. And what you convey to us now is that that land would be very useful as an extension of holdings to the neighbouring crofters?—Very useful. It belonged to them at one time; it was part of their crofts and they took a rotation of crops out of it. And more than that, as to those crofts that were immediately connected with the farm of Little Altas, one crofter there, immediately after building a new dwelling house, was removed from that, and his croft added to the farm without one fraction of compensation. The next crofter to that, unfortunately for him, had the great bulk of his cultivated land adjoining that next to the farm, and in order to secure all this cultivated land the late G. G. Mackay drew a line, a march, cutting this off till it actually took the corner stones of the crofter's house, and I remember the crofter pleading for enough way for anybody to pass the end of his house, but he would not grant him even that. So the crofter in question had land that was from seven to eight acres taken from him in that way, and the fruit of his own and the family's labours in reclaiming that was added to the farm of Little Altas without one fraction of compensation. Then, of course, the crofter had to set to again and reclaim land, and I know for a fact that on the land that he was reclaiming they cleared away 2000 cart loads of stones from every acre that he reclaimed after that.

27,276. In other words, what you urge is this, that there were arbitrary proceedings in the past by which crofters were deprived of certain lands, and you wish us now in considering these lands to have that in view in dealing with the question of available land?—Quite so.

27,277. *Mr Sutherland.*—I wish to know exactly where this meadow land is. Is it beneath the road, between the road and the river?—Yes, the meadow grass, the half.

27,278. Where is the brushwood grass?—Between the crofts and the road.

27,279. And has Mr Mackay that pasture just now?—He has.

27,280. In connection with the farm of Altas Beg?—Yes.

27,281. And has he the farm of Inveran as well?—Yes.

27,282. That is not on the Sutherland estate?—On the Duke of Sutherland's estate.

27,283. But Altas Beg is not?—It is on the Rosehall estate.

27,284. And you say it would do no injury whatever to the farm of Altas Beg to take this away from it, because there was a time when it had not it?—There was, and as a proof that it is of no use to them, they took in graziers from the Duke's tenant. If I might be allowed to tell, the farm of Little Altas was about fifty years ago altogether occupied by small tenants, and there are plenty tenants and cottars on the estate of Rosehall to-day that would be very glad to get it back again.

27,285. As grazing?—Yes. Their forefathers have been on the farm of Altas fifty years ago. Lairg,

27,286. Your observations apply to the whole of the ground?—The whole of the ground. Malcolm Munro.

WILLIAM MUNRO, Altas, Rosehall (50)—*examined.* William Munro.

27,287. *The Chairman.*—Are you a crofter?—Yes.

27,288. Was your rent dealt with by the Crofters Commission?—No.

27,289. Are you under lease?—Yes.

27,290. For nineteen years?—Fourteen years.

27,291. On whose estate is your croft situated?—On the Rosehall estate.

27,292. What rent do you pay under the lease?—£6, 15s.

27,293. Has your rent been reduced at all?—Yes, when we gave over the feu.

27,294. What had the rent been before that?—£16, 15s.

27,295. And when you gave over the feu and were put under lease it was reduced to £6, 15s.?—Yes.

27,296. Was that for the same extent of ground?—The same extent of ground.

27,297. What is the extent of your arable?—About 12 acres.

27,298. And have you an outrun?—An outrun of about 13 acres.

27,299. And have you hill grazing besides?—None whatever.

27,300. Then, is your complaint similar to that made by the preceding witness, Malcolm Munro?—Yes.

27,301. You take the same view he does and make the same claim?—The same claim with regard to the meadow and the hill pasture. In Sir James Matheson's time the crofters were obliged to uproot all the wood and clear these meadows, and a rotation of crops off them regularly; and the marches are there to this day.

27,302. *Mr Sutherland.*—I think you said you concurred generally in the evidence given by Munro?—Yes.

WILLIAM MACKINTOSH, Cottar, Tullich, Rosehall (56) —*examined.* William Mackintosh.

27,303. *The Chairman.*—Are you on the Rosehall estate?—Yes.

27,304. Which part of it?—Tullich.

27,305. You are described as a cottar; do you pay any rent?—Yes.

27,306. What is your rent?—50s.

27,307. To whom do you pay rent?—To Mr Irvine. [*Mr Forsyth, factor.*—He pays no rent to Rosehall.]

27,308. Are you a sub-tenant to Mr Irvine?—I don't know whether he is a feuar, but he occupies a farm there. [*Mr Forsyth, factor.*—I understand the witness is a servant, I may be misinformed.]

27,309. Are you a servant of Mr Irvine?—No.

27,310. But you pay him as landlord £2, 10s. of rent?—Yes.

27,311. What is the extent of your holding, how much arable?—Of Mr Irvine's holding?

27,312. No, of your own holding.—I have got no holding.

27,313. You have the site of a house?—Yes, I pay rent for a house.

27,314. Have you any land at all?—Not any.

27,315. Have you not a potato patch?—Nothing.

27,316. Are you anxious to get a holding?—Yes.

27,317. With arable and outrun?—Exactly.

27,318. And do you suggest that there is land in the district available for such a holding?—Yes, I think there is.

27,319. And you would be glad to leave this place where you have no land, in order to get a place where there is land?—Yes, I would.

27,320. You maintain yourself by labouring?—Just by labouring.

Lairg.

William Mackintosh.

27,321. Have you a regular employment?—No, I have not.

27,322. It is precarious?—Exactly.

27,323. From whom do you generally get labour?—Different parties here and there.

27,324. Round the district?—Yes, round the district.

27,325. You heard the previous evidence given by William Mackintosh and William Munro, with regard to land in that quarter?—Yes.

27,226. And do you agree with that evidence?—Yes, I do.

27,227. Were you appointed to appear as a delegate?—No.

27,228. You are just appearing in your own individual interest?—Yes.

27,229. Had you any croft at one time, or have you always been a cottar?—I have been a farm servant, and I came to this man, Mr Irvine, as a farm servant, but he does not work the place now altogether, so I have taken the house from him. I have been five years engaged with him.

27,330. How long have you been living in this house?—Ten years.

27,331. And have you always paid that rent of £2, 10s.?—Yes, I paid no rent the first five years, because I was engaged with him.

27,332. You were labouring with him?—Yes.

27,333. But since you ceased to work for him, you pay him a rent of £2, 10s. for the house?—Yes.

27,334. What is the size of the house?—It is just a small house in the steading, it is not much.

27,335. Two rooms?—There is just one.

27,336. Who built the house?—It was Mr Irvine, I suppose.

27,337. You did not build it yourself?—No.

27,338. Does he help you to maintain it?—No, he maintains it.

27,339. *Mr Sutherland.*—You have been here ten years?—I have been here twenty years.

27,340. Then, you know of your own personal knowledge, some of the lands we heard about to-day?—Well, I am not very well acquainted with the lands away up the glen.

27,341. Do you know Shinness?—No, I do not.

27,342. Do you know any land round about here that would be suitable for the making of such holdings?—Oh, plenty.

27,343. And you have heard what was said in regard to that by the previous witness?—Yes.

27,344. And you would be very willing to take a holding yourself?—Yes, I would.

27,345. And you would take it to-morrow, would you, if you got the opportunity?—Yes, I would take it to-morrow.

27,346. So you believe there is a demand for land in this quarter?—Oh, there is a demand.

27,347. And you are a testimony to it yourself?—Yes.

27,348. *Mr Gordon.*—Are you the only tenant that Mr Irvine has?—Yes.

27,349. Is there not another crofter on his estate?—Not one.

27,350. What has become of the man that was there?—John Horne was a tenant of his, but he has got under the Crofters Commission now.

27,351. He pays rent to whom?—To the Scottish Provident Institution; I suppose to Mr Forsyth, the factor.

27,352. Because I have heard him quoted as an act of cruelty on the part of the Crofters Commission to take away the land from Mr Irvine and give it to this man for nothing.

27,353. *Mr Forsyth, factor.*—Where did you come from?—I came from Grantown, Speyside.

27,354. You are a native of Grantown?—Yes.

David Munro.

DAVID MUNRO, Altas, Rosehall (42)—*examined.*

27,355. *The Chairman.*—Are you a crofter?—No, I am a cottar.

27,356. Have you any land?—Nothing.

Lairg.

David M

27,357. Just a house?—Just a house.

27,358. Do you pay a rent for it?—No rent.

27,359. Do you follow a trade?—No, I am a labourer.

27,360. Whose land is your house upon?—On my good-father's.

27,361. Your father-in-law?—Yes.

27,362. What is his name?—Nathaniel Munro.

27,363. Was his rent dealt with by the Crofters Commission?—No, it was not under the Commission.

27,364. Is he under lease?—Yes.

27,365. Do you agree with the evidence given by the several witnesses with regard to the question of available land?—Yes, I quite agree with it, but there is plenty more land that could be taken in that they did not touch upon between Invercassley and Oykell.

27,366. Is that land at present grazing land?—Yes, it is under sheep. The postmaster at Ardgay has it under sheep, and there are plenty good bits on this Sutherland side too that would be very good for crofters.

27,367. But you ask us to consider land between Invercassley and Oykell, on both sides of the Kyle?—Yes.

27,368. And you say that land is available within the meaning of the remit?—Yes.

27,369. What is the total extent of it, would you say?—It would keep maybe seven or eight crofters very happy.

27,370. And would you be very glad if you had the opportunity to leave the house where you are and take a new settlement there?—I would be very glad to get good ground to work upon.

27,371. And would you undertake such a holding without assistance?—Yes, I have a good family grown up who would help me; I have five sons.

27,372. So that you would look forward with confidence to carrying on such a holding to profit and paying a fair rent?—Yes.

27,373. *Mr Sutherland.*—Of what place are you a native?—Altas, Rosehall.

William Macleod.

WILLIAM MACLEOD, Cottar, Rosehall (40)—*examined.*

27,374. *The Chairman.*—Are you a cottar?—Yes.

27,375. Do you pay any rent?—Yes, £2, 12s.

27,376. Have you any land?—No, but a bit of garden.

27,377. And to whom do you pay the rent?—To Rosehall.

27,378. May I ask, are you anxious to leave the place you are in and get another settlement if one can be got?—Yes.

27,379. How long have you been living in your present house?—Seven years.

27,380. And you have paid a rent all that time?—Yes, for five years, and I was for two years a servant.

27,381. And while you were a servant you had the house as part of your arrangement?—Yes.

27,382. Who was your employer?—Mr Maclay in Achuess.

27,383. *Mr Sutherland.*—How many cottars are there in Rosehall, do you know?—There are six of them. They have cows, and they will not get a single bite on the estate; it is just from the crofters they are getting it.

27,384. Have the estate management got land that cows could be grazed upon?—Plenty of it: there is any amount of land on the Rosehall meadows, and the deer park is not 20 yards from the back of our houses.

27,385. And you get then the cow's grazing from the crofters round about?—From the crofters at Rosehall and Altas.

27,386. And you say that if you got a holding in a place such as was spoken of to-day you would be very glad to take it?—Yes.

27,387. And you would have no fear but that you would succeed if it was good land?—Yes.

27,388. *The Chairman.*—What stock have you got, have you just a cow?—A cow and a heifer and a stirk.

27,389. Any sheep?—No. [*Mr Gordon.*—You get keeping for these from the crofters?—Yes.]

27,390. Do you pay them a grazing rent?—Yes.

27,391. How much?—Fifteen shillings for the cow, and when there is a spate on the meadows they will put their own cattle on the parks, and we have to put ours to the side of the road.

27,392. Do you pay any other grazing rent besides the 15s.?—We buy the wintering out of the sales.

27,393. The grazing rent includes the cow and the stirk, I suppose?—No, I pay for the stirk to another farmer.

27,394. What do you pay for it?—One pound.

27,394*a*. And that is your whole stock?—Yes.

27,395. *Mr Gordon.*—This deer park you say is at your door?—Yes, 20 yards.

27,396. What kind of grass is on the nearest side of the park to you?—Good grass.

27,397. Is it old wood or young wood?—Old wood; there is no young wood, and there is a lot of arable land.

27,398. And is it near?—The farthest off is not far away.

27,399. The farthest off is beyond Achness.—Yes.

27,400. Is there any arable in the deer park except that at Achness?—No.

27,401. But there is grazing on the side of the park next you?—Yes.

27,402. And are there more people in your immediate neighbourhood?—Six cottars.

27,403. Are they in the village of Altas or near you?—Just close to us.

27,404. *The Chairman.*—What is the total number of cottars on the Rosehall estate? [*Mr Forsyth, factor.*—Nineteen yearly tenants holding houses and gardens; these are cottars.]

27,405. And how many crofters? [*Mr Forsyth, factor.*—Thirty-eight small tenants under lease, holding pasture and arable land, and ten under the Crofters Commission, and ten feuars.]

27,406. That is the whole, is it?—That is the whole.

JOHN FORSYTH, Factor for Rosehall (71)—*examined.*

27,407. *The Chairman.*—You are factor on the Rosehall estate?—Yes.

27,408. How long have you been factor?—Since 1880.

27,409. You have a statement to submit?—Yes, a few notes.

27,410. Just read it.—Rosehall estate extends to 6500 acres, of which there are 900 in the deer park, about 1000 in wood, and 2782, in fact almost 3000, let to tenants under lease, pasture and arable, and 1600 moor ground. The balance is accounted for as pasture and meadow land by the Kyle side liable to be flooded by high tide and spates in the river. The deer park is a small one, enclosed, and adds much to the amenity of the place, and is largely or solely the policy ground; and if crofters were set down on it this amenity would be done away with. It consists of land wholly unsuited for crofters in my opinion; only a few acres of it are green land, being patches on the roadside. The whole of it I may say is hard barren rocky ground and never intended by nature for cultivation. It is only fit for a few deer or sheep, and I am perfectly satisfied you will confirm my view when you go over the ground. To give you an idea of how liberally and generously my constituents, the Scottish Provident Institution, who are merely bondholders in possession, have dealt with the tenants and feuars on Rosehall, I will give you a few instances. The witness, Malcolm Munro, succeeded a feuar who held 22 acres at £20, 10s. Of this he had let a portion, and the balance he now holds at Mr Gordon's valuation, £6. William Munro, mason, along with his father, held a feu of 12 acres arable and 16 pasture, with feu-duty of £7. This is now £6, 10s.

27,411. That was when the feu was turned into a lease?—Yes. They were relieved of the feus. Then, Mr Sutherland, who was before you, holds three lots, Nos. 51, 57 and 58; 51 has 18 acres arable and 32 acres pasture, in all 50 acres, for which he paid £20, 10s.; it is now £7, 10s. Nos. 57 and 50, with 169 acres pasture were £6, now £4. Thus he pays now £11, 10s. instead of £26, 10s. as formerly. These are a few instances of how liberally and generously the Scottish Provident Institution has dealt with the tenants and feuars. Several of the feuars have been relieved of their feus and have become tenants at reduced rents; a few of them hold feus still which they would not give up. In 1887 it was arranged that Mr Gordon of Elgin, now one of yourselves, should go over the whole place. The rental then paid by feuars and tenants was £820, 15s. Mr Gordon's valuation of these subjects was £346, 13s. 6d., and this is practically the rent that they now pay. It is not quite exactly the rent, because a few of the feuars held on and their places were valued with the expectation of giving them up.

27,412. Did Mr Gordon reduce the rent from £820, 15s. to £346, 13s. 6d.?—Yes

27,413. By between 50 and 60 per cent.?—Yes. There are 38 tenants holding under lease arable and pasture ground: 19 yearly tenants of houses, a few of them with a little pasture, and 10 under the Crofters Commission all holding land; and 10 feuars. Thus there are 77 tenants on this small estate. The leaseholders' rents vary from 25s. to £75 and £100. That is the rent of a farm that was alluded to: it is a farm on Invernauld estate. It was part of the Rosehall property at one time, and the Institution bought it back from Principal Geddes a year ago. The rents of the yearly tenants vary from £1 to £10, and those under the Crofters Commission from £1 to £8, 8s., and the feuars from £2 to £12, 10s. I am clearly of opinion, gentlemen, that when you inspect Rosehall you will experience considerable difficulty in finding ground on which it would be judicious to set down crofters.

27,414. But what about extension of grazings, is there a need for extension of grazings?—They all want additional ground if they can get it.

27,415. But do you think the desire is reasonable?—It is unreasonable, because it cannot be got on Rosehall. The moorland is very bad stuff, and the deer park is very bad stuff.

27,416. *Mr Sutherland.*—You say that you think the deer park is not very suitable for extension of grazings?—No, it is very poor stuff.

27,417. Haven't you heard otherwise to-day?—Oh, yes, but I have a different opinion; and I may also say that if the deer park was done away with I have no doubt putting the crofters on it would interfere with the amenity of the place very much.

27,418. No doubt, if you take land from one man and give it to another it is against the man from whom it is taken, but you heard that when the pasture was taken away the rents were put up?—That is a long long story; and as to those meadows that have been alluded to I found them let to the tenants who still hold them and they could not be altered, the meadows that are let to Mr Mackay and to Mr David Munro, Altas.

27,419. Are they held under lease?—Yes.

27,420. And they are part of the lease?—Yes.

27,421. We all know how generously the Scottish Provident Institution dealt with them, but you think there is no plan by which under any re-arrangement grazings could be given?—The moor ground is very poor ground.

27,422. What, may I ask, have you done with Invernauld, Principal Geddes' estate?—The Scottish Provident bought it.

27,423. What did they do with it?—They will be glad to sell it to you along with Rosehall.

27,424. But what have they done with it with regard to occupation?—The two tenants are in it, who were in it, and there is a lady living in the house for the summer months.

Lairg.

John Forsyth.

27,425. Was there a farm attached to it?—No.

27,426. So the tenancies remain as they were?—The tenancies remain as they were.

James Sutherland.

JAMES SUTHERLAND, Spinningdale, Bonar Bridge (73) —*examined.*

27,427. *The Chairman.*—Are you a crofter?—I was a crofter, but they did not leave my croft with me. I was evicted twice, and I may say I was evicted thrice. I was evicted before I was born, and twice since I was born.

27,428. Have you a written statement?—I have just: a great deal of statement. I come here to give evidence to the truth, and am bound by the author of truth to give evidence to the truth. I was born and lived thirty-two years at Claisnaprountanaich, north east of Achabadcaldie, beyond the estate of Pulrossie. I am well acquainted with the districts from Strath Carnaig Road to the east end of Achvaich, 5 miles long, and from the south of Clashnaprountanaich to the north boundary of the estate, four miles broad, that is 20 square miles. I have seen 32 crofters and 2 shepherds living on these 20 square miles. The best land and the best pasture is Achormlarie and Prontaich. That is the sheeprun, the crofters have not but the outskirts,—land that they themselves reclaimed out of moors and mosses and built their possessions and never received a shilling of help for reclamation, or a single caber of timber, without buying it to build their possessions. And when they were evicted they never received a sixpence as compensation for all their improvements, and none of them were in arrears, they lived in honesty, and without blemish. There are only 4 crofters and 1 shepherd now on these 20 square miles. Now, if these 20 square miles are to be given to crofters, as I hope they will, and if they have enough of land and pasture, 24 crofters will be plenty settlers on it. Twenty-four ought to make an independent living, and pay their rent and their local taxes annually; that is 12 crofters on each side of the river Evelix. There are four and twenty names of the crofters: on the north side there were Alexander Murray, John Murray, Donald Murray (brothers), Achvaich, Strath above; Donald Murray, William Murray, Hugh Munro. These are the Murrays whose ancestors were in Achormlarie and Achvaich since three hundred years ago, but they were evicted by Sutherland Walker. The next crofters are Hugh Gunn, Laggan; Alexander Murray, George Mackay, William Mackay, Philip Macculloch, Gordon, and two old maids—I don't remember their names—Donald Fraser, John Ross, Sleasdarie. These are 15 crofters that were on the north side of the river, with the sheep run Achormlarie, the very best land and pasture. The crofters on the south side of the 20 square miles:—Widow Macdonald, Corbinsunevan; Duncan Ross, Hugh Graham, Hugh Murray, George Leith, Cannabad; Ross, Craganskorie; James Sutherland, Corrienagauch; David Sutherland, Clachnaprountarich; Angus Barclay, Clachnaharraich; William Murray, Craignach; Donald Mackay, Charles Keith, Widow Mackay, Abigail Murray, Alexander Dingwall, William Ross, George Murray, 7 crofters of Mossnagarr; George Ross, Balcha; 18 crofters and the sheeprun of Prountnach now add 10 crofters there. There are 2 already in Cannabad. If these 20 square miles are to be given to crofters, as I hope it will, let them live independently. Before I read anything more—I made a forgetfulness before Lord Napier's Commission, and I was determined I would not do that again, because I took up the stock and the crop of my father at Prountnach, and the stock I saw on my father's place, on the 9th August 1883, when I stood before Lord Napier's Commission, the stock was:—three cows, two ponies, 50 sheep, about one and half dozen of hens; 18 bolls of oatmeal; 24 to 26 bolls of potatoes; and one half-acre under turnip, and the stock that Mr Walker had on the crop of my father's place, that day when I was measuring the improvements that myself and my father made, was one white hare and one grouse. That was the stock of the landlord. That was all for crop, stock, and all. (2) *District of Achabadcalie and Clashenglass.* I have seen 18 crofters, and now there are only seven. There could be 2 more added. Some have three crofts and some two crofts and some one croft; but each of the nine can have two crofts. That will be more like justice than some having three and others only one and others none at all, but that is estate management. (3) *The deer forest district* from Colog to Whiteface is four miles long and, upon the average, one mile broad, that is four square miles. I have seen 24 crofters living on it, all evicted without compensation for their improvements. It is two keepers who are now the inhabitants of these four square miles. Names of the crofters that once were the inhabitants of this great forest:—Donald Munro, Loch Migdale; John Ross, Cannamoine; William Murray, William Fraser, James Matheson, Donald Ross, George Murray, Robert Mackenzie, Coulag; Janet Munro, Balnacuil—that is up in the woods there; George Leith, Thomas Ross, William Ross, Colin Ross, Spinningdale; James Barclay, William Murray, William Calder, Donald Chisholm, William Gunn, Donald Gunn, John Macdonald, Widow Gordon, Tachran; James Matheson, Alexander Chisholm, Balnacrag; Donald Gunn, Larichan; Robert Gordon, Lochfhad. I have seen these 24 crofters and a *few* dwellers and a meal mill in the glen near Loch Migdale, now in ruins, the last mill in the north highlands that should be put to ruins, for the dry summer or frosty winter never came in the north of Scotland but this mill had a supply of water to keep it shelling and grinding. The winter of 1837 was one of the severest winters that I have seen; all the mills in the Highlands were frozen up, but this little mill was working all that winter. Were it not, a famine would be in this vicinity, and now if the land is to be restored to its former state of cultivation this mill must be restored to its former order. I have seen it shelling and grinding 18 bolls of dry corn in a winter day, and all of us home by daylight. The deer in this imitation of a forest are making a destruction on the crofters to the north and south, on their corn and potatoes and their turnips, and those that are taking on themselves to be their owners never paid compensation for the damage done by them. I am in doubt whether the crofters cannot compel them to pay as these owners never milked one of them; they have no mark on their ears, or on their horns, never had them by a bridle on or a tether; they may name them, but they will not answer their name. I am in doubt that those owners had no more right to them than the crofters. Some of the crofts were planted, some not, and there could ten of these crofts be given to crofters, but the few deer must be evicted. (4) *Spinningdale, West.* In my former years I have seen 12 crofters from Lorvy to Balnolton. Their names are:—Hugh Murray, William Macrae, John Ross, George Murray, George Murray, weaver; Donald Duff, James Chisholm, Alexander Murray, Robert Ross, John Munro, Balnacoil; Alexander Grant, George Ross, Balnolton; now only had four single crofts, which had not but one croft there is one that had two crofts, and one had five crofts. This is estate management. In East Spinningdale I have seen 14 crofters, where now there are 7. The names of the former are:—Roderick Munro, William Calder, James Barclay, Donald Calder, Alexander Calder, Widow Chisholm, Donald Gunn, Joseph Fraser, William Gunn, Donald Gunn, John Graham, John Macdonald, William Murray, Janet Gunn. On the bleaching ground of the old cotton mill I have seen 10 crofters, and I have seen a number of feuars and dwellers. A miller paid £14 of rent for the mill that is now converted into a stable and byre; a threshing mill for threshing nine or ten rigs of stooks; the meal mill of Spinningdale was from time immemorial, and what was done put the crofters and dwellers in this vicinity to a great deal of trouble, by going 10 or 12, I may say 15 miles to Evelix or Skelbo mills, while their fathers had a mill and kiln beside them. This is estate management, to put down the two mills of Spinningdale and Glanen. And as for the Migdale mill, if a fortnight of dry weather, or a

Lairg.

James Sutherland.

fortnight of frosty weather comes, it will not have a drop of water to turn it. With your permission, gentlemen, I submit a copy of the lease my father had, and you will see the rent after the land had been under cultivation for nineteen years. 'Skibo Castle, June '14th, 1814, To John Ross. I grant you a lease 'of 8 acres of land at Clashnaprountnach, lying north 'east of Achuebadcaldie, on the estate of Pulrossie, 'in the parish of Creich, for nineteen years, and your 'lifetime afterwards. The first nineteen years begin 'at Whitsunday 1814, the first three years 1s. per 'annum, the remainder of the nineteen years 2s. 6d. 'per acre per annum, and during your lifetime 5s. per 'acre per annum, but you are not allowed to assign or 'sublet any part or parts of it until the whole of it is 'sufficiently enclosed and the one half cultivated 'without binding on my respect. Signed William 'S. Dempster. Donald Murray, witness, William 'Forsyth, witness.' 'Skibo Castle, May 15th, 1819. 'I transfer and assign all rights and titles of this lease 'to John Ross, Sayar, who hath relinquished his lease in 'the favour of the said David Sutherland from Abers- 'cross, in the parish of Golspie, who is now bound to 'perform all rights and titles of this lease to John 'Ross, who has relinquished his lease in his favour, who 'is bound to pay all arrears that may be due by John 'Ross. Signed William S. Dempster.' I would not agree to that. The names of the crofters who once lived on the bleaching ground:—Kirsty Sutherland, William Morrison, Hugh Munro, Kirsty Ross, Donald Bethune, John Munro, Hugh Main, Hugh Fraser, miller and crofter; John Gunn, William Ross, 10 in all. It has now 4 crofters; 3 single crofts, but 4 dwellers. All the rest of the land is with one man; that is estate management. I hope the government will do justice in dividing the estate soon. (5) *District of Muir of Acharry.* I have seen 17 crofters here, and now there are 9; 4 single crofts, 3 double crofts, and 2 occupying 3 crofts. If justice would divide, he would give 2 crofts to 8, and 1 single. Oh, for justice and righteousness to divide the land. (6) *District east of Ospisdale.* I have seen 26 crofters here; their names are:—Peter Macdonald, Rhian; Donald Murray, Crocan; Simon Macdonald, Confluch; Hugh Macdonald and Hugh Mackay, Restakih; James Mackay and Donald Mackay, Londine; John Fraser, Lonastle; Angus Mackay, Andrew Macdonald, Laid; Roderick Gray, Craiglea; Murdo Macleod and Hugh Macleod, Navag; Donald Ross, William Grant, Brook, David Mackay, Muir; George Mackay, Alexander Macdonald, Coplan; Archie Cameron, Donald Macintosh, William Ross, Colin Campbell, Bardnalean; Andrew Campbell, Back of the Wood; and now it is 12 crofts that are on this estate.

My loss or the house of Dunrobin's profit on my ancestral home is £3 per annum. Since seventy-three years ago, my grandfather, James Sutherland, Cnoc-na-foor was paying £2, but a very heavy statute labour, which consisted in my three grand-uncles fighting with noble Earl of Sutherland, until the Highland Chiefs and their clansmen were slain, and Prince Charlie routed at Culloden, while at the same time, my grandfather, Nicolas Sutherland, fought at the Little Ferry, until they were destroyed or drowned, all in the year 1745. My loss or the house of Skibo's profit on my father and our family, during thirty-two years from 1819 to 1852, is £4 per annum, and forty-one years since, if not, it was not the fault of the improvement done at Clashnaprountnach. My loss and the house of Ospisdale's profit on my improvement at Balnacrag, Spinningdale, from 23rd February 1852 to 1864, £1 per annum, since twenty-nine years ago, and here I am, a pauper, living on 3d. a day for six days in the week, and nothing to eat or drink on the Sabbath.

27,429. Is that the whole?—I have been all Monday last measuring the breadth and length of the colony that I have my lot in. I found it to be the south side of Pulrossie, and the length that I found it to be 1700 yards long, and I measured the breadth of it. At 300 yards I found it to be 135 yards broad.

Then at 600 yards I found it to give					133
„	900	„	„	„	40
„	1200	„	„	„	47
„	1500	„	„	„	33
„	1700	„	„	„	110

That is the size whatever it may come to, three acres and a cow maybe.

27,430. Was that written out by yourself?—Yes.

27,431. Do you pay any rent at present?—No, because I am a pauper, and the Parochial Board is paying rent for me, but I was paying a rent for twenty-seven and twenty-eight years, £1 for a house. I had no land since I was evicted in 1864 out of the croft.

27,432. Where was the croft?—At Spinningdale.

27,433. And who was your landlord?—Mr Gilchrist Ross, and when he died I was evicted.

27,434. But who was your landlord at the time you lost your holding?—It was under trustees.

27,435. And how long have you been getting assistance from the Parochial Board?—Two years, 3d. a day, or 1s. 6d. a week.

27,436. That information you have given us in that paper, is most of it from your own knowledge?—My own knowledge, because I knew everything so well, I was thirty-two years there, and since the year 1852, when I was evicted, I was as well acquainted with all these districts. I could show you the ruins of that house that we lived in.

27,437. Were you born at Spinningdale?—I was born at Clashnaprountanaich.

27,438. That is where your father had his holding?—Yes. He lived there from 1819; he died in 1849, and I was evicted in 1852, myself and my wife.

27,439. Was that the first time you were evicted?—Yes, except when I was evicted before I was born.

27,440. And were you evicted a second time in 1864?—Yes, I was twelve years there and paying £4 a year, and I was evicted in the year 1864. The estate was put under trustees when Mr Gilchrist died.

27,441. *Mr Sutherland.*—What became of the holding you had at Balchraggan?—That Dunnet man has it, with all the men outside of the road, this Dunnet man that got money and converted it into a byre and stable.

27,442. You were evicted for the purpose of adding your holding to his?—To the holding of the Dunnet man. Of the whole 10 acres there is not one of them who has 3 acres.

27,443. And they never asked whether you were to get a place or not. Never troubled themselves about it?—Never.

27,444. Now, you spoke about a tract of land that included 20 square miles?—Yes.

27,445. And the whole of that is without inhabitants, is it?—Yes.

27,446. And what was the deer forest you referred to?—It is between Spinningdale and Achvaich, just half a mile broad at some part, but it goes west and east and there is 4 miles in length, and all the crofters were evicted and put out of it.

27,447. And are there no sheep at all grazed on that land?—Not one, but in Achormlarie; it is under sheep now, but I think the trustees on the estate of Skibo have it since Sutherland Walker was evicted or put over Bonar Bridge.

27,448. Has Mr Ross got it?—He has had it for two or three years.

27,449. But this land that you said was used as a sort of deer forest, is it used for the purpose of rearing game only?—Oh, to be sure, there is game where there are plantations, and some of the crofts were in the plantations.

27,450. Are there no cattle or sheep grazed at all on these 4 square miles?—Not a mortal thing.

27,451. And would it be suitable, in your opinion, for making new holdings?—Yes, what is not planted, but where the holdings were planted I don't think you can help.

27,452. Are there clear spaces in it?—Yes, there are clear spaces, that they have never planted in.

Lairg.

James Sutherland.

27,453. Could that be made into arable land?—It was arable before to be sure, but it is mostly now going back to its natural state. But a man getting it at the rent we had here, three years for 1s. and 2s. 6d. per acre for nineteen years, surely he might improve it, and I would get nine hundred and ninety-nine years instead of nineteen.

27,454. But you know the Crofters Act gives you nine hundred and ninety nine years, so you would have that and a fair rent. You think holdings could be made there?—Yes, and men lived in honesty and made their living there. If I was a young man I would rather take it than take the land in the reclamations from the Duke of Sutherland this year, because that land was never reclaimed, it was only scraped If it had been reclaimed by the men of Sutherland it would have been different, but it was men from England and gaffers from the railroad. I was working at it myself, but such a thing I never saw, it was not reclamation at all. It was 20 to 18 inches deep, but not a thing was proper there.

27,455. It was jobbed, was it?—It was not trying to make the work good they were, but how many acres they would go over in the day.

27,456. And you were working on it and saw it?—I was working on it for six weeks, I have worked in Novar and other places, I was trenching there, but I never saw a trench made but the man continually was after us with a gauge, and the measurement was 18 inches; but there is not 5 inches there.

27,457. Are you of opinion that the reclamations were not properly made?—I am certain of it.

Alexander Mackay.

ALEXANDER MACKAY, Merchant, Bonar Bridge, (50) —*examined.*

27,458. *The Chairman.*—You are not a crofter?—Not a crofter.

27,459. Do you wish to make a statement to us?—Yes, I wish to make a reference to plantations on the estates of Balblair and Skibo. I was not satisfied—it was not clear in my mind whether these lands would come under the scope of your inquiry. Were we sure of that my name would have been sent to the Secretary of the Commission long before now. What I have to say, with regard to the plantations on the estate of Skibo, is that there is a tract of land from the march between the Duke's estate and Skibo, about four miles north east of Bonar-Bridge from Loch Migdale to the shore. There is an acreage in that plantation of about 1500, or thereabout, and that plantation is very suitable and well adapted for the pasture land of cattle and sheep. I don't know of any other plantation in Sutherlandshire which is better adapted for the pasture of sheep and cattle than that. Near Bonar Bridge there was a township where 7 or 8 crofters resided in very comfortable circumstances. When Mr Sutherland of Skibo, as proprietor, came to the district he evicted 5 of these crofters in this township of Swordale near Bonar Bridge. They had a pasture right of all this plantation, and by having this pasture land they were in comfortable circumstances, and after their removal the plantations were partly enclosed. They are not at present altogether enclosed, but they are partly enclosed, and these plantations are held as a game preserve or for sporting purposes. It has been only for a period of fifteen or twenty years till last winter. I understand that it has been let last winter to a farmer in Little Creich, but I know quite well, for a fact, that the parties I am representing here to-day have made repeated applications to the estate management of Skibo, with the view of taking these woods as pasture and giving a fair rent therefor. I am also led to understand by a party that the estate management refused to let it but to one man. That is all I have to say with regard to the plantations on the Skibo estate except that a portion of that plantation is a complete deer forest, that deer always reside in it and these deer for the last five or six years or especially since the last two or three have been making ravages upon the crofters' holdings in the township of Migdale, whereby they suffered considerable loss. I am also well aware that the estate management have enclosed one lot and another crofter has been enclosing his own lot, but I know it is a great complaint and a great loss to those people how their crops are destroyed by the deer. That is all that I have to say. I am quite confident that the crofters are able and willing to give a rent for these woodlands if they get them for pasture land. With regard to another estate in the parish of Creich, the estate of Balblair, there is a tract of woodland from the station of Invershin, extending north-east for about three miles and one and a half miles in the average in breadth. The acreage in the Valuation roll, I understand, is 850 acres, or thereby, but I understand it might be more. In the year 1824, I was told by old crofters on that estate, the estate was in the hands of Mr Dempster at that time, and this tract of land was held as a sheiling by the crofters on the estate of Balblair, seven or eight in number (it is one farm now), and there were several crofters in these woodlands which is a plantation now. These were all evicted, the plantations were enclosed and have been held since then—with the exception of some years—as a game preserve. These parties were evicted from the low lands for the sake of making one farm, the consolidated farm is in the hands of Mr Mackenzie, Portna-lic, and I understand from one of the farmers themselves that the present farmer in Balblair has offered one of his fields and the proprietrix would not consent to that arrangement. The farmer himself has informed me that he would be quite willing to give a part of his farm to the crofters for extending their holdings if the proprietrix would consent to it. With regard to this plantation the whole of this land was a common on the estate of Balblair. There are a number of crofters beyond this plantation who have some pasture land, but they will be very willing to get this plantation for pasture, because it would be so suitable for wintering their sheep. I have nothing further to add as to the parish of Creich, further than that with the exception of another farm which is called Achinduich near the boundaries of Lairg, I don't know from my own experience the nature of that hill ground so well. I know the arable farm, and I know that several crofters could be very comfortably settled there, and so far as the pasture of that ground is concerned I am not sure as to the value of it, but I am quite confident that if that farm was made into, or granted for crofter settlements, it would be very well adapted; and there is another portion of that farm which has recently been let to a farmer named Mr Young, and that is low lying lands, near the station of Invershin, where there were seven or eight crofters in very comfortable circumstances, and I don't know where a crofters' settlement could be made in a better situation; it is lying near the shore, it has facilities of pasture, and the arable is very good.

Lairg.

Alexander Mackay.

27,460. I gather from your statement that you are appearing as representing the crofters of the district?—I am representing the crofters of the district of Migdale, Tullich, and Swordale, where there were seven or eight crofters, and there is now only one.

27,461. And were you appointed at a public meeting?—Yes, on the 5th of this month.

27,462. So that the statement you have now made is a statement representing their views with regard to the lands you have mentioned?—Yes.

27,463. *Mr Gordon.*—Supposing you gave these woods to the crofters, what arrangement would you propose to make in the case of the woods being replanted?—So far as I am able to tell you I don't think but it will be a long time before it will be necessary to replant these woods.

27,464. Not very long in places I know of: some of it is ready for cutting just now?—Oh, yes, a great part has been cut, but a great part has not come of age.

27,465. But assuming it was full grown within the next twenty years, what arrangements would you make in connection with the proprietor's right to

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replant?—In the next twenty years probably the greater part of that land where the wood I refer to is may be cultivated.

27,466. Then you would prevent the proprietor from replanting it; do I understand that?—I leave that in the hands of Her Majesty's Government.

27,467. Well, but I am not satisfied with that answer; I would like to know what proposal you would make?—There is one proposal: those parts of it which would pay better for planting might be replanted.

27,468. Yes, but you are aware that if the land is once handed over to the crofters it is assigned permanently from the proprietor. Now, if you take away these woods you prevent him from replanting. I don't suppose you would wish to prevent him cutting the woods, but you prevent him from replanting them?—Oh, that is possible, that is possible, I don't see what would be the best way to do that.

27,469. I am afraid the matter of your proposal goes beyond the scope of our Commission.

27,470. *Mr Sutherland.*—You say that these woods, as a matter of fact, have been let as pasture?—They have.

27,471. You did not hear of any difficulty arising about replanting, did you?—I never heard the question discussed.

27,472. But you think that it is a contingency that might arise?—Oh, it is a probable contingency no doubt.

27,473. Do you think it could easily be met when it did arise?—I should think so.

27,474. And if the proprietors, or the trustees, or whoever is responsible for it, have let that woodland for pasture now they must have taken some precautions such as have been referred to if they thought it necessary?—I would think so. [*Mr Gordon.*—From year to year.]

27,475. But would the crofters take it from year to year if they got it?—Possibly, they would, but I would think they would be better pleased to have it for all time.

27,476. But it is a fact that they offered for it and did not get it?—Yes.

27,477. And that another man offered for it and he got it?—Yes, that is a fact.

27,478. *The Chairman.*—You began by expressing considerable doubt whether plantations came under the remit?—I did so.

27,479. I did not wish to interrupt your statement, but I confess I don't think plantations do come under the remit?—Well, my lord, I am not certain whether they would or not, and with that reservation I made the statement.

27,480. Yes, I observed you were very careful to mack that reservation.

27,481. *Mr Sutherland.*—But the question was put to you about the difficulty of replanting, and it is a difficulty that would arise in any circumstances in dealing with the plantation?—It is always the case with regard to plantations that they must, some time or other, be replanted.

27,482. And even although there were a difficulty, don't you see a way of overcoming it?—There are various ways of overcoming it. A great tract of that plantation on the Skibo estate where several crofters were before is a fit subject to be reclaimed in comparison with the land the crofters of Sutherland are reclaiming.

27,483. And even if the timber were left upon it, don't you see a way of obviating the difficulty if any difficulty arose? The difficulty arises at present, I understand, from the fact that the timber is the property of one man, and the grazings the property of another, but if they both became the property of the one person there would be no difficulty?—No difficulty whatsoever.

William Anderson.

WILLIAM ANDERSON, Factor for Balnagown (35) —*examined.*

27,484. *The Chairman.*—You desire to say something to us I understand?—I hardly anticipated that anything would be said about the Balnagown ground, but as it has been referred to I will read a general statement which I have written out for the most part since I came. I may premise that it refers altogether to the Balnagown property, in the parish of Creich, and county of Sutherland, and consists of the Benmore and Loubcroy shootings, otherwise Invercassley sheep farm. This ground lies between the river Oykel (which is the march between Ross and Sutherlandshires) and the river Cassley, and extends as far as the watershed on the Benmore Assynt ridge. The acreage is about 50,000 Ordnance Survey, and comprises about 500 acres of wood, in small patches, and perhaps 170 to 200 acres or so of arable land, the bulk of this being at Invercassley sheep farm house, close to Cassleybridge, and the remainder being distributed at distant intervals at the shepherds' and gamekeepers' houses: the balance being uncultivable moorland, unquestionably suitable for sheep and game alone. The altitude of the entire ground is high: at its lowest and most accessible point it is not less than 500 feet, or so, and it rapidly increases till near Benmore Assynt, where it is over 3000 feet high. I should think about nineteen-twentieths are from 700 to 800 feet above sea level. There never have been crofters or small tenants of any kind on the land in any part of it: at any rate I can find no trace in the Balnagown estate office books or records of such, with the solitary exception of the merchant and carpenter and small householder at Rosehall, and these had been paying rent for but a comparatively short number of years. For a very long period back the ground has been let as a sheep farm to one farmer, the present tenant, being a member of the family of Kennedys, who have held the farm during the past half century. Prior to 1875 the entire rent derived from the ground as a sheep farm was £800, and it is only within a period of about forty years that the ground was let for sporting purposes, the income derived from this source beginning at £150. In 1875 the rent of the sheep farm became £1400, but on several occasions in recent years the tenants received an abatement of rent, the largest amount given in one year being £500. At Whitsunday 1893, when the lease terminated, the tenants positively refused to renew their tenancy at a higher rent than £700, producing figures to prove that during the greater part of the lease the most careful working of the farm had not yielded them a percentage of profit after paying rent and expenses. As the landlord knew the tenants to be men of great experience in sheep farming and as he did not believe the farm could be let to greater advantage in such depressed times, he relet the farm to the old tenants at this large reduction of 50 per cent.

Lairg.
William Anderson.

The shooting rental on the other hand has been increasing, and there is no reason to believe that if circumstances continue as they are the assessable income derived from this source will diminish. On the contrary it may be expected by judicious management to increase to a considerable extent. I may mention that both landlord and tenants have expended a considerable sum of money (about £800) upon the sheep farm houses within the past twenty years; and a large outlay has to be made very soon upon the shepherds' houses. This year a sum of about £700 has been spent in repairing and improving Benmore Lodge, the work being done by local tradesmen.

If I am asked what I have deduced from the past history of this ground and from my experience of estate management as it applies to such a district, I should say without hesitation that nothing can be gained by the proprietor, or by the people of Creich parish by interfering with the existing condition of things as they apply to such a district as I am particularly referring to. If it was suggested to me for instance that crofters could be located with advantage upon any part of the Balnagown property in Sutherlandshire, I should think at once that the suggestion was made at random, or was a purely fanciful one. My reasons for this may be stated as follows:—(1) the great lack of cultivated or cultivable land without which crofters or small farmers could not exist. The proof of this can

Lairg.

William Anderson.

be seen by any one travelling the ground,—north, south, east or west: and additional proof of the comparative uselessness of the land already cultivated, lying as it does near the rivers Oykel and Cassley may be found in the fact that every other year the crops, such as they are, are completely destroyed by floods. Moreover, the corn is frequently cut in a green state, and is for the most part worth very little. (2) The inaccessibility of the ground. At its nearest point it is ten miles from a railway station, and there is but one road, traversing only about one half of the ground. The greenest and best grazing parts of the farm indeed occupy the most outlying districts. (3) The utter hopelessness of expecting that if men of capital and great experience like the present tenants, with skilled managers and shepherds at their back, find the farm such an unprofitable concern, crofters or small farmers could exist for any time, however reasonable their rents might be. (4) The present depressed state of sheep farming, the very small prices received for stock, coupled with the expense of management, wintering, &c. Imagine a number of small tenants without an acre of arable land, meeting the requirements of wintering, and the many other expenses attending a sheep farm. (5) The great loss to the parish at large which a diminished rental would entail. The sheep farms of Creich are certainly of importance for rate-paying purposes, and it would be most unwise to risk a large diminution of their valuation; but it is in connection with the shootings in the parish, that one is struck with the immense importance of conserving such a satisfactory state of things. It can be readily seen how very materially the burden of rates is relieved. When it is recollected that the rental of the shootings in Creich is almost one fourth of the entire valuation. It is surely of the utmost consequence that nothing should be done to lessen this valuation, or to interfere with its possible increase in future years. When land bears a double valuation in this way, I think it is hardly necessary to say that it would be excessively unwise to take any measures whereby the valuation may be hazarded, or may disappear altogether. The existing system, moreover, provides remunerative employment for as many people as any other system. I imagine no one thinking carefully of this particular case can believe that a larger number of people can be benefited under any change than the shepherds presently on the ground, and the persons employed by the shooting tenants in so many different ways.

27,485–7. *Mr Sutherland.*—You stated that the Balnagown property in Sutherlandshire (to which I understand you limit your remarks) never had crofters on it?—That is my belief from what I can find.

27,488. Founded upon what?—Upon evidence. I have been able to go back nearly a hundred years. We have a very old book of plans in the estate office, almost a hundred years old, and I don't see the remotest trace of such tenancies.

27,489. Who occupied the land in Glencassley, and cultivated it?—The sheep farmer of the time.

27,490. Who lived in the houses, the ruins of which are visible?—Their shepherds I presume.

27,491. How many shepherds would there have been?—Probably nine or ten shepherds and their families.

27,492. How many are on it now?—About the same number.

27,493. And there are no remains of houses except where the shepherds lived?—Of course, I don't pretend to have travelled over the whole, but I have seen no other.

27,494. Did you see any signs of old cultivation?—None apart from the shepherds.

27,495. You have seen no plough ridges along the margin of the river, have you?—I have seen a considerable tract of very green attractive-looking land.

27,496. How was that made green, have you any idea?—Naturally. I think sometimes the naturally green land is mistaken for land cultivated anciently.

27,497. What are the ridges we see there and the old enclosures?—I have no recollection of that. I do not pretend, of course, to have gone over it all, and I do not say that such may not exist, but I have not seen them. For at least ninety years no person has paid rent to Balnagown for that entire tract of country except one man.

Lairg.

William Anderson.

27,498. Did you say—I may have mistaken you—that there was a general concurrence among the people of the parish of Creich that the present arrangement is the best one?—Certainly not.

27,499. You merely said *you* thought it was?—I expressed my own opinion to the effect.

27,500. But you did mention the people of the parish of Creich?—I said it would be to their disadvantage that any change should take place; that refers more particularly to the Balnagown part of the parish, as the rule may not apply all over.

27,501. And you think it is to their greatest advantage that matters should remain as they are?—I do most assuredly.

27,502. Is it to the advantage of a man, do you think, when he wishes land not to get it?—Very often it is.

27,503. But you would allow, would you not, that he is a pretty good judge of that himself?—No, I would not allow anything of the sort. Of course, there may be exceptions, but the exception does not prove the rule.

27,504. By no means, that is just my point—you are the exception, and they are the rule.—No, excuse me, you rather evade my answer.

27,505. I am not under examination, if you please. But you stated that a fourth of the assessable rental of the parish would be done away with if the land were opened up?—There is a very strong presumption that that would be the case.

27,506. But you understand surely that it is the subjects that are assessable and not the people who are there?—I don't quite follow the distinction.

27,507. The assessment might remain whoever was there, and would, as a matter of fact, remain?—Not the double assessment. If you substitute crofters for a sheep farmer, the presumption is that the shooting tenant will disappear.

27,508. Oh, dear, no; crofters' common grazings have a sporting value as well as a deer forest; is that not so?—That is not my experience.

27,509. But, as a matter of fact, the holdings are let to a shooting tenant—I don't say they get the same return, but they get a considerable return. But whoever holds it, the value remains there, and would be assessed?—Assuredly, a certain value would remain.

27,510. It might be a little higher in certain circumstances than in others?—I am not prepared to allow that; but some value would remain.

27,511. Am I right in assuming that the greater part of the Balnagown property is in Ross-shire?—Yes.

27,512. So we may have another opportunity of meeting you when we deal with that county?—No doubt.

[Adjourned.]

TWENTY-SEVENTH SITTING.

MELVICH, SUTHERLANDSHIRE,

October 4, 1893.

Present:—

DAVID BRAND, Esq., Advocate, Sheriff of Ayr, and Chairman of the Crofters Commission, *Chairman.*
ANGUS SUTHERLAND, Esq., M.P.
JAMES NOEL MULLER FORSYTH, Esq.
GEORGE GORDON, Esq.
WILLIAM MACKENZIE, Esq., *Secretary.*

WILLIAM MACKENZIE, Trantlemore, Strath-Halladale (48) —*examined.*

27,513. *The Chairman.*—You are a crofter, I presume?—Yes.

27,514. What rent do you pay?—£5, 10s.

27,515. Was your rent dealt with by the Crofters Commission?—It was left the same as it was.

27,516. I see the holding is in name of Widow Janet Macdonald or Mackenzie, its area being 5 acres arable, 2 acres 1 rood outrun, and a share in the common pasture of 8000 acres common to the townships of Bighouse, Allt-a'-mhuillin, Kealsary, and Trantlemore?—Yes.

27,517. Is the share of the hill according to the rent?—It is supposed to be.

27,518. Have you a written statement?—Yes, a few words.

27,519. We shall be glad if you will read it.—I may say that as I have taken down the areas myself I cannot say that they are precisely correct, as I had no means of making an exact estimate of the extent of the grounds, and consequently you will excuse me if there be little mistakes regarding areas; I only give approximate figures here:—'The area drained by the Halladale, including the district occupied by the townships of Portskerra and Melvich, extends to 68,000 acres. The Bighouse sheep farm takes 45,000 acres. The tenants on both sides of the Halladale have 18,800 acres, and the remainder goes to the Portskerra and Melvich tenants, making to each of the latter a farm of 27½ acres; to each of the Halladale tenants one of 360 acres, and to the tenant of the sheep farm one of 45,000 acres, including 8000 acres now let as a deer forest.

'The grounds now occupied by the Bighouse sheep-farm, and the part now let as a deer forest, at one time maintained a population of 60 families, distributed as follows:—East Side—Golval to Culfearn, 24. West Side—Kirkton to Upper Bighouse, 10. Total for lower end of farm, 34 families. Evicted in 1807 on upper end of farm—Brachru and Dalshuag, 3 families; Forsinain, 5; Forsinard, 10; Craggie, 3; Dyke (evicted 1828), 5; total 26 families. I do not maintain that it would be wise to cut up that farm again into 60 crofts, though, if that were done, you would give each a farm of 750 acres, and the standard of comfort would be infinitely superior to that of the average crofter anywhere else in this neighbourhood, even the much-envied Halladale crofters, whose average farm is 360 acres, not to speak of Portskerra and Melvich, where the average is 27½ acres of land of the most wretched description.

'If this Royal Commission is anxious to find out land for small farms, there is here a subject which will make at least thirty nice farms of 1500 acres each. But some, though they confess to the suitableness of the lower parts of the Strath for small farms, may object that it is nonsense to try farming in the highest reaches of the Halladale—in Forsinain, Forsinard, Dyke, &c.; that the altitude of these places, with exposure to frosts and storms renders cultivation out of the question there.

'I may state here that six and twenty families lived there in comfort and plenty in former times—in times when there were no roads, no railway, no communication with the markets of the world, and no improved agricultural implements such as there are now. I have been conversant all my life with the men and women born there, the descendants of the old tenants, and it was one life-long grief to them that they had to leave their comfortable homes and be sent to live in places already fully occupied and stocked. One instance of many is that of Donald Sinclair, who was evicted from Forsinain and sent to a farm in Trantlemore. He drove down his sheep—a flock of 100—at Whitsunday 1807, and at Whitsunday 1808 only 12 of the entire flock remained alive—the result of taking stock from good ground to inferior ground already more than fully stocked. I am informed by those who intimately knew the circumstances of the tenants in the upper part of Halladale that there were no more comfortable tenants in the north of Scotland—a fact which I do not doubt, knowing as I do the quality of the arable lands there, and the extent and excellence of the hill pasture.

'I know there is an attempt—a deliberate attempt—made in this country to show that there is little or no land in the Highlands fit for small or medium-sized farms of the mixed agricultural and pastoral sort. Such statements are generally made by factors and deer-foresters, and supported by certain favourites and flunkeys, if I be allowed the expression; but to us who, with a life-long experience of hill-farming, have an intimate knowledge of the country in the Highlands, and whose policy is to preserve our race, all these statements are a delusion and a snare, made to strengthen the hands of those whose policy is to preserve the game.

'Now, sir, we hope, sincerely hope, that this Royal Commission, to whose labours we look forward with eager expectation, will help to do something to mitigate the state of matters in the Highlands, and to weaken the hands of those who are fast turning our country into a huge sporting ground.

(Signed) 'WILLIAM MACKENZIE.'

27,520. Were you appointed at a public meeting?—Yes.

27,521. And you appear here as a delegate?—Yes.

27,522. Representing certain townships?—In Strath-Halladale.

27,523. And I think these are the townships you mentioned?—Yes; I made a passing mention of other townships which I have no power to speak for, but which were connected with the district, such as Melvich and Port-Skerra.

27,524. Just tell us again the townships for which you specially appear. Is Bighouse one?—Upper Bighouse is one; Allt-a-mhuilinn, Trantlemore, Bun-na-h-amhuinn, Trantlebeg, Croick, Dalhalvag, Craigton, Earr, Achamore, Culfearn.

27,525. Is there a general desire on the part of the crofters in these townships to get new holdings?—That is how I always understood it.

27,526. Is it a desire in that direction rather than a desire for additional grazing, or is it for both?—It is for both.

27,527. And does it consist with your knowledge that those who have very small holdings would be willing to leave these and take new and larger holdings in the district?—Certainly it does.

27,528. You refer us to Strath Halladale generally as ground that we ought to consider in the light of these desires?—I do, as a very suitable subject.

27,529. Do you say a subject suitable for new settlements or for grazing?—For both combined.

27,530. And you point to these former occupancies as evidence that this place could be repeopled again?—I do, and I may add that I can point to the tenants now resident on Halladale Strath.

27,531. You described these, I think, as the 'much-envied' tenants of Strath Halladale?—Yes.

27,532. Are they better off than their neighbours?—As a rule they are: the extent of their hill ground in

Melvich, Sutherlandshire.

William Mackenzie.

connection with the arable land is greater, and that leaves them more liberty and more comfort.

27,533. They have a larger and better stock, have they, than their poorer and smaller neighbours?—Yes, that is so.

27,534. And are they in the general case more contented on that account than other crofters in the district?—I would understand that to be the case.

27,535. *Mr Gordon.*—Was the land which these crofters in your neighbourhood possess arable land when they came there, or did they reclaim it?—Those who were sent there at the time of the evictions do you mean?

27,536. Yes.—It was partly arable land when they came, and they have partly reclaimed it.

27,537. They reclaimed part of it?—The old crofts, after the evictions, in many cases were divided up into two or three divisions, and given to those who were evicted.

27,538. They were subdivided?—Yes; and, as a rule, there were improvements going on from time to time over all the crofts among the small tenants in the strath, as you would have seen yourself, sir.

27,539. You told us about a certain number of tenants occupying crofts in the neighbourhood of Forsinard?—Yes.

27,540. How many were there there?—Ten.

27,541. Where were they located?—On both sides of the river.

27,542. How far down from the station did the crofts come?—About a mile and a half or two miles from the railway station is the boundary line between Forsinain and Forsinard.

27,543. We came down that way, and it appeared to me that there was very little green ground, or any appearance of former cultivation in the neighbourhood of Forsinard?—But the fact is that there was a considerable amount of cultivation there.

27,544. In giving the area of the farm, you have done so, I have no doubt correctly, but it must be kept in view that a large extent of these 68,000 acres is beyond the railway, and practically valueless for crofting purposes, being away to the north-east Caithness side?—No, sir, I deny that statement; there is no part of that district that is valueless to the crofters.

27,545. How would you propose to occupy the land beyond the railway for instance?—By the sheep and cattle stock of the tenants who would occupy the arable lands in the adjacent parts; and without these high lying grounds I maintain that the arable land would not be of very much use in these high places.

27,546. But I am afraid that if you were to confine people up to that part of the country for their whole holding it would not be a safe place to keep stock in during the winter?—They have been there for hundreds of years, and I never heard any complaint.

27,547. That may be the general idea; it is before our day. But the climate now must have changed, because I do not think it would be possible now to winter your sheep up there wholly?—I don't say it would be possible to winter very much stock there, but they have means of communication for importing winter stuffs that were quite beyond their reach before. We practise that ourselves on a small scale.

27,548. If you have to import much keep for your stock up there, I am afraid it would run away with your capital?—We never found that.

27,549. But you were never farming at Forsinard?—No; but I am intimately acquainted with the descendants of those who were there.

27,550. How long is it since Forsinard was cleared?—In the year 1807.

27,551. There will not be many immediate descendants of such tenants alive now?—Oh, there are some of the immediate descendants alive still. I have one yet in my nearest neighbour, whose father was born in Forsinard.

27,552. I would have grave doubts about the advisability of repeopling that part of the country.—I would have none.

27,553. Would you be inclined to go up there yourself if you had the opportunity?—Certainly I would.

27,554. Up next the station?—Yes, even there there is plenty arable land, and plenty room for improvement. I have seen crops grown at the railway station as fine as I saw anywhere.

27,555. You have told us about the extent of croft, arable and pasture, which there would be to divide among the thirty tenants, *i.e.*, 1500 acres. Now, what stock would you suppose that would keep?—The division would have to be made according to the nature of the soils. You know yourself, sir, from your knowledge of lands that in the lower lying parts a smaller area would hold a larger stock, because the quality of the soil there may be better.

27,556. That is no doubt so, but take an average croft, with an average stock?—The average croft is what I mentioned. An area of 1500 acres would keep a stock, counting it all in sheep, of something between 200 and 300 animals.

27,557. Three hundred sheep?—I don't say that, but perhaps 250.

27,558. How many cattle would you have?—I would have about 30 head of cattle between old and young.

27,559. And how many sheep would you allow to each beast?—Three.

27,560. Would not that be rather small?—No, counting it overhead, calves and all.

27,561. Well, that would be equal to 90, which would leave you 160 sheep?—Yes.

27,562. And a horse?—Yes; equal to 5 sheep.

27,563. Well, I suppose one horse would do. Your stock, then, would be 135 sheep, 1 horse, and 30 cattle. Now, what value would you put upon these animals? How much would you put on the sheep to start with?—That varies in my experience.

27,564. Just give me your own idea?—I could not without some calculation.

27,565. Would you say 20s. or 15s.?—The average for ewes I should say 20s.

27,566. That makes £135; and what would be an average price for your 30 cattle?—They would average £5 or £6; the older cattle, of course, are much more valuable than the younger, but that is overhead.

27,567. That makes it £285; and the horse £15?—Yes.

27,568. Making £300 in all?—Yes.

27,569. Now, do you think you could manage to get 30 men, with £300 each, to stock these places?—I think there would not be very much difficulty about it.

27,570. And if you did not get them in your own glen would you object to other people coming in from elsewhere?—Certainly not.

27,571. Then, you would have your holdings to erect, so that you would have a pretty heavy bill in front of you?—I can see that the expense of building is one thing that would prevent cutting down the farms to a very small size.

27,572. The expense of building is practically the same for a £10 croft as for a £30 croft?—Not exactly, as the latter requires a larger steading.

27,573. Much about it. Put the cost in at the moderate sum of £120, and you arrive at £420; that is a pretty big sum?—It is a pretty big sum.

27,574. What I want to point out to you is this, that while it is very advisable to have crofts of a certain size, you may be putting it beyond the power and beyond the means of the great bulk of the people to take these places?—Well, I don't see that very many could take these places without assistance in some way; but there are various ways.

27,575. Have you any idea in your own mind where the money could be got?—I think there would not be much difficulty about money. I observe that there seems to be no difficulty in raising money to emigrate the crofters; and why should there be difficulty in migrating them?

27,576. But there would be difficulty, and it must be patent to yourself that it could not be done without getting a loan?—Money is very cheap.

27,577. But if you put on a moderate rent, *plus* the interest on even £200, it comes to be a very heavy

burden on a crofter?—The interest would only be £6 a year at 3 per cent.

27,578. You might get money at 3 per cent., but you would have to pay it back?—Certainly.

27,579. The rate then of repayment, including principal and interest, would be at least 4½ per cent., or £9 per annum?—I could get a bond at 3 per cent. to stand any length of time.

27,580. I merely make these remarks to show you that there is a difficulty there?—I do not doubt that there is some difficulty in that matter, but still it is not insurmountable as far as we can see.

27,581. *Mr Forsyth.*—Have you considered the advisability of having different sizes of crofts?—The state of the subject would render that absolutely necessary I fancy, as in some cases you could not get a large croft at all, and in other places you could; and in some cases, again, a tenant might not be able to take a large-sized place, but he might be able to take a smaller one.

27,582. Assuming that it were possible to find a certain number of these crofts such as you have described, with stock as you have described, and after considering the difficulties that have been brought out by Mr Gordon's questions, would you as an alternative think it advisable to institute a smaller size of croft—not a self-sustaining one, but a small croft in the new ground, or do you not like that class of holding?—I would not advise the cutting up of a place into very small pieces. The expense of building will prevent that for one thing, and it would not be very advisable to do so. There would be a sufficiency of small holdings in the old place after the new places are divided up.

27,583. Before I go further, may I ask you, do you represent this place of Melvich and Portskerra?—No, I simply referred to that as it was connected with the subjects I spoke of.

27,584. Because, while we are considering Strath Halladale, we are bound to look at the very large number of people that there are down here?—Oh, yes.

27,585. And it appears to me that the land for such crofts as you have described, the larger and self-sustaining crofts, would very speedily become exhausted. Now, can you give us any idea as to the possibility of the smaller croft, aided by outside work,—how would that do?—It would do very well if you have public works in the immediate neighbourhood.

27,586. And how does work stand in the immediate neighbourhood?—There is no such thing to be got, unless the happening of a day's work occasionally.

27,587. Then we are rather forced back to what you originally stated,—the large self-sustaining croft, or to put it more plainly, the small farm?—Certainly.

27,588. And of these you say a certain number could be got?—Very well.

27,588*a*. That croft, you think, could be worked with profit, but it would require a considerable amount of capital to start with?—It would, no doubt.

27,589. In most cases, at all events. You might find an occasional man who has got the capital, but that would not be the rule, but rather the exception?—It would not be the rule, I believe; but I don't see very much difficulty in starting on subjects like that in these times when money is cheap.

27,590. Then, finally, as to the small croft, there should not be many of them, so far as your experience goes?—No, I entirely disapprove of the crofts being too small: it compels a man to run about the country seeking labour elsewhere, and it is one of the most pitiable things I know to see these aged men going from place to place seeking work, and perhaps returning home after finding none. I have often felt very sorry for these people.

27,591. As to the sheep on the hill pasture of these small farms, do you think the tenants should have them in common, or that they should each have his own sheep, but running in common?—I think it would be a better arrangement that each tenant should have his own separate; it is quite possible to have them in that way, and still have the ground in common for yeld cattle and other cattle and horses, and even for the sheep; but they could have them in separate runs, as is actually the case there. Two or three of the crofters, and sometimes more, have their sheep on the same run; in other parts each crofter has a separate run.

27,592. As a matter of fact, we know that sheep do take to a certain part of the hill and keep to it; they happen to get run together, and thus they naturally form into small hirsels?—That is exactly the case.

27,593. Do you find any trouble in your district from overstocking on the part of any individual tenant?—No; there is the best understanding possible, so far as I can see, among the tenants in the Strath. There is very little grumbling that ever I heard on the subject.

27,594. It is done by mutual arrangement, is it?—Mutual arrangement. There are a few who perhaps may have a few animals more than they ought to have, but by the sufferance of the rest they are allowed to keep them, and there is no word about it. The other neighbours are content to allow the matter, and they are all happy.

27,595. Then, in the event of a certain individual holder's sheep stock becoming smaller—that is to say, he may be unlucky and lose them by death, or otherwise—is he allowed to make up his number?—At any time he pleases; there is no restriction in that way.

27,596. Then, generally, you are against the club farm system, about which we have heard so much elsewhere?—The fact is, that we never had any experience of the club farm system, and we do not know exactly how it would work. I don't know but it might work exceedingly well, but we have not had experience of it, and I think the best way would be for each to have his own sheep, and still the ground be in common, as it is in the meantime.

27,597. Do you not perceive the advantages in selling sheep from a club farm—that they become more uniform—the sheep that you would sell run together better in lots?—I see a slight advantage there, but there are disadvantages connected with it that I do not see very well how you could get over in places such as we occupy.

27,598. On the whole you prefer the individual holding as you have described?—There is one thing; in the wintering of the stock every man has it in his own hands, and can give his hoggs what he pleases, whereas if it were a club farm it would be rather a difficult matter to make arrangements to winter the stock at home.

27,599. You mean that if you have a club farm the difficulty would be that the hoggs would have to run in common over all the holding for their wintering?—It would not be a satisfactory arrangement I think.

27,600. *The Chairman.*—In connection with our inquiry in this quarter my attention has been called by Mr Mackenzie, the Secretary, and I think it right to refer to a rather important report which was made to the Board of Agriculture by Captain John Henderson in 1815. It was an official report, and he says that the upper part of the strath was cleared before the date when he wrote. He says:—'Eighteen families were removed 'to make a sheep farm; they paid £185 sterling yearly 'of rent, and the sheep farmer now pays £400 sterling 'per annum for the same ground;' and then he goes on to mention the names of the townships. On the

West Side of River.

Townships.	No. of Families.
Melvich,	22
Kirkton,	4
Evag-Chruaidh,	2
Coul,	4
Bighouse,	8
Allt-a'-Mhuilinn,	2
Earr,	2
Trantlemore,	8
Total,	52

Melvich, Sutherlandshire.

William Mackenzie

East Side.

Gorval,	6
Corkull,	5
Evag-Mhor,	3
Corrigill,	4
Cargarrybeg,	1
Achamore,	3
Alt-Smigile,	2
Craigton,	4
Dalhalvaig,	6
Croick,	2
Trantlebeg,	4
Total,	40

—In all, 92. That was in 1815 according to this official report.

27,601. *Mr Sutherland.*—With regard to the way in which the people are distributed in Strath Halladale, you state the area of the district drained by the Halladale as 68,000 acres?—Yes.

27,602. And I think you said the farm of Bighouse occupies 45,000 of these acres?—It is an approximate calculation.

27,603. That farm is in the occupation of one man, of course?—Yes.

27,604. And is he a resident farmer?—No; he is an absentee farmer.

27,605. Then you said the balance that was left to the crofters of Strath Halladale and of Melvich and Portskerra was, how much?—About 20,000 or 21,000 acres.

27,606. How many families have got to live upon that balance of 21,000 acres?—I cannot be exactly sure, but I should say about 140 families, speaking roughly; there is a population of about 600 or 700 in Melvich and Portskerra.

27,607. And how much in Strath Halladale?—Three hundred.

27,608. But could you give me the families?—There are 60 families in Strath Halladale, not calculating shepherds.

27,609. How many in Melvich?—About 140 or 150; say 150.

27,610. And how many in Portskerra?—That includes Portskerra.

27,611. Two hundred and ten families then have got an acreage of only 21,000?—Yes.

27,612. And one man who does not live there has 45,000 acres?—Yes.

27,613. And you think that that is a state of matters, I suppose, that ought to be remedied if possible?—I think so.

27,614. Then you referred to the difference between the state of the people in Strath Halladale and those down here as to comfort?—Well, as to liberty and other things, I may say that there is a great difference.

27,615. Speaking generally, is there any other particular in which the importance of this strikes you,—the condition of the population of Strath Halladale I mean, except that they are better off than the others?—There is one thing noticeable in those who have been left in anything like their original position,—there is an air of comfort and prosperity about them that you will not get about tenants anywhere else that I see. I speak of the few envied farmers among us who were left as they were before the evictions. These, indeed, have not got very great encouragement; I must say, with all due deference to Sheriff Brand, that the last Commission who visited us dealt very harshly with some of the best tenants there.

27,616. At any rate, they did not find it necessary to increase or to keep at the same figure the rents of those tenants who had been removed to carry out the Sutherland improvements?—I don't take in the drift of that question entirely.

27,617. You said yourself that the most striking particular of Strath Halladale, historically speaking, is that the people were left where they were?—Yes.

27,618. The Crofters Commission did not find it necessary to reduce their rents?—On the contrary, they have raised them in many cases from 5 to 15 per cent.

27,619. Now, did you ever hear that the Commission increased the rents of evicted tenants anywhere—the rents of the people who were evicted to the seashore?—I believe they have been increased in certain cases along the shore, but I am not so well informed there as in our own case.

27,620. But you had not heard that they increased the rents to the same extent as in Strath Halladale?—Nowhere, as I understand, throughout the Highlands.

27,621. So far then as the landlord's interest is concerned, what do you think that proves?—That proves that it would be in his interest to have a number of substantial small farmers, such as we have up among us. I think that is proved clearly, because in the face of a downcome of rents everywhere else we find here a rise in rents.

27,622. So, then, do you think you would be justified in stating that the tenantry, in the original position in which they were placed, have proved a success, while the large farmers have been a failure?—Certainly; I have no hesitation in saying that. No man can say that tenants who were left as they were of old ever applied to a destitution fund. Perhaps some of the older men may have better information than I have, but I made inquiries, and I could never find that any tenant whose rent was £8 or £10 or £12 among us has ever applied to a destitution fund. They have got reductions from time to time from the estate.

27,623. So, in your opinion, it proves conclusively that when people were sent down to the coast to improve their condition, the improvements were the wrong way?—Certainly.

27,624. And you think the case of Strath Halladale proves that up to the hilt?—I have not the slightest doubt about that.

27,625. Are the crofters of Strath Halladale, in your opinion, in as good a position to improve and progress as they were before these clearances were carried out?—Oh, they are not so well placed for progress now.

27,626. Does the condition of things with regard to the distribution of the land exist in Strath Halladale now that existed before the clearances?—Oh, by no means. Quite a number of tenants have been sent from the evicted parts to dwell among others in places already fully occupied.

27,627. That is what you referred to when you spoke of sub-division?—Yes; and that has made a congested state of things in certain districts among us.

27,628. So that your sub-division was not one by the people?—No, it was forced upon them, dead against their will.

27,629. And you think that if these subdivisions had not been carried out the people would have been still more comfortable to-day?—They would have been doubly so in many cases. In my own case, for instance, my grandfather had a holding three times the size of the one I now occupy; owing to the evictions the place was split up into three divisions.

27,630. But from the economical point of view, and looked at from the point of view of the landlord, the settlement of Strath Halladale is one of the best paying he has got in the estate of Sutherland?—I fancy so.

27,631. Because, while rents had been reduced 30, 50, and 60 per cent. on the large farms, yours have been increased?—Yes, that is so.

27,632. You stated that with the old distribution of land each of the families you mentioned in the valley of Halladale had 750 acres?—Yes, that is the calculation.

27,633. But you have not to-day got 750 each, have you?—A little less than the half of that.

27,634. Then, you were asked some questions with regard to difficulties as to wintering stock in the upper reaches of the glen, and I think you mentioned that one of the advantages you would have nowadays is that you have a railway?—Yes, that is one of them.

27,635. And you think that is a very great advantage?—I think it would be the means of procuring various things in times of need at these places, and there would be times of need, I have no doubt, when

Melvich, Sutherland-shire. William Mackenzie

more feeding matter would be required in the winter, and all that sort of thing.

27,636. So that you would have perhaps sometimes to import hay?—It is always done by us.

27,637. At present?—Yes.

27,638. But you do not, I suppose, complain that you have to import certain things?—No, for the reason that we have a good extent of hill ground, and can keep on a big stock in summer, and we find it pays us well to buy a little wintering stuff.

27,639. You use a great many things in Strath Halladale that you do not grow in the strath?—A great many.

27,640. If I might put it to you—you do not grow tea, but you use tea, don't you?—Yes.

27,641. I state that, then, as applying, though not to the same extent, in some degree to other things as well. Do you think the presence of the railway there changes the condition of things very greatly?—I believe it does. They would exist very well without it, but it makes a very great difference.

27,642. Does it consist with your knowledge that in the upper part of the glen, above the railway, there is practically what is called one hirsel,—I am not speaking with exactitude, but with a degree of approximation?—It is one hirsel and part of another.

27,643. And are hirsels kept and fed separately?—Yes, kept separately; they run separately.

27,644. And do you think that what is one hirsel or one man's herding would make the basis of a very good small farm?—Oh, most excellent; there is no doubt about that: it would rather be too much in many cases.

27,645. But, generally speaking, you would have no fear but with the same expedients as you have to resort to yourself, you could winter the stock even at the upper end of Strath Halladale?—I have not the slightest fear.

27,646. You were also asked some questions about the proportion of arable to pasture land. Is there much green land in your hill grazing?—Very little: I would say that 2 or 3 acres on the sides of these small burns would take in the whole of what there is in the 8000 acres on the west side of the river.

27,647. Who has the greater proportion of green land in his holding do you think,—you, or the farmer of Bighouse?—Of course, the sheep farmer has the greater proportion of green; but they do not preserve the green for cultivation as we do.

27,648. They use the green for pasture?—Yes.

27,649. You cannot use it to the same extent?—We do not use it to the same extent.

27,650. So that if that would be an argument against anything it would be against your holding rather than the large farmers?—Oh, no, I find that in our holdings we can pasture about as many sheep on the system we work as they can do on a sheep farm, independently of the cattle altogether. We have as many sheep in the township of Trantlemore as would be enough to stock the place without any cattle; Mr Telfer, manager at Forsinain, has said as much to me, and I believe it myself.

27,651. So you maintain upon your land a stock of sheep the same as the larger farmers, and you have the cattle over and above?—Yes.

27,652. Do you then believe that the large farmer throws away the grazing of the cattle altogether?—I believe that to a great extent he does: I don't say altogether, but to a great extent, for the grasses suitable for cattle that I see on the sheep farms are allowed to grow wild and are not touched from year to year.

27,653. Then, with regard to the getting of stock for holdings, are you of opinion that it would be necessary to the extent that is commonly believed to get monetary advances for that purpose?—That would be absolutely necessary in some cases.

27,654. To meet what?—To meet the expense of stocking and building.

27,655. Do you think it could be got over in the same way as was done before?—I think it could if the people were dealt with and allowed to build as they liked; I mean if they were allowed to build temporary houses as they liked.

27,656. Whom do you think was going to hinder them?—By the present law it could be hindered; by the estate laws and by the sanitary laws. Melvich, Sutherland-shire.

27,657. Don't you see you are dealing with an entirely different state of matters from what we contemplate?—I am thinking of the sanitary regulations which require a certain standard of building. William Mackenzie.

27,658. You don't object to that?—I don't object to that, but there is one objection I have: if tenants in these new places were allowed to build as they liked they could put up a house in two or three days, such as served them in the olden times, and would serve the purpose till better houses were erected.

27,659. But is there any desire on the part of the people to do that?—I cannot say, I would do it.

27,660. Do you see any evidence of the desire to build inferior houses in Strath Halladale at the present time?—No, but in a case of necessity like this I believe it would be a sort of alternative. I don't mean that it should be done if there was a better way.

27,661. But you do not expect, evidently, in the case of buildings, the same progress as has been made in other cases?—I cannot think of that at the very outset: it might by degrees come to that, I have no doubt.

27,662. Do you believe now that there would be any desire on the part of the people to build inferior houses?—No, there is no desire on the part of the people to do it if they could possibly get a better.

27,663. As to all these new houses which we see being built at the present time in Strath Halladale, it is not against the will of the people that they are put up?—Certainly not, it is by their own will.

27,664. And by their own effort?—By their own effort.

27,665. And don't you think if they had larger holdings they would do the same in that case too?—I know very well they would. And I can give you an instance in illustration of that. In my own township, a few years ago, there were two tenants who jointly occupied a croft of about 8 acres. It so happened that another croft of 5 or 6 acres became vacant. One of the tenants on the 8 acre croft was shifted to the vacant croft, and at the present day I find two of perhaps the best crofter's houses that you will come across in the county of Sutherland on these two holdings, simply as the result of the judicious increase of holdings.

27,666. You think that with larger holdings there would be a tendency to erect better houses?—I see practical proof of it every day.

27,667. And have you noticed any advance on the part of the people in building houses since the passing of the Crofters Act?—There is: they build every day, I see a new house rise now and again.

27,668. There has been a general advance in the improvement of houses?—Certainly, and some of the very best houses among us have been built since the passing of the Crofters Act.

27,669. Is that due, in your opinion, to the fixity of tenure that the Act confers?—I think in a great measure it is: they see they have a right to improvements that they had not before.

27,670. Do you notice any difference in the number of houses that were started immediately after the passing of the Act compared with the time before it?—Well, they were building both before and after.

27,671. But do you think there is a greater proportion of new houses being built now than there was before the passing of the Act?—I think it is much about the same thing. There were advances given by the estate before the passing of the Act.

27,672. How many new houses were built in Strath Halladale within the last six years?—I am not exactly sure; there were two or three.

27,673. How many last year?—This year, do you mean?

27,674. Since this time last year?—One, I think.

27,675. And how many in the year previous?—There might be one, or so.

27,676. And was there one each year before the passing of the Act?—I believe that would be the case, because during the last few years, before the passing of

Melvich, Sutherlandshire.

William Mackenzie.

the Act, there were better advances made by the estate to the tenants than ever before that. I don't know the reason, but such is the case: they got all the timber they required a few years before the passing of the Act: formerly they only got a little.

27,677. In the case in which we had to contemplate advances to the tenants, you referred to the conditions upon which advances were proposed to be made to the people for emigration?—Yes.

27,678. Do you know what these conditions were?—I have seen them and read them in the public papers.

27,679. I want just to make that point clear; are you aware what the precise conditions were?—Not as to details.

27,680. You are probably aware that an Act of Parliament was passed empowering the advances to be made?—I have an impression that such is the case.

27,681. This is from the Act—'In order to assist the 'Government of the province of British Columbia to 'transfer to and settle upon the sea coast and islands 'of the province families from the crofter parishes of 'Scotland, the Treasury may before the first day of 'January 1898 advance to the said Government on 'the security herein after mentioned, any sum or sums 'not exceeding in the whole £150,000, which shall be 'applied by the said Government for the purpose of 'effecting the said transfer and settlement on proper 'conditions. (2). The said Government shall repay 'every sum advanced by equal half-yearly instalments 'within thirty years from the date of its advance, and 'the first of such instalments shall be paid within five 'years from the date of the advance. (3) The said 'Government shall pay interest half-yearly at the rate 'of three per cent. per annum on the amounts advanced 'for the time being and not repaid.' Now, I wish to ask you, with regard to that legislation which is now on the statute-book, are these conditions such that if advances were found necessary you would think favourable for the settlement of crofters in the Highlands?—I should think that is the wisest policy.

27,682. You have noticed the salient points of that clause:—(1) a sum of £150,000 shall be advanced by the Government; (2) that within thirty years the same shall be repaid; (3) that no instalment need be repaid until five years after the advance is made; and (4) the low rate of interest, three per cent.?—These are very considerate terms, but I say it is a blindfold policy from two points of view.

27,683. In what way?—First, our country sends away its wealth in the shape of money; and then it sends away its greatest wealth in the shape of its people to enrich other countries.

27,684. Yes, but excuse me, that is hardly the point of my question. I say if it is necessary, or were found necessary to make advances for the purpose of making new holdings in the Highlands would you consider terms like these favourable?—I think these terms are exceedingly favourable.

27,685. And do you not think that if the Government of this country gives money to the Government of British Columbia for such a purpose, it might very well do the same for its own subjects at home?—I think they might extend that assistance to Parish Councils or similar bodies in the Highlands.

27,686. We are, of course, assuming that it is found necessary to make advances?—In certain cases perhaps it would; in others it would not; but if it were necessary these would be very advantageous terms.

27,687. Then, I just wish to ask you one question in conclusion with regard to club farms. As I understand, in reply to a question asked you by Mr Forsyth, you did not object to club farms?—I could not, because I had no knowledge of the working of club farms.

27,688. It was all a question of your not having had experience of them in Strath Halladale?—Exactly.

27,689. But you do not say for a moment that if it were found necessary to establish club farms that would not be a good system?—I believe it might work.

27,690. And the desire to continue the present system in the Strath is due to two causes, first, that you found it so and continued it?—Yes.

27,691. And the other that you found it necessary deal individually with the matter of stock?—Yes. [*Mr Forsyth.*—I should just like to say that the witness's account of the system or method of keeping their sheep stock in the Strath appears to me to be an admirable one, according to my own experience.]

Melvich, Sutherlandshire.

William Mackenzie.

27,692. I quite understand that. It would depend, would it not, in some degree, upon the amount of pasture you would give them? You can see that if people were planted rather thickly it would not be so convenient to manage?—We do it just now, but we don't find it very convenient, owing to the small boundaries we have.

27,693. But if the boundaries were larger you think it would be more convenient to carry out the individual system?—It would be quite convenient I think.

27,694. With regard to the objects of our inquiry generally, you could show us those places that the Chairman read a list of from Captain Henderson's report?—Yes, I have a knowledge of all these grounds. [*The Chairman.*—These names are all familiar to you?—Quite familiar.]

27,695. And, generally, you are of opinion that the land which you have mentioned is fit for the making of new holdings, for the enlargement of holdings which already exist?—I have no doubt of it whatever.

27,696. And do you think it would be for the benefit of the country as well as for the benefit of the individual?—It certainly would.

27,697. *The Chairman.*—I think it important to notice that the arable holding of a number of those whom you represent is very small?—Very small.

27,698. I see from the Crofters Commission Report for 1890-91 that a common size of arable holding is 4 acres, 3 acres, 5 acres, 2½ acres, 3½ acres, 6½ acres, 4 acres, 2 acres, 2 acres, 2 acres, 2½ acres, and so on?—Yes.

27,699. Of course, a number are a good deal larger than that, but are you able to say that in a number of the holdings the arable acreage is exceedingly small?—Yes, very small.

27,700. And I suppose the chief value of these crofts lies in the hill grazing?—Yes, and besides that there is a number of cottars who have small patches or gardens who pay rent and have stock upon the ground as well.

27,701. Can you tell me how many cottars there are?—I cannot say exactly; but there are five or six at least.

27,702. And they have stock on the hill as well as the crofters?—Some of them have.

27,703. Do they pay any rent?—They may pay from 5s. to 10s., I am not conversant with their affairs, but I think they pay from 2s. 6d. to 10s. of rent.

27,704. The class of sheep, I understand from Mr Forsyth, is cheviot?—Cheviot.

27,705. And I learn from him also that you manage these sheep with unusual skill and care?—We take great care of our sheep stock.

27,706. They are the mainstay of your holdings?—Not the mainstay, but one of the chief supports. The cattle stock I may say is the sheet anchor.

27,707. The value of the holdings so far as they have a value is mainly due to the cattle and sheep stock?—Certainly, and to the agriculture as well; without that you could not maintain the cattle stock.

27,708. *Mr Macaulay, Solicitor, Golspie.*—I shall not detain you with many questions; I think you made a very intelligent and clear statement, but I wish to ask you about this Forsinard land you spoke of. How many acres of old arable land do you estimate there are in this ground that you described?—I never measured the land.

27,709. Give me a rough estimate?—I should say there would be about 100 acres in all of old arable; or perhaps 200 if the land which is quite capable of being cultivated is reckoned along with what was tilled in olden times. I might even say 1000 acres could be found quite as good as any that has been improved at Forsinain.

27,710. But old arable land there,—what do you

Melvich, Sutherlandshire. William Mackenzie.

estimate it at?—I cannot exactly say; there is not the appearance of a great extent of arable land there, but a great deal of the land has gone back to heather and looks so wild now that you would not actually take it for arable land: I refer to land that had been cultivated in former times by these small tenants.

27,711. Would that land not be required for hay crop for the feeding of the horses and cattle?—Certainly.

27,712. So that any feeding of sheep that would be required to protect the whole stock would have to be brought in in the case of a hard winter?—Even in places like Forsinard the tenant would have a great number of sheep and cattle in summer, and it would be a great benefit then to low-lying farmers, say in Caithness, if these were sent down to winter during the winter season. That has been done in former times, and I believe it could be done still with profit to both parties.

27,713. But, generally speaking, if it was a sheep stock any feeding would need to be brought in?—Not any feeding.

27,714. In the case of a hard winter?—In the case of a hard winter there would be a great deal required I have no doubt.

27,715. Then, as to the crops: there are some people up there who have crops now, such as shepherds and keepers?—Yes.

27,716. Have you any experience as to what sort of crops these people grow?—Yes.

27,717. How do the crops do there?—They are exceedingly good crops.

27,718. They are very good crops this year?—Yes, and every year that I remember.

27,719. But is it not the fact that the potato crop, for instance, gets blighted very much?—That is the case in various places. I have had experience for the last nine years, and we were never without frost, but it never totally destroyed the crop except perhaps one year. But we do not depend upon the potato crop; we know the pieces of ground that are subject to frost, and we don't go in for potatoes in these spots.

27,720. Turnips appear to grow very well there?—Yes, Mr Forsyth and the other gentlemen can say that they saw very good turnips there.

27,721. You referred a little ago to the result of the Crofters Commission proceedings?—Yes.

27,722. When the Commissioners raised your rents I presume they must have thought you were too cheaply rented?—That is the impression they are apt to leave on the mind.

27,723. That you must have had the holdings very cheap?—The fact is that the rents were raised, but not all over.

27,724. Then, as to the advances that were made to tenants, you spoke of advances made by the proprietor before the passing of the Crofters Act; were these considerable?—In some cases I am not very familiar with the figures, but they might be from £5 to £50.

27,725. So that the tenants in Strath Halladale generally are very comfortable?—So I am told, and I know it is the case with those who have fair sized places.

27,726. It was brought out a little ago that the tenants of Strath Halladale and Melvich here, numbering about 200, hold about 21,000 acres?—Yes.

27,727. But the fact is that the Strath Halladale tenants themselves hold very nearly 400 acres each on an average?—Three hundred and sixty acres.

27,728. Is it within your knowledge that the gamekeepers up at Forsinard had to give up growing potatoes owing to the frost?—I never heard of it.

27,729. *The Chairman.*—Do you wish to add anything further?—Not in the meantime.

HUGH MACDONALD, Ashall, Strath-Halladale (77) —*examined.*

Hugh Macdonald.

27,730. *The Chairman.*—I see you have a paper to submit, and as you are an old man, and I understand very deaf, I will read your paper for you if you will allow me.—I am seventy-seven years of age. I remember with perfect ease the time when the whole lower half of Strath-Halladale, on the east side from Caragarrybeg to Alt Hacron, was occupied by crofters. I was seventeen years old when my father was evicted from Dusphey to the croft that I at present occupy.

The whole of the district above mentioned, with the exception of Havaig, was cleared after it became the property of the Sutherland family. Evag, as far as I can draw on my memory, was cleared in 1827 by Major Mackay of Bighouse, who retained the land in his own hands, and kept a ploughman to work it. From this district three crofters were cleared, namely, John Sutherland, William Gunn, and Charles Macleod.

Golval, as far as I can make out, was cleared in 1829 or 1830, as also was the township of Corkal. Bad-a'-Chridhe, and Dusphey were cleared out in 1833, and Corrigal and Caragarry in 1834. The names of the different crofters who were turned out and the townships they occupied were as follows:—*Golval*—John Fraser, Angus Sutherland, James Campbell, Mrs Hugh Gordon, Roderick Macdonald, John Cameron, Malcolm Fraser, Angus Mackay (M'Iau), James Mackay (Couper). *Corkal*—Angus Mackay (Couper), George Mackay, John Mackay. *Bad-a'-Chridhe*—Grace Mackay, Widow Angus Mackay. Properly speaking they were not cleared out, as the land was taken from them, but were allowed to remain in their houses. The same applies to James Campbell, blacksmith, Golval. *Dusphey*—William Macleod, Hugh Campbell, Malcolm Fraser, Mrs Gordon, Hugh Macdonald, William Macdonald (M'Rory). *Connigill*—Donald Mackay, Donald Gunn. *Caragarry*—Roderick Sutherland.

Of the above mentioned twenty-seven who were shifted or their land taken away, some were shifted twice within three years. Twelve were set down on the portion of Halladale which is still peopled, two went to America, two to Caithness, two to Melvich, and one to Portskerra. It must be borne in mind that I set down the numbers as twenty-seven who were cleared. Taking them collectively they only amounted to twenty-two, but some, such as those sent from Golval to Dusphey, and thence cleared out of there, leaves the number of crofts at twenty-seven.

Golval, Corkal, Evag, and Dusphey contained at that time more land than they do now. It was about that time that the river was embanked, so that land that then belonged to the east side belongs now to the west side. So far as Dusphey is concerned, a great part of it has been washed away by the river.

My father paid £15 for Dusphey. He kept ten milch cows and their followers, two horses and between fifty and sixty sheep. The people were all in comfortable circumstances. They had plenty of good nourishing food. Their crofts were self-supporting. I can remember of little or no meal having to be imported from Caithness or the south—a marked contrast with the present time. I know that some parties made a cry about the *periodical famines* the Highlands were subject to. Such a state of things never existed in my day or anything approaching it.

(Signed) HUGH MACDONALD.

27,731. That is your statement?—Yes.

27,732. Are you a crofter?—Yes.

27,733. I see your holding is 2 acres arable and 4 acres outrun, with a share in 10,872 acres common to 27 crofters. Your old rent was £2, 10s. and your new rent I see has been made £2, 15s.?—Yes. In my father's time it was only £1; and when he died there was 10s. put on to my mother. My mother was spared thirteen years after my father, and when my mother was taken away my name was put in the book, and there was £1, 1s. 3d. added to my rent by Mr Robert Horsburgh.

27,734. *Mr Gordon.*—How many sheep have you?—I have 18 ewes and 10 lambs.

27,735. Has any of your neighbours more than yourself?—Oh, far, far more; a great deal above that.

27,736. They have more than they ought to have, perhaps?—Oh, I daresay they have indeed; I don't

Melvich, Sutherlandshire.

Hugh Macdonald.

know. It is themselves that can put that right and not me; I am no judge of that.

27,737. *The Chairman.*—Was this paper written out for you?—Yes, by my son.

27,738. And is it your son's signature that is appended?—It is my own signature.

Robert Campbell.

ROBERT CAMPBELL, Crofter, Portskerra (67) —*examined.*

27,739. Are you a crofter?—Yes.

27,740. I see your holding extends to 3 acres arable and 1½ outrun. Your old rent was £1, 14s. 6d., and the rent fixed by the Crofters Commission was also £1, 14s. 6d.?—Yes.

27,741. Would you just tell me what stock you have got?—As a rule I keep two cows and sometimes a calf.

27,742. What sheep have you?—I have nine sheep just now, or ten; but I have not had sheep at all since I occupied the place, until four years ago.

27,743. Nine or ten ewes?—No, altogether.

27,744. You have no horse?—No.

27,745. You heard the evidence given by the two preceding witnesses?—Yes.

27,746. And do you concur in that evidence?—Yes, though I was concerned with the low end of the sheep farm.

27,747. And what about the other end, do you not know about it?—No, I don't know anything about the upper end.

27,748. You mean the Forsinard end?—Yes, Forsinard and Craggie and Dyke and these places.

27,749. You don't know about these places?—No.

27,750. Have you anything to add to what the previous witnesses said with regard to this end?—With regard to the Golval section of the farm of Bighouse from the Hachran burn to Caragarry, the tenants were evicted since the estate was sold; but the rest of the sheep farm existed before the estate was sold, with the exception of the Hachran portion of Caragarry-beg.

27,751. To the Sutherland family?—Yes. About 24 tenants were evicted since the estate fell to the Sutherland family in the year 1832. I remember all these crofts although I was young; I was only six years of age when the first evictions took place.

27,752. You confirm the evidence given by Hugh Macdonald with regard to that matter so far as your information goes?—Yes, he has stated more crofters than I have got. In Golval township there were John Fraser, Widow Hugh Gordon, Roderick Macdonald, Angus Sutherland, John Cameron, James Campbell (my father), Malcolm Fraser. In Corkal township the tenants were James Mackay, cooper; an Irish family whose name I do not know; Angus Mackay, cooper; John Sutherland, Charles Mackay (Roy), William Mackay, weaver; Widow Mackay, Widow Bain, Angus Mackay. In the township of Evag, William Gunn. Total, 17 crofters.

27,753. You are giving all these names of your own knowledge?—Well, I have seen most of them, and I have seen their immediate descendants. I was resident on the place till I was 27 years of age.

27,754. *Mr Sutherland.*—Were you born at Golval and resided there till you were 27 years of age?—Yes.

27,755. That is to the north side of the river Halladale, across the bridge?—The east side of the river.

27,756. And when the people were located there, did they come down past the line of the present bridge?—Not past Hachran bridge in my time. What was north of Hachran burn was made a sheep farm by the former proprietor.

27,757. How far up did the sheep farm go at the time you refer to when the people were there?—It came to this burn from Bighouse.

27,758. And when were its boundaries extended farther up?—In the year 1832.

27,759. Up to Caragarry-beg?—Yes. I think it was two years in the hands of the Sutherland family before they were evicted.

27,760. Did they evict them immediately after they came into possession?—They came into possession in 1829 and the evictions took place in 1832.

Melvich, Sutherlandshire.

27,761. And when was Kirkton cleared?—That had been cleared before.

Robert Campbell.

27,762. And when was the upper part cleared? Was it at that time?—Oh, no, it was cleared before.

27,763. Before that date?—Yes.

27,764. It was cleared before the Earl of Sutherland became possessed of it?—Yes, long before. This is all that was cleared since the Duke of Sutherland became the possessor.

27,765. Those whose names you gave us?—No, I have only given the names for three townships: I left the other portion.

27,766. Is it your opinion that the people could be very well off there if they were put there now?—Yes, it is.

27,767. And do you think they would be better off there than some people are in Portskerra?—Oh, yes.

27,768. You have no doubt of that?—No.

27,769. How many families are in Portskerra?—Between 50 and 60, and some cottars.

27,770. You heard what was said about building houses. Let us assume for a moment that you are going to put the people back there. Take the people of Portskerra, as many of them as would wish to go or could be accommodated at Golval, and supposing they had houses to build, do you think there would be any very great difficulty with regard to that?—I cannot say; but there would be no great difficulty in building the house if a man got the offices built for him,—the byre, the stable, and the barn: he could then easily provide a house for himself.

27,771. And is it your opinion that if he got time to provide these offices he would ultimately do so, after he settled there, without any help?—Oh, yes, the place itself would soon help him; a good place like Golval.

27,772. What is the distance of Golval from Portskerra?—About two miles.

27,773. It is that by the road?—Yes.

27,774. But suppose a man were going away there to build a house and work at it in the morning, could he not go there and come back to his present house at night?—The fishermen would not be inclined.

27,775 But supposing there were men who wished to go?—Oh, yes.

27,776. So that they could actually have houses there that would suit them until they got the offices, working from their present places?—Oh, yes.

27,777. And are you of opinion that there are people in Melvich and Portskerra who would be glad to get the offer of making new places, either in Golval or in Kirkton?—I could not say; I think the fishermen are disposed to be near the sea.

27,778. But take the case of a crofter; do you think any there would be so disposed?—There might be; I have not questioned any of them on the subject.

27,779. But you will know the general feeling pretty well among the people from your residence among them?—As a rule they are not fishermen in Melvich, but they are disposed to take crofts.

27,780. You think they would be more disposed to take crofts if they could get them?—Yes.

27,781. But do you think they would be in better circumstances there?—To be sure they would; they would have better pasture and more of it.

27,782. With regard to pasture, the Portskerra and Melvich crofters hold their pasture in common, don't they?—Yes.

27,783. It goes back now I understand to the top of Beinn-Ruadh?—Yes, or thereabout.

27,784. How far did it go before it was extended?—It would be within half-a-mile I daresay, or perhaps less.

27,785. From there?—Yes, from this side. It was the people on the Strathy side who benefited most by the extension.

27,786. They get more than you?—Yes.

27,787. When was that extension given?—It would be about six or seven years ago. [*Mr Box, factor.*—In 1884.]

27,788. And was it the Crofters Commission that fixed the rent for it?—I don't think there was any rent put upon it.

27,789. It was just given as an extension of the holdings at the rent they then paid?—Yes, it was stated by the estate, it was not requested to be given by the Commission.

27,790. The rent was not fixed as the other extensions round about were by the Crofters Commission?—No, I did not hear anything about that.

27,791. Has it done them any appreciable good, the extension?—Oh, yes, there is no doubt of that, for it is tolerably good.

27,792. Do you know the extent of it?—No.

27,793. Have you any idea?—No, I have made no inquiries, or concerned myself about that. It was considered a great boon to get it.

27,794. And you think it has done some good?—Oh, yes, and the late Duke has fenced it too.

27,795. Do you think a still greater extension would be a still greater good?—Well, I could not say: perhaps they may have enough in proportion to their arable lands: they cannot all winter what they have in summer.

27,796. *Mr Forsyth.*—There are a large number of small crofts at Portskerra. How do the people mostly get their living?—By fish: they prosecute the fishing.

27,797. Are there many holders at Portskerra who do not fish?—No, there are not many.

27,798. Do you fish yourself?—No.

27,799. How do you get your living, because your croft is a very small one?—I have been occupied as a blacksmith.

27,800. Now, how many people could be comfortably accommodated at Portskerra, so far as the present land goes?—It is fully occupied at present.

27,801. But I think you would admit that the crofts in Portskerra are far too small to maintain a family?—Yes, if they had to depend entirely on them; but it is on the sea they are dependent, not on the crofts.

27,802. Could you give me any idea how many men there are in Portskerra who are not regular fishermen?—No, there are very few.

27,803. They are nearly all fishermen?—Yes, all fishermen.

27,804. Would you recommend that these fishermen should have larger crofts?—I could not say, but they cannot be enlarged here at all events.

27,805. If they were removed, or if they moved to new places, they would have to give up the sea?—Yes, probably.

27,806. Do you not think that if the crofts at Portskerra were rather larger,—smaller in number, but bigger in size, the fishermen would be able to make a good living?—Certainly.

27,807. Especially if the harbour were improved?—If a harbour was to be made perhaps it might reduce the crofts.

27,808. Reduce the number of fishing holdings, and increase their size, is that your idea, so as to keep the fishermen near the sea, with a larger holding, and with an improved harbour?—An improved harbour would perhaps lead to the place being laid out in feus if the fishing would prosper, and they had accommodation for boats. There might perhaps be hundreds of boats fishing here if there was a harbour to afford them shelter.

27,809. And that would add to the prosperity of the place you think?—Yes.

27,810. Are there in Portskerra, do you think, people who wish to take the large holdings we have heard of to-day already, that is to say to leave the sea and go to the land entirely?—I don't think so.

27,811. According to your idea then it is a question of improving the fishermen's position here so far as Portskerra is concerned (I am not talking of Melvich at present); the question is how best to improve the condition of the fishermen?—A good harbour is the only way of improving their condition.

27,812. Could that be at all easily done here?—Yes.

27,813. Have you any idea of the expenditure required?—For a very good harbour perhaps £20,000. Melvich, Sutherlandshire.

27,814. Would not less do?—The half of that might make a good harbour too; and less might do. Robert Campbell.

27,815. Do you speak as regards Melvich too? Do you represent Melvich?—No.

27,816. There are other people coming forward to speak as regards Melvich, are there?—I am not sure; there may be.

27,817. But you are representing Portskerra?—No, I came here to give information about Golval.

27,818. You do not represent Portskerra generally?—No.

27,819. *The Chairman.*—Were you appointed as a delegate?—Yes, to give information regarding Golval and the neighbouring townships.

27,820. In any of the evidence given here to-day, are you representing the fishermen of Portskerra?—No.

27,821. You have just been answering Mr Forsyth's questions as a resident in Portskerra, who knows a good deal about the place?—Just so.

27,822. And have given your own individual impressions?—Yes.

WILLIAM MACLEOD, Crofter, Achina, Farr (44)—*examined* William Macleod.

27,823. *The Chairman.*—Are you a crofter?—Yes.

27,824. Was your rent dealt with by the Crofters Commission?—Yes.

27,825. What was your old rent?—17s. 3d.

27,826. And what is the new rent?—With the extension of hill pasture £2, 9s.

27,827. I see you have a holding of 1½ acres arable, and 2½ acres outrun, with a share of 2953 acres of hill common to the townships of Achina, Achneiskich, Ardneiskich, Clerkhill, Crask, Dalcharn, Farr, Newlands, Rhian-chaitel, and Swordly West.

27,828. Have you a written statement?—Yes.

27,829. Just read it.—To the Royal Commission, (Highlands and Islands, 1892).—Having seen from the public prints and advertisements issued in the name of your honourable Commission that you had been appointed by Royal Warrant to inquire what land in the county of Sutherland, among other counties, now used as deer forests, grouse moor, or other sporting purposes, or as grazing not occupied by crofters or other small tenants, was, in your opinion, capable of being cultivated to profit or otherwise advantageously occupied by crofters or other small tenants, the crofters of the Kirkton division of the parish of Farr, at a public meeting held for the purpose, appointed me to give such evidence on their behalf as would enable your honourable Commission to carry out her Majesty's commands. I will, therefore, endeavour to limit myself briefly to the points on which you desire evidence.

There is, in our opinion, plenty of land, such as you are requested to report upon, in the parish of Farr. We refer particularly to Strathnaver, which previous to the year 1817 had a population of upwards of 2000 souls. How they were cleared out, and the attendant horrors, are now matters of history. We are the descendants of the cleared out people who were driven to poverty and untold hardship on the rocky and barren sea-shore, and we would be only too willing to return to Strathnaver to-morrow if we got the opportunity.

As we consider the evidence of your Honours will be the best evidence of the fitness of Strathnaver for profitable and advantageous occupation that can be brought before you, we will be glad to point out the localities in Strathnaver to which we refer.

I have to inform your Honours that there are sixty townships in Strathnaver suitable for occupation by crofters, and from which the people were removed at the time of the Strathnaver clearances, and had all their houses and lands confiscated, and were placed on the barren sea-shore without any provision being made for them.

Melvich, Sutherlandshire.

William Macleod.

I am requested to inform your Honours that there are plenty of people in the Kirkton division who are prepared to remove to Strathnaver on condition that they get it at its fair agricultural value and not at the value placed upon that portion assigned to them recently from the Skelpick farm, namely, 1s. 1½d. per acre, while the big farmers in many cases do not pay 2 per cent. on money expended on improvements, and nothing for the land.

In conclusion, we trust your Honours will submit an impartial report to Her Majesty's Government on behalf of the downtrodden Highlanders, and that Parliament will pass an Act which will restore to us the lands from which our forefathers were mercilessly burnt out. (Signed) WILLIAM MACLEOD.

27,830. You mentioned 60 townships?—Yes.

27,831. You did not give us their names?—I have not got the names here.

27,832. I think I can supply that. In the *Oban Times* of 15th April 1893 there was published a list of the townships,* with the number of families in each, and the number of arable acres, that being taken from the work I have already referred to,—the general view of the county of Sutherland, presented by Captain John Henderson to the Board of Agriculture in 1815, and the names, which are divided into two lists, are as follows:—

Strathnaver Townships before 1815.
East Side of the River.

	No. of Families.	No. of Arable Acres.
Mudale,	10	48
Alltnaharra,	2	12
Baghardy,	2	8
Clibrick,	12	50
Blairdow or Salach,	2	8
Rhehalavag,	10	36
Nibad,	2	7
Rhecopag,	1	4
Achacoul,	3	30
Achaness,	11	80
Auldanlaghert,	2	8
Auldanaba,	1	...
Badinilled [Bad-an-leathaid],	1	...
Corihuran,	4	20
Trudorsag,	18	54
Dalharral,	4	...
Rosehall [Rossal],	13	...
Achness,	2	13
Rheloisg,	4	30
Ishlampy,	2	9
Rhephail,	5	30
Garvie,	1	1
Ravigill,	11	44
Dunvedan,	7	40
Achabuie,	1	4
Skelpick,	9	60
Dalnadroit,	2	7
Rhenavey,	3	30
Achkinlochy,	9	...
Achilnaborgy,	8	...
Achana,	7	...
Dalcharn,	4	14
Bettyhill,	2	14
New-Lands of Farr,	10	30
Achimore,	2	16
Farr,	10	36
Kirtomy,	9	30
Swordley,	5	16
Clerkhill,	1	30
East Side Total,	212	992

West Side of the River.

Tubeg Mudale,	4	30
Knockdow,	1	7
Grubmore,	14	50
Denachory,	3	16
Grubbeg,	7	30
Kencail [Ceann-na-Coille],	5	16
Kitsary,	2	8
Rhicork,	1	3
Syre,	14	65
Langdale,	18	70
Achatraltyre,	1	7
Leidstinachory,	1	8
Letterbeg,	4	30
Achnaclach,	2	16
Polruskerny,	1	7
Skaill,	5	50
Wood of Skaill,	2	8
Carnachy,	12	66
Dalhorikill,	5	16
Acharagary,	4	16
Dallingarsh,	3	15
Apogill,	1	16
Lechvairn,	6	24
Invernaver,	10	30
West Side Total,	126	614

27,833. That as I make out is 63 in all; the number you gave was 60?—Yes. I have another statement here regarding the land rent and the sporting rent.

27,834. Kindly read it?—*Rental* of the Kirkton division of the parish of Farr.

	Land Rent. £ s.	Shooting and Angling Rent £
Achnabourn,	180	...
Mudale and Landale,	750	...
Borgie (including Achnabourn shooting),	125	150
Clibrick,	600	...
Beuklebreck,	...	1000
Lochnaver,	...	275
Locha Choire,	...	400
Syre shootings,	...	350
Angling,	...	795
Rhifail,	600	300
Skelpick,	180	450
Altnaharra hotel and land,	100	...
Bettyhill hotel and land,	50	...
Fiscany ground officer,	10	...
Fiscany crofts,	443 9	...
	£3038 9	3720
Total,	£6758 9s.	

	£	s.
Whereof Farmers pay	2595	
Crofters	443	9
Sportsmen	2925	
Anglers	795	
Total,	£6758	9

27,835. Do those whom you represent subsist by fishing?—Very few of them. There is another delegate coming after me from the fishing township in the district.

* According to Mr George Mackay, County Councillor for Farr, the Old Strath-Naver townships were as follows:—

East Side of River, proceeding upwards towards its source:—Aird-an-iasgaich, Ach-an-iasgaich, Blaran-odhar, Dalcharn, Adhina, Kylile, Ach-coille-nam-Boirgin, Ach-an-lochaidh, Raonbuidhe, Dail-a'-mhuillinn, Sceilpig, Achadh-mor, Ach-an-eilein, Dun-Bhidein, Rabhaigil, Garbh, Rheaphail, Innse-lampaidh, Rhealoisg, Dail-mhina, Ach-a'-phris, Ach-an-Ràth, Raomasdail, Rosail, Bad-an-losgainn, Bad-an-leth-leo'id, Dail-Harol, Truidairsgaig, Ach-an-Eas, Ach-a'-chuil, Rhea-chopag, Coire-h-iubhran, Allt-an-laoghard, Allt-na-Bà, Coire-na-feárra, Nibad, Rhea-shealabhag, Blar-dubh, Clibrig, Strath-Bhagastaidh, Cnoc-an-Duin, Taobh-mor-Mudail, Allt-na-h-eirthe.

West Side of the River, proceeding down the Strath towards the sea:—Bad-an-t-seabhaig, Taobh-beag-Mudail, Cnoc-dubh, Rudha-'chaisteil, Grum-mor, Achadh-mor, Grum-beag, Dail-shobhrach, Clais-mhairtinn, Ceann-na-coille, Rhea-dorch, Ceadsaraidh, Rhea-choirce, Saghair, Bad-gallag, Achadh-braigh-Shaghair, Breaclait, Lang-dail, Sgail, Achadh-mhaoil-Duainidh, Staonachdairidh, Leitir-bheag, Poll-Ruisginidh, Craicirnis, Dail-Leusaraidh, An-talamh-ur, Ach-shalmaidh, Carnachadh, Dail-Thorcuil, Achadh-Cheargairidh, Dail-Bhiogais, Dail-Thorraisgil, Aipigil, Ach-nam-Buithrin, Leag-bhuirne and Innirnamhair.

27,836. What district is that?—Kirtomy; most of the fishermen are in that township.

27,837. How do those subsist who do not depend upon fishing?—They have to go to all parts of the world for work, some to America.

27,838. They do not depend entirely on their holdings?—They cannot.

27,839. But they make their livelihood partly from the holdings and partly from outside labour?—Just so.

27,840. I would like to ask you this general question. Do the people who wish to change their holdings look in the main for assistance in setting themselves up in their new holdings; or do they look to doing for themselves without assistance?—A number of them would do it themselves, but that would depend very much upon the conditions on which they would get the land.

27,841. What do you say as to the majority; would the majority do for themselves, or would they look for assistance?—I believe the majority would do it, if they saw a good sign before them that they would get land at its prairie value.

27,842. Assume that they got land at a Fair Rent, —I mean a Fair Rent in the whole circumstances of the case—do the majority look forward to getting assistance, or do they look forward to doing the thing themselves?—I would not go to the majority with it, but I am safe to say that a large number of them would do without any assistance providing that they would secure the land on favourable terms, and saw they could make a comfortable living on it.

27,843. But I understand you also to say that a considerable number would require assistance?—Yes, I believe so.

27,844. *Mr Gordon.*—What size of holding would you suggest?—I could not say much regarding pasture, but for arable I would suggest between 20 and 30 acres, so that a family might live comfortably on it.

27,845. You say the extent of arable at that time was said to be between 900 and 1000 acres in the whole Strath?—Yes.

27,846. Well, if you were to give 30 acres to each you would not accommodate more than about 30 families supposing you had the whole Strath, according to that statement?—But there could be more taken in. I don't look merely to the ground that is there in the meantime.

27,847. Is there much land, in your opinion, that could be reclaimed in addition to the old arable land? —I am certain of that.

27,848. How many people do you suppose the Strath would hold if it was all repeopled in holdings of the size you mention?—That is a thing that I have not studied.

27,849. I am afraid you have not studied it, because I think with holdings of 20 or 30 acres you would soon find your land exhausted,—not only all the old arable land but all the reclaimable land?—Well, I would not like to leave myself unless I could see my way to live on the new holding.

27,850. What I would like to point out is that it is possible you might hold a very erroneous impression as to the number of people you could put into the Strath in holdings of a size to occupy them fully?—Yes, but the Strath is long.

27,851. No doubt. I don't know much about the Strath yet, but I judge from what you have said yourself and what the Chairman has read out?—Oh, there is plenty of land to be reclaimed in it.

27,852. I am not quite sure of that; we will see that by-and-bye. But I am afraid there is a good deal of reclamation that would not pay very well; that is to say they would not repay the man who was at the cost of making them?—In what respect?

27,853. In respect that they would cost too much to reclaim to be of any value to you afterwards.—What did it cost for what was taken in before in the Strath?

27,854. I do not go upon the cost of these recent improvements at all.—It is the former improvements I look to.

27,855. That is what I am looking to. I am supposing that a man can take in land at about £10 an acre, and I don't think he could do it for very much less, but he should be able to do that unless the ground requires much draining; and if it does require much draining he is better to leave it alone. But I am supposing you could take in the land such as it is at a cost not exceeding £10 an acre, and I am afraid that there is not a great extent of land that could be added to that which was arable land previously to the evictions?—Yes, higher up than Rhifail.

27,856. On dry land?—Yes.

27,857. Is it green or heather?—It is a mixture.

27,858. Are you acquainted with the land up there? —I do not go up very often, but I have gone at different times.

27,859. Is that glen liable to frost?—Not so far as is known to me.

27,860. I observed yesterday at Rhifail that instead of planting their potatoes at the foot of the farm where you would think they would be most convenient for use during harvest time at anyrate, they put them away up to the very top of the field; the fact of their doing so impresses me with the idea that they were afraid of frost if they had put them lower down?—Really, I cannot say much regarding that, but I know one thing for certain, it is they who have the crop.

27,861. This is a very essential matter, and if you speak about a place of that kind it is very necessary that you should know about that?—The like of us cannot understand everything connected with this Commission. Very few delegates appearing before the Commission can come out with everything just with certainty. [*The Chairman.*—We are glad to take all we can get from you]. One thing I am certain of is this, that it is they who have the crop up there and not us.

27,862. They have the crop?—Yes, the corn crop.

27,863. You have some pretty good pasture down beside you, but the great mistake of the crofters seems to be that they invariably overstock?—Every one tries to put on as much as he can.

27,864. You are a crofter yourself?—Yes.

27,865. Have you sheep?—Yes.

27,866. How many?—Fourteen ewes.

27,867. Now, assuming that there were new settlements made in that Strath and that part of the hill ground was allocated to the new townships, would you suggest that this pasture should be occupied as a club farm, or, as Mr Mackenzie suggested, each man having his own stock?—I would go in for that myself.

27,868. For what?—For every one holding his own stock.

27,869. Is there not a little danger of the weak ones going to the wall in that case?—I cannot say very much regarding that.

27,870. I am afraid that is not an infrequent occurrence. Would it not be a fairer thing for the crofters all round that the stock should be a common stock?—The same as they have just now.

27,871. A common stock which would belong to no man in particular, but to the township and under the management of a qualified shepherd?—That is something on the old style again.

27,872. I don't know what was the old style but I think that is the fair style, and every man gets his own? —That is just what is called the farms again, the same as they are constituted in the meantime, and the same as the farmers have. That is not what we want: it is an extension of new holdings.

27,873. Very well, you get your holdings, but suppose ten of you together, that would be 400 sheep you would have: that number would be sufficient to employ a shepherd?—But where is the arable land now for it?

27,874. You were telling me there was plenty in the glen?—I am assuming there was a certain portion of the glen set aside for ten families.

27,875. *The Chairman.*—What Mr Gordon means to ask is whether it would not be more advantageous for the crofters to manage their common stock through a qualified shepherd, or whether it would be better for each to manage his own?—I would go in for that in the hill.

27,876. But whether would it be more profitable and more advantageous altogether that they should have

Melvich, Sutherlandshire.

William Macleod.

ten crofters, say each with 40 sheep, in a common stock on the hill managed by a committee with a qualified shepherd; or should each crofter look after his own sheep?—I would go in for them having them in common in the hill.

27,877. In the form of a club?—Yes, for the new holdings; each one would have his own holding and the pasture in common.

27,878. Managed by a committee?—Yes.

27,879. And with a qualified shepherd?—Yes.

27,880. *Mr Forsyth.*—You mean the stock in common as well as the land in common?—No, I don't mean the arable land.

27,881. But the hill land?—Yes.

27,882. You mean sheep stock on the hill held in common on the club farm system as well as the hill land held in common, in fact both land and stock on the hill in common?—Yes.

27,883. *The Chairman.*—And each man having his own arable land and outrun to himself?—Yes.

27,884. That is what Mr Gordon meant?—I had misunderstood him.

27,885. *Mr Sutherland.*—You have heard the statement that was read out by the Chairman as to the number of people and the number of acres arable in Strathnaver?—Yes.

27,886. The division gives 5 acres arable to each of these families?—At that time.

27,887. That is the estimate which was made by Captain Henderson, that each family had 5 acres of arable land. I suppose you have frequently heard it asserted that the people were turned out of Strathnaver in order to improve their condition?—Many a time I have read it and heard it.

27,888. You are the descendant of one of those who were turned out?—Yes.

27,889. You presumably were turned out of a 5 acre holding of land?—I assume that.

27,890. And what is the size of your holding now?—One and a half acre.

27,891. You were improved by turning you out of a 5 acre holding to a 1½ acre holding?—Yes, your honour; a great improvement.

27,892. Would you be inclined to reverse the improvement now? Do you think you would be better with a 5 acre holding in Strathnaver than a 1½ acre holding in Achina?—That is what brought me here to-day.

27,893. You have heard difficulties started about stocking holdings?—I hear them every day in the year from some people.

27,894. Have you ever heard a complaint that you overstock your present holdings?—We can put the stock on there as thick as we like.

27,895. No one offers the slightest objection?—No.

27,896. They complain that you overstock your present grazing?—Some do.

27,897. And that if you got new holdings you will not be able to stock them?—They say so.

27,898. They say so?—But let them try it.

27,899. Don't you see that in the one case they complain of your having too much stock and in the other case of your having none at all?—Yes.

27,900. But your opinion is that if you have too much stock on the poor place you would be able to stock a good place?—Just so.

27,901. That you think is a natural argument to use?—Yes.

27,902. Then, with regard to the prospects of success if you went there, you will admit, I have no doubt, that the increasing of the amount of arable land there would enable you to occupy the grazing to greater advantage?—Certainly.

27,903. You have seen reclamations, have you not in Strathnaver?—Yes.

27,904. Who paid for them?—Dunrobin or the Duke or what they call it.

27,905. The proprietor paid for them?—Yes.

27,906. It was not the large farmer who paid for them?—They don't pay for anything there; they get everything done for nothing.

27,907. What do you mean by that statement?—I have that in my statement. As far as we can judge they do not pay 2 per cent. on the outlay.

27,908. They do not reclaim land?—They do not reclaim land, but they sit and live in the best of our land.

27,909. And the land that is reclaimed is paid for by the proprietor?—Yes.

27,910. And they do not pay the same rent as you pay?—Certainly not. The rental is here and the estate books and the acreage, and it is easily known.

27,911. Then another obstacle that is sometimes put forward, I don't know if you hear it much, but I will ask you about it,—the fear of frost?—Well, there is always some fear from the like of that.

27,912. But do you think that the potato crop suffers much from frost in Strathnaver?—How have they always got potatoes there?

27,913. That is what I was going to ask you. Do you know the shepherd at Achnaburin?—Yes.

27,914. Do you remember where his land is?—Yes.

27,915. Where is it?—Beside the river.

27,916. How many feet above the river?—About two or three feet.

27,917. On the margin?—Yes.

27,918. And how far from the river?—Close to it.

27,919. Down at the river bank?—Yes.

27,920. Did you see it yesterday?—Yes.

27,921. Did you see the good potatoes he has?—I did not see the potatoes themselves, but I saw the shaws.

27,922. That is what I mean; did they show signs of frost?—No, there was no appearance of it.

27,923. Are you of opinion that there really would be substantial damage done to potatoes or any other crop there provided the people cultivated the flats by the riverside?—There is no difficulty in that; I don't see any difficulty in the way.

27,924. Do you know, as a matter of fact, that potatoes are sometimes frosted?—Sometimes they are with the crofters, with the poorest in the place.

27,925. Where you are at present?—Yes.

27,926. And over the country?—Yes.

27,927. Do you think now it would be greater there than over the country generally?—I don't think so; for we very often get potatoes down the Strath for seed.

27,928. You get seed potatoes from Strathnaver?—We do at times; I have seen potatoes coming down for seed and potatoes going up for seed.

27,929. I suppose you can say generally that you know the sentiments of the people round about?—I think I should.

27,930. Did you follow what was stated by the Chairman, with regard to the number of tenants that were in Bettyhill at the time of which he spoke?—Yes.

27,931. How many did he say there were?—Was it not two? [*The Chairman.*—Two with 14 acres arable in 1815.]

27,932. Did that strike you as he was reading?—I was noticing it at the time.

27,933. How many are there now?—None except the hotel.

27,934. Then the other places; how many families are in Dalcharn now?—Six I think.

27,935. And there were only four then?—Yes.

27,936. Do you know Clerkhill?—Yes.

27,937. How many families are there now?—I think six.

27,938. Do you remember how many were mentioned in the list?—One.

27,939. Then, we may take it generally, I suppose, that the people who were in the townships above have disappeared, and that there are more down below than there were before?—Yes.

27,940. That would naturally follow. Then, the reclaiming of land you think would follow the settlement of the people there, would it not?—Yes, I have no doubt of it.

27,941. And a great deal more could be made arable than the people had when they were there before?—There is no doubt of that; that is visible enough.

27,942. What makes you think that?—The land is lying yonder, and there is nothing to do but to improve it the same as was done before.

27,943. Where?—In any extension that the crofters may get there are so many acres ready for the plough, and in a little time he could trench and take in more in connection with the green.

27,944. You think that in the case of the small holder the tendency would be continually to reclaim land?—Certainly.

27,945. In order to get better wintering for his stock?—Yes.

27,946. And do you think there would be a number of people ready to take holdings there if they got the opportunity on reasonable conditions?—There is no doubt of that.

27,947. *Mr Macaulay, Solicitor, Golspie.*—With regard to this place where there were six crofters, Clerkhill; do you know anything of the party who had this holding before?—That is Gordon.

27,948. Yes, was he a crofter?—No, he was a tacksman.

27,949. *The Chairman.*—Is that all you wish to say?—There is one matter I omitted to state, and that is regarding the grazings. In our district the whole of the pasture is common, and the people dispute very much about it, and requested me to mention the matter. They have it all in common, and the hotelkeeper has the privilege of the hill which they have no right to. I stated before your lordship, while the Crofters Commission sat at Farr, that they had no right to the old pasture and yet they held a stock there, sometimes about 100 sheep. Now, it is very hard on the crofters there if they have to pay for the whole pasture, while the estate reaps the benefit two fold. Now, Mr Box is here and he can state the facts better than I can, and I would like to know about it as I was requested to ask.

27,949*a*. That is rather a subject which falls to be dealt with by the Crofters Commission; we cannot go beyond the terms of our remit. Matters are occasionally mentioned which are not quite germane to this inquiry, and as we do not wish to stop the evidence we may allow them to pass: but that is a point that is not before us.—We must look to it somewhere; we cannot go on paying for the hill pasture while the estate reaps the benefit of it. Your lordship stated at the Court there that the hotel has no right to the hill pasture, and still they have the stock on it.

27,950. Which hotel do you mean?—Bettyhill. I don't refer to the tenant at all, but only to the hotel. It is the estate that gets the benefit of that, not the hotel so far as is known to us. They get the rent, I believe, £50, and the tenant has liberty to stock the hill for which we pay.

27,951. I am afraid we can hardly go into the merits of that question in this Commission. Is there any other matter you wish to refer to?—I omitted to say that I am a member of the Parochial Board; and thus have an intimate knowledge of the parish.

JOHN MACKAY, Newlands, Farr (32)—*examined.*

27,952. *The Chairman.*—Are you a crofter?—I am a crofter's son.

27,953. What is your father's name?—George Mackay.

27,954. Your father holds 2 acres 3 roods arable and 1 acre outrun, with a share in 2953 acres of hill pasture?—Yes.

27,955. Have you a written statement?—I have some notes, but they are something similar to Macleod's evidence. I want to refer to a point or two that were not taken up.

27,956. Please do so in your own way?—It has often been asserted in support of the Sutherland clearances that crops will not grow in Strathnaver. Finer crops of oats, hay, turnips, potatoes, and garden produce can hardly be found, and crops can be raised to advantage in Strathnaver when they are a failure along the coast. I remember seed potatoes being supplied to the crofters from the farm of Syre when the crofters had none.

This year the corn and hay crops were in the stackyard at Syre about the middle of August, whilst along the sea coast the crofters' corn was out five weeks later. If it was an exceptional year it was an exceptional year all over, and it proves that crops can be gathered in the Strath earlier than along the coast.

There are hundreds of acres ready for the plough, while thousands can be reclaimed and made into good land. The crofters are prepared to take the land at a fair rent.

The sheep farm of Rhifail is 12 miles by 5, at a rental of £670. On this farm alone the Duke spent on improvements between £8000 and £10,000, while the crofters reclaimed, fenced, and drained their lands and built houses at their own expense.

Mr Sellar holds 25 miles in length, or 43,300 acres, at less than 4½d. per acre, while the crofters pay 1s. 1½d. per acre for the tail of Skelpick farm. When the crofters succeeded in reclaiming land, building houses, and growing crops on the miserable patches allotted to them, it is certain that they would be successful in Strathnaver with from 20 to 30 acres arable, with pasture in proportion. Some, no doubt, would require assistance to stock the holding and build houses. Others would be able to do it all themselves.

There should be no difficulty in getting a grant from Government when there was enough money in the Treasury to banish the Highlanders to the wilds of America.

(Signed) JOHN MACKAY.

27,957. Can you mention those parts of Strathnaver where frost never was seen?—Rossal for one place. Grumbeg is always clear of frost.

27,958. Any more?—It was very seldom seen on the low ground at Langdale, especially at one place, a park there close to the river. It is a very rare thing for the shepherd at Skail to have ever seen frost on his potatoes.

27,959. Would you say that the potato crop in Strathnaver is a more certain crop than the potato crop raised by the crofters?—Yes, certainly.

27,960. Are crops more liable to suffer from frost on the crofters' land as at present occupied than in Strathnaver?—Not more, but they are as subject to it along the coast as at Strathnaver. The last year that I saw frost in Strathnaver the crops all the way from Portskerra here to Skerra West were touched with it, and they were all black in one morning.

27,961. What year was that?—Four or five years ago.

27,962. That was an exceptionally bad year from frost?—Yes, but the crofters' potatoes were equally black with those on Strathnaver.

27,963. Do the crofters with the lands they have at present more frequently lose their potato crop from frost than those who grow potatoes in Strathnaver?—Generally speaking, they do, because some years when the potatoes were frosted along the coast here there was none of it at Strathnaver; but there are very few who raise potatoes there except the shepherds.

27,964. *Mr Sutherland.*—You rather astonished me with regard to the difference in price that the proprietor gets for the land from the large farmer and the small: are you certain of your figures?—Such as I can make out it is so. There are 43,300 acres rented for £750 according to the valuation roll.

27,965. I just want to know where you get the figures?—I took them from the valuation roll, and, of course, I made up the total myself: if I went wrong it is in making that calculation. I took the acreage from the "Sportsman's Guide" where it is given at some hundred acres less than it appears by the map. It is 12 miles by 5 on the map, which I think gives 48,300 acres and it is only 35,000 acres in the "Sportsman's Guide."

27,966. You are referring at the present time to the farm of Rhifail?—Yes.

27,967. You said it pays 5½d. an acre?—Yes.

Melvich, Sutherlandshire.

John Mackay.

27,968. And you state also that the proprietor spent from £8000 to £10,000 upon it?—Yes.

27,969. So that after an investment of £8000 to £10,000 upon this farm it only pays 5½d. an acre?—Yes.

27,970. And your further statement is that the crofters for the extension of holdings they were given for the lower end of Skelpick are paying 1s. 1½d. per acre?—Exactly so. [*Mr Gordon.*—Who fixed that rent?—The Crofters Commission.]

27,971. How many times is the one greater than the other,—nearly three times?—Yes.

27,972. So the crofters are paying almost three times as much per acre as the large farmers?—Yes, and if the improvements are taken into account five times more. The crofter gets nothing done in the way of improvements; they had to make their own improvements, and as they did that the rents were always raised.

27,973. I am referring particularly just now to the exact data we have got as to what is paid per acre by the crofters for the extension that was given to them?—Yes.

27,974. You stated also that one holding was 25 miles long?—Yes, Mr Sellar's farm; from the top of the holding at Mudale down to the Carnachy burn.

27,975. That is the farm of Syre?—Yes.

27,976. You think that is a little too big?—Yes, I think it is.

27,977. In view of the holdings of 1½ acres down at the foot?—Yes.

27,978. But that is not the whole that Mr Sellar has got: has he not also a farm at Golspie?—Yes, I think he has.

27,979. And has he a farm anywhere else?—I don't know: he had two or three on that side before.

27,980. You think that is a state of matters that would bear a little remedying?—Yes.

27,981. You know Strathnaver very well, do you?—Yes, I have been there since I was a child; since I was twelve years of age I have been in it more or less.

27,982. And you think it is a far better subject than the rocky shore down here?—Certainly.

27,983. Do you think there would be any danger of people not taking small holdings if they got them?—Not in the least; they would take them fast.

27,984. And you think the condition of things there is favourable?—Yes, certainly.

27,985. There is a road right through the glen?—Yes.

27,986. Communication from end to end?—Yes; to Kinbrace Railway Station, and to Lairg Railway Station, and down to Bettyhill.

27,987. And you think all these things would tend to success?—Certainly, there was nothing of that when the crofters had it; they had no communication with the outside world except on horseback.

27,988. So that if the conditions were favourable in the olden times they are still more favourable now?—Three times more.

27,989. And is there a good opportunity at the present time to make a change back to the old arrangement?—I think so.

27,990. What is the circumstance that, in your opinion, makes it favourable at the present time?—I hear a grumble made about the crofters having too much stock, and, therefore, I think the best thing is for them to get land to put the stock on.

27,991. Then, from the other side, as to the large holdings, do you think they are a great success?—No, I don't think so.

27,992. What is, in your opinion, the reason for this want of success on the part of the large farmers at the present time? You have heard of reductions of rent given to them, have you not?—I believe that the land is now about exhausted, and the one stock being kept on it just destroys it, so that stock cannot be worked profitably.

27,993. What do you mean exactly by the land being exhausted?—It has never been turned up for the last eighty or eighty-five years, and thus it has got into its present state. I have seen myself at Rhifail farm, the ploughman setting the heather of the old crofters' ground on fire, and coming in with the plough after that, so that proves clearly that it was not feeding for sheep or anything else. And there are hundreds of acres to-day on Strathnaver where no person could say there had ever been a crofter unless they knew it; the ground is all under heather.

Melvich, Sutherlandshire.

John Mackay.

27,994. You heard little differences of opinion expressed here to-day with regard to the green spots on sheep farms?—Yes.

27,995. It was asserted that the value was given to the pasture by these old green spots?—Yes.

27,996. Do you believe that that is true?—No. Of course, the value is given to the pasture by these; but I see that crofters have very little of these green spots in their pasture, and yet their stock is equally successful.

27,997. But I was referring rather to the value given to the sheep farms by these green spots?—Oh, certainly, they make out that that is the value.

27,998. Who gave these places the value they now have?—The crofters.

27,999. When?—Before they were evicted.

28,000. And that value the crofters have been losing ever since?—That has been taken from them, and they never got any compensation.

28,001. So you think it is the result of the former industry that is getting exhausted?—Exactly.

28,002. And, therefore, the large sheep-farming system is going?—Yes, fast.

28,003. What then would be, in your opinion, a reasonable cure for the present state of things?—To put the crofters back again and give them proper holdings.

28,004. You would take one yourself if you got the chance?—Certainly.

28,005. *The Chairman.*—What sort of holding would you desire to have in Strathnaver?—It would depend greatly on circumstances. There might be some families with five or six members, and these would be capable of working from 20 to 30 acres; and there might be others again with only one or two, and 10 acres perhaps would be as much as they would be able to have.

28,006. You would have holdings varying from 10 to 20 or 30 acres arable?—Yes.

28,007. What size of holding would you yourself be inclined to take?—I would just go in for as much as ever I could, if I was to get the chance.

28,008. How many acres arable?—About 20 acres.

28,009. May I ask you would you venture upon that without assistance, or are you one of those who would look for assistance?—It would depend entirely on where we got to work.

28,010. I am assuming that you got the land at what you yourself considered a Fair Rent, whatever it was?—With a little time the most of the crofters could manage. I don't see why if they were successful in coming down to such barren places as this and reclaiming the land, and so forth, without assistance, they should not be equally successful in going back to good land without assistance.

28,011. You think that having done so well as they have done in poor lands they might reasonably be expected to do as well in better land?—Exactly.

28,012. But my question was rather directed to your own case. Would you yourself look for assistance, or would you venture upon this new holding without it,—assuming that you had the land at what you yourself considered a fair rent?—Yes, I would go myself.

28,013. Now, we would like to have your opinion with regard to the club farm system, and I put the question in this form. Do you consider it would be more profitable in every way for crofters to have a common hill ground, with a common stock managed by a committee and in charge of a qualified shepherd; or that each crofter should have his own stock upon this hill ground and manage it himself?—Well, in several ways I believe it would work fully better on the club system. The sheep would have the attention of the

shepherd all the year round, and that would be an advantage, except perhaps in the winter time when there might be a difficulty in feeding them; one man might have three times the number of others, and if there was the necessity to hand-feed the stock the shepherd might have some difficulty in working it in that manner.

28,014. But comparing the two systems over all, which do you think would be the more profitable to the crofters?—I could not say actually.

28,015. Have you had any practical experience of the club farm system?—No, none in our district.

28,016. Each man here looks after his own sheep?—Exactly; or in many cases one man may look after five or six crofters' sheep.

28,017. That is a sort of club farm system in a modified form?—Yes.

28,018. Now, don't you think it would be advantageous to extend that system, and instead of one man looking after five or six of his neighbours' sheep as well as his own, to have a central committee with a qualified shepherd looking after the whole, and honestly divide the profits of the year?—Oh, yes, I believe it would work well enough.

28,019. What do you think would be the better course?—I have not had the experience.

28,020. You are not able to compare the two from want of knowledge?—We had none on this side of the county to give us an idea of how it would work.

28,021. You know of the Grazings Act I daresay?—Yes.

28,022. Has the Grazings Act been adopted in this quarter by any of the townships?—No, I don't think so.

28,023. *Mr Gordon.*—Are you bothered at all with some of the people in your neighbourhood not keeping the sheep clean; not dipping them?—No, it is very seldom that that occurs; of course, sheep may break out unawares to the crofters, and it may happen in places like this where the man perhaps to whom the sheep belong is maybe in America while his sheep are on the hill.

28,024. That is one instance where a club farm would be an advantage, because the sheep would be dipped at regular intervals?—Well, it is generally the case now that all the sheep are dipped at one time, and so many times in the year.

28,025. There is a further advantage which you would come to appreciate very soon if you were accustomed to the system, and that is this, suppose you had 10 crofters with 40 sheep each, or 400 sheep in all: that flock would be all of one character, and the probability is that they would sell for a shilling a head more than in individual lots of 10. A lot of say 150 wedder lambs of one class going to a public sale would certainly fetch a better price than a lot of 20?—They might.

28,026. You speak about the difficulty of wintering; but there is no difficulty in winter any more than in summer, because the turnips or other crops would be stored out of the sheep's way at a certain season of the year, so that the sheep from the hill would have the run of the arable lands in the winter?—Certainly, but they hand-feed all their lambs here in the winter time.

28,027. But the committee might purchase from any tenant who had a little hay to spare; there would be plenty hay grown in the quarter. The shepherd would merely have to purchase hay just the same as another tenant.

28,028. *Mr Macaulay, Solicitor, Golspie.* — You compared the rent of Syre with that of some lands you have, and this extent of 25 miles you seem to think is a grievance. May I ask whether the crofters would be prepared to take the farm at the same rent as is paid by the present tenant?—There are two farms.

28,029. Well, the two farms?—Yes, and I think they would make a very good thing of it at that money.

28,030. You think they would be prepared to take it if they got the offer?—Certainly.

ALEXANDER MACKAY, Crofter, Kirtomy (60) —*examined.*

28,031. *The Chairman.*—You are a crofter?—Yes.

28,032. Have you the holding No. 98 Kirtomy?—Yes.

28,033. I see your arable is 3 acres 3 roods, and your outrun 2 roods. Your old rent was £2, 8s. and your new rent is £3?—Yes.

28,034. And you have a share of 2612 acres common to the townships of Swordly, east of Kirtomy?—Yes.

28,035. Have you a written statement?—Not much. At a meeting of the Strathnaver Branch of the Highland Land Law Reform Association, held on 4th September, I was appointed to represent the townships of Kirtomy and Swordly.

The township of Kirtomy contains 19 crofters and 16 cottars, with a population of about 160, and 50 to 60 acres arable—a poor contrast to the thousands of acres of fine land lying waste in the glens and valleys of Strathnaver and in possession of three or four sheep farmers.

There are about 30 fishermen in Kirtomy, and their gross earnings from the 15th May till the end of August last only averaged about £3 each. By the memorable Strathnaver clearances the township was so crowded by those evicted that it is a hard toil to eke out an existence. At a meeting held in the public school about twenty signed their names as being willing to remove and take crofts in Strathnaver if the Strath is opened up, provided assistance is given by Government for stocking, &c.

(Signed) ALEX. MACKAY.

28,036. There are 19 crofters in Kirtomy?—Yes.

28,037. And 6 cottars?— Ten cottars. There are 16 cottars altogether, and only 10 have outhouses of their own; and there are 19 crofters and 30 fishermen. That includes the crofters.

28,038. I see that in 1815 there were 9 families in Kirtomy, with 30 acres of arable land?—Yes, but there are more to-day.

28,039. These men subsist I daresay mainly by the sea?—Yes, mainly by the sea.

28,040. Do they wish to give up the sea?—Yes, because they are getting tired of it: the fishing has been a clean failure of late years.

28,041. They desire to give up their means of livelihood from the sea and obtain settlements in Strathnaver if settlements can be got?—Yes.

28,042. And to live upon their holdings?—Yes.

28,043. They would wish to have holdings large enough to enable them to make a living without either going to sea, or seeking for labour?—Just to have holdings that would support them the whole year; provided they could get assistance to commence with.

28,044. Is that the unanimous desire of the fishermen?—Yes.

28,045. You said provided they could get assistance?—Yes.

28,046. Is that also the unanimous desire?—The unanimous desire. The people are so reduced to poverty that they cannot take holdings without it.

28,047. They do not contemplate getting holdings in Strathnaver, except with some assistance?—Only with some assistance; they could not do without it.

28,048. Do you mean by way of a loan?—Yes, by way of a loan, or some assistance from his Grace the Duke of Sutherland. If the houses were built by the Duke of Sutherland, or by means of a loan from Government they would try their best to get the land reclaimed and to stock it.

28,049. Do you mean by the house, the house and steading?—Yes, the house and the steading; that is the great difficulty.

28,050. I take it you mean assistance by way of a loan which they would repay in the course of years?—Yes.

28,051. Getting their holdings at a reasonable rent?—

Melvich, Sutherlandshire.

Alexander Mackay.

Yes, at a reasonable and a prairie rent. It was our forefathers who improved what is improved at Strathnaver, and now the big farmers are reaping the advantage of that improvement. They have the benefit of it, and our fathers were sent out from Strathnaver without any compensation; they were burnt out, and although they had their crop on the ground when they were burned out they never got that much for the crop, besides having their houses burnt.

28,052. *Mr Gordon.*—You give rather a bad account of the success of the fishing for the last year?—Yes, I have to give that I am sorry to say.

28,053. Well, Mr Campbell, the witness from Portskerra here said that if the harbour was improved here it might be of more benefit to the crofters of Portskerra who are fishermen than additional land would be, and that so far as he could say the fishermen would not readily remove from the township of Portskerra to any part of the Bighouse farm. Now, don't you think if you had a better harbour the fishing could be prosecuted with more success?—There is no doubt it could be prosecuted more successfully in the winter time, but for all that the fishermen would rather get land.

28,054. They would rather be farmers than fishermen?—Suppose we had the best harbours in Scotland the fish is getting scarcer on our coast. The trawlers have spoiled our coast entirely.

28,055. But there is a part of Great Britain where trawlers are not admitted, that is the Moray Firth. You are aware of that?—Yes.

28,056. Would there be any inclination on the part of the people of your township to remove from Kirtomy to Nairn or Buckie, or any place on the Moray Firth?—No, I think not.

28,057. They would not like to go there?—No, they would not like to go there.

28,058. You are aware of this, that fishing is carried on there not only profitably but most successfully?—Oh, yes, there is no doubt of that; it is more successful at times.

28,059. The fishermen are not only good hardy fishermen, but they are, as men of business, successful at their calling?—Sometimes.

28,060. But, as a rule, they are?—Just as other men.

28,061. But, as a rule, they are, there is no doubt about that. Now, the question I would like to put to you is whether there would be any inclination on the part of the fishermen of Kirtomy to move to the neighbourhood of a good harbour either in Sutherlandshire, Caithness, or the southern shores of the Moray Firth?—They would rather get the land from which their forefathers were evicted.

28,062. But the difficulty is this that there would not be land for so many people as want it, suppose the whole of the country was broken up?—Let the land be used for what is on it.

28,063. And what would you do with the remainder? You say 20 of your people have signed the paper as wishing to get crofts?—Yes.

28,064. How many people do you suppose would sign a similar paper between Melvich and Bettyhill?—I could not say.

28,065. There would be several hundreds?—I hear from Mr Campbell that the Portskerra fishermen would not take land.

28,066. But you yourself would take it?—Yes.

28,067. But you think they would not be willing to move to the neighbourhood of a harbour?—No.

28,068. *Mr Sutherland.*—Where did your people come from?—From Strathnaver. My father was born in Altnaharra, and had a holding in Syre. In two years he was evicted from Syre down to Skailwood, and from Skailwood to Carnachy, and from Carnachy to Achkenlochy.

28,069. How many times was he evicted?—Four or five times.

28,070. And he made a home each time?—Yes, a kind of a home. After being in Carnachy for about a year, he was turned out by Mr Sellar, who is now dead and gone; he came down and burnt the house before them. My father and my uncle came down to the house and tried to save the timber of the rafters for making a tent for themselves at night; they got the wood and put it at the back of a hillock for safety, but the burning party came and pulled down the house and then went in search of the timber. They found it at the back of the hillock and put fire to it also.

28,071. So that he could not build another?—No.

28,072. And where was he sent to next?—To Kirtomy, the place where I live now; it was then just on the top of a precipice.

28,073. Did he tell you about the state of matters in the Glen?—He told me the whole thing; and I have gone up the Strath along with him at different times.

28,074. Do you mean to say that your father had to make a new home five different times?—Yes, my father and my grandfather: my father was the eldest of the family.

28,075. He was in his father's family at that time?—Yes.

28,076. You have heard the difficulties that have been raised about making a new home in Strathnaver?—They would not think anything of it those who came from it.

28,077. You do not think there is anything in that objection?—No.

28,078. Now, with regard to the fishing, your father would not have been a fisherman?—No, but the people who came down from Strathnaver had to take to fishing, and it was so dangerous that there was a boat or two lost.

28,079. They did not take to the fishing except by force?—By force.

28,080. By the force of circumstances?—They could not get anything else to do.

28,081. They would either have to fish or to starve?—To starve.

28,082. Were they put down there at Kirtomy for the purpose of being fisherman? Was that stated?—No, they were sent down, it was said, to improve their condition, but it was quite the contrary.

28,083. What preparation was made at Kirtomy to improve their condition?—None at all.

28,084. Was it contemplated that they should turn fishermen?—Yes.

28,085. Was that stated?—Yes.

28,086. And were they provided with a harbour?—Not a harbour, but what God made.

28,087. Have you any harbour to this day?—Not a stone, but just a natural creek, and the people have to haul their boats every day they go to sea.

28,088. You stated that the people of Kirtomy were from home practically after May to the month of August this year?—Yes, from 15th May to the latter end of August, there were nineteen out of Kirtomy at the herring fishing.

28,089. And they only brought home £3 ahead?—The gross average was £3 ahead; I had that from the fishermen themselves at the meeting here in the public school.

28,090. And you have no reason to suppose but that is correct?—Quite correct; some of them came home penniless.

28,091. After being away from their homes for all that time?—Yes, from May to August.

28,092. You are not surprised, I suppose, after that experience that they would like to get a home where they could attend to their business all the year with a reasonable hope of success?—No indeed, they are just getting disgusted with the sea.

28,093. You state that you would require assistance in new holdings?—Yes.

28,094. And to what do you attribute the fact that you require assistance now?—We were made so poor by so many being put together in one township. In the township that was for nine, there are now nineteen.

28,095. And you do not subdivide your holdings?—No.

28,096. Who subdivided them?—The Duke of Sutherland.

Melvich, Sutherland-shire.

Alexander Mackay.

28,097. So that there are now thirty fishermen in Kirtomy?—Yes, there were thirty out last year.

28,098. And their experience after all these years is that they wish to drop their fishing, but they are so poor that they cannot make homes without assistance in the new places?—They cannot make homes without assistance; it is impossible.

28,099. Generally speaking and taking a wide view, to what do you attribute that fact? You heard witnesses here to-day giving evidence that they would be able to take holdings without assistance; what makes the difference between them and Kirktomy do you think?—I cannot say.

28,100. Do you think it was the attempt to make them fishermen in spite of nature?—Yes, I believe there are a good many in the parish who get work mostly every day,—perhaps some of them up Strathnaver; but the Kirtomy people never get a decent day's work on the estate hardly.

28,101. Was it asserted that it was a deliberate attempt to make fishermen of the people?—Yes, just a deliberate attempt to make them take their livelihood out of the sea.

28,102. Without making any provision for them in the way of a harbour or anything?—Not a stone. The Duke of Sutherland has given them a store-house.

28,103. What is it for? What are you going to store in it?—Sometimes fish; if a curer would come to buy it. It is meant for the good of the fishermen. They work at the lobster fishing in the spring, and when they leave that the lobsters are stored in the store-house; also the sails, and nets, and such like. The store-house is very handy.

28,104. Are the people in Swordale in much the same position as you?—There is no fishing there at all except the herring fishing.

28,105. Now where were these men from May to August?—Some of them were in Shields.

28,106. And when the fishing ended at Shields what did they do?—Came home.

28,107. Were they there for the six months?—Yes.

28,108. Where did others go?—To Peterhead, Fraserburgh, Wick, and the early fishing at Scrabster.

28,109. So it cannot be said with any truth that they are not industrious men?—No, they are very enterprising.

28,110. More enterprising than the large sheep farmers? What did they do?—Anything they want they will get, and we get nothing.

28,111. How many people in Kirtomy do you say expressed their willingness to take farms?—Twenty were willing to leave Kirtomy to-morrow, provided they would get some assistance.

28,112. But that assistance they would repay with interest?—With interest.

28,113. They never thought of anything else?—No.

Hugh Gunn.

HUGH GUNN, Baligill, Strathy (36)—*examined.*

28,114. *The Chairman.*—Have you something to tell us?—I have nothing to say at all. I was appointed as a delegate, but I did not agree to act, because I have nothing particular to state.

28,115. Were you appointed at a public meeting to come as a delegate from the Armadale district?—From Strathy.

28,116. Do you concur generally in the evidence given to-day?—Yes.

28,117. And you have no addition to make?—No addition to make.

John Mackay

JOHN MACKAY, Strathy (44)—*examined.*

28,118. *The Chairman.*—Do you reside in No. 66 Strathy?—No. 74, it is my mother who holds the croft, Widow William Mackay.

28,119. I see your area is 5 acres 2 roods 6 poles arable, 5 acres 34 poles outrun, and a share in 4284 acres. How many share in that?—I mention the number in my statement.

28,120. Your former rent was £4, 1s. 11d. and the present rent is £8, 17s.?—Yes. Melvich, Sutherland-shire.

28,121. Were you appointed as a delegate?—Yes.

28,122. At a public meeting?—At a public meeting. John Mackay

28,123. Held at Strathy I presume?—Yes.

28,124. When was it held?—In April last.

28,125. And you have a written statement?—Yes, which I submitted to a public meeting on Monday last.

28,126. Did they approve of it?—It was unanimously approved of.

28,127. Just read it please?—Statement by John Mackay, delegate, Strathy, representing the townships of Baligill, Strathy, Strathy Point, Aultivullin, Brawl, Aultiphuirst, Ardvinglass, and Leadnagullen.—The following statement was submitted at a public meeting of crofters, cottars, and others, and was approved of unanimously. In the Strathy Strath, forming part of the Armadale sheep farm, there were prior to the clearances thirty-six tenants who were all removed about the year 1817 to make room for sheep, as follows:—Shellach, two tenants; top of strath, eight; Dalangwell, five; Bowside, six; Achrayan, four; Dallchine, five; Dallagnevach, two; Reg Roy, one; Dallgeback, one; Arclouch, one; Baligill Burn, one; total, 36. Some of them got small patches of land at Strathy, which they improved and built houses upon without any assistance. Two years later, in 1819, the Strathnaver evictions took place, when a number of newcomers were settled among them, which left the place so congested that there was no room for making any improvements, and it is in this state at the present day. When the people were in the Straths they were quite comfortable, and ever since they have been in a state of poverty verging on destitution.

There are at present forty crofters in the township of Strathy having only 153 acres called arable land, or an average of about 3¾ acres each. In the township of Balligill there are twelve crofters having 73 acres arable, or an average of about 6 acres each. There are about 2485 acres of hill pasture in common between the townships of Strathy and Baligill, or an average of about 47½ acres for the fifty-two crofters. There are at Strathy Point thirty crofters having 103 acres arable, or about 3¼ acres each; Aultivullin, three crofters and eight acres arable; Brawl, seven crofters and 27 acres arable; Aultiphuirst, six crofters and 17 acres arable; Ardvinglass, three crofters and 9 acres arable; Leadnagullen, twelve crofters and 25 acres arable.

From Strathy Point to Leadnagullen there are sixty-one crofters having a common share in 3740 acres of hill pasture. There are also twelve cottars and a number of lodgers in the district I represent who are landless and quite willing to get land.

General Statement.

In the parish of Farr there are 415 crofters having only about 1462 acres called arable land, with about 37,173 acres hill pasture in common, and paying £1103, 17s. 10d. of rent. We had last year 174 paupers and 42 dependants on the poor roll receiving relief, on whom was expended £1309, 16s. 4d., or £205, 18s. 6d. more than the whole of the crofters' rent. There are nine sheep farms in the parish, including part of Borgie farm, in the hands of seven men, all absentees except two, and holding land to the value of £3395, or more than three times the rental of the 415 crofters—all in the interior of the parish and the crofters on the barren rocks. Deer forests, shootings, and sheep farms pay together £7570, or nearly seven times the rental of all the crofters. The sheep farmers live in luxury on the fruit of our forefathers' labours, and the poor crofters starve in sight of hundreds of acres of the best land in the county. I wish to draw your particular attention to the number of paupers in the parish and the money expended on them, and compare it with the time when the people were living in comfort in the straths and glens before the clearances, when such a being as a pauper was unknown.

(Signed) JOHN MACKAY.

Melvich, Sutherland-shire.
John Mackay.

28,128. You say last year you had 174 paupers and 42 dependants, or in all 216, on the poor roll?—Yes.

28,129. Have the paupers been increasing of late years?—Increasing every year.

28,130. Do you remember the increase last year?—I don't remember.

28,131. But has there been a steady increase in the number of paupers?—There are continual applications at every meeting of the Parochial Board.

28,132. Are you a member of the Parochial Board?—No.

28,133. Who is the Chairman of the Board?—Mr Box, factor for the Duke of Sutherland.

28,134. To what do you attribute that constant increase in the number of paupers and dependants?—The want of land.

28,135. And do you think that if arrangements were made for assignment of land to those who wish it, and can take it, pauperism would decline?—Yes, it would.

28,136. Is there a strong desire for additional land on the part of those whom you represent?—A very strong desire.

28,137. Are the districts you represent congested?—Very congested.

28,138. And is the land they work exhausted?—Very much exhausted by continual cropping.

28,139. Is this desire for land in the form of new holdings, or additional grazing, or both?—Principally new holdings.

28,140. And what do you say as to the question of assistance?—Well, the majority of them would require a little assistance, but I would not consider it much assistance. If they got a proper dwelling-house built I think they would be able to build the offices themselves in course of time.

28,141. If they got some assistance for their dwelling-houses they could manage as to the land and as to the steading?—That is my opinion.

28,142. Assistance by way of loan to be repaid in a period of years?—Yes.

28,143. And getting their holdings at a reasonable rent?—Yes.

28,144. And you have mentioned the places where you think such land ought to be considered by us?—It is not much that I have mentioned, there is not much land; the river has spoilt a good deal since the people left the place, because there were no steps taken to prevent the overflowing of the river.

28,145. And it has destroyed the banks?—Yes, but there could be a good few there.

28,146. On what farm?—On Strathy farm.

28,147. The people at present are all crowded down towards Strathy Point?—Yes.

28,148. And you represent the desire that they should be migrated farther up the Strathy water?—A few of them, but the most of the people at Strathy Point and Strathy are descendants of the people who were evicted from Strathnaver.

28,149. Then, is the land you have in view at Strathnaver mainly?—Both places.

28,150. *Mr Forsyth.*—Can you tell me what the poor rate is in this parish?—Yes, it is 2s. per £.

28,151. Has it been increasing?—I am not in a position to say.

28,152. At present it will fall 1s. on the landlord and 1s. on the tenant?—Yes.

28,153. And that is owing to the large amount of pauperism that you have been speaking about just now?—Yes.

28,154. Then, in the event of a number of new holdings being created in this district it would be difficult to provide for those who are already very poor and not able to take new holdings, would it not?—To the poorest of them I would give the the holdings that would be left so that they would not require to remove; I mean by that that the township should be weeded out.

28,155. Would you give to the landless poor the holdings of people who went to larger places?—Yes.

28,156. And you think that would keep them off the poor roll?—Yes, and by help of their friends when they were in the better place.

28,157. *Mr. Sutherland.*—You stated that the poor roll is increasing?—Yearly.

Melvich Sutherland-shire.
John Mackay.

28,158. May I ask you how this process goes on? Do you ever look at the ages of the registered paupers; —Yes.

28,159. Have you been struck by anything in the ages?—Not very much; there are some young people on the roll as well as old people.

28,160. Have you noticed that they are all either very old people or very young people?—The majority are old.

28,161. Why are they paupers, these old people?—Because their friends cannot keep them, and it is too much for them to keep themselves.

28,162. And have they friends here in some cases at all?—Yes, plenty.

28,163. And in other cases?—In the majority of cases they have friends in the township.

28,164. Take the case of an old woman, say one who is a mother or a grandmother, do you know of such?—Yes.

28,165. In some cases friends may be here, but too poor to help?—Yes.

28,166. And in other cases the friends may be away altogether?—In a few cases.

28,167. Which is the more general case?—The more general one is that of those who have friends at home too poor to support them.

28,168. The poor rate you say is 2s. per £?—Yes.

28,169. You were not able to say if it is increasing very rapidly?—I am not in a position to say so.

28,170. But you are aware that the Government subventions for the maintenance of the poor have greatly increased of late?—Yes.

28,171. So it is quite possible for the poor roll to increase enormously without the rate increasing, because you get a greater amount of money now from the Government?—Yes.

28,172. You also said that the greater number of them are descendants of those who came from Strathnaver?—Yes.

28,173. You know Strathy Point very well, don't you?—Yes.

28,174. Have you any remarks particularly to make upon that district?—No, except that I think it is a place that no crofter should be in. Almost every year they lose corn by going over the rocks if a storm is to happen at harvest time; and another thing they lose a great many cattle and sheep.

28,175. How does the improvement theory apply at Strathy Point? You heard the assertion, I suppose, and read it that it was for the improvement of the condition of these people that they were sent down from Strathnaver?—I deny that it was for their improvement.

28,176. And you think, I suppose, that the present situation is quite sufficient refutation of that theory without anything further?—It is.

28,177. I think you also said that the new settlers would in most cases require some assistance?—Yes, in the majority of cases. There might be some amongst them who would be quite able to build and stock with the assistance of their friends in various parts of the world.

28,178. But that remark as to assistance applies more particularly to the district included in Strathy Point you think rather than to some other parts?—No, to the whole district that I represent.

28,179. Do you not think that perhaps thirty men could be selected from among them who would not require any assistance? You observe that the question of assistance would depend very much upon what conditions you may have in your mind as requiring to be fulfilled when they went there?—Of course.

28,180. You may have present in your mind at the present moment that they would be as poor in the future as they are now, but if there were a reasonable hope of the conditions being changed do you not think they might fulfil more onerous conditions in the future than now?—I have no doubt of that.

28,181. That would, you think, be an element in forming any opinion in regard to that?—Yes.

28,182. And if there was a prospect of people being more comfortable in the future they would make greater efforts, don't you think, than they are called upon to make just now?—I have no doubt of that.

28,183. Is it the case that at the present moment the people are without hope that they can improve themselves in their present place?—Yes.

28,184. And do you think the belief in a man's heart that there is no hope has an effect on the efforts he may put forth?—Yes.

28,185. If hope were given to the people that they could improve themselves by their own efforts they would put forth greater efforts than before?—They would; they have no encouragement at present to do anything, because they have no land to improve.

28,186. Take the case of Strathy Point near us here. Can the people put forth any effort of industry to improve their condition?—No.

28,187. The first element of success in the shape of land to work upon is wanting?—Yes.

28,188. But suppose they were put back into Strathnaver, do you think there would be a hope for them there?—I have no doubt of it.

28,189. You have a knowledge also of the fishing? The people at Strathy Point are more or less fishermen, are they not?—Yes.

28,190. You have heard the statement that has been made by Mr Mackay, Kirtomy?—Yes.

28,191. Does the experience that he relates of Kirtomy apply also within your knowledge to Strathy Point?—I believe it does.

28,192. A great number go away to the fishing?—Yes.

28,193. Do they carry on a fishing at Strathy Point itself?—A little, but it does not pay them.

28,194. Do you know under what circumstances they carry it on?—They sell their fish to a curer.

28,195. Have you ever seen what is called their harbour?—I have.

28,196. And you know the conditions under which they land their boats?—I do.

28,197. Are there many accidents off this coast by drowning?—Not many, because they do not fish but with small boats.

28,198. I am talking of the whole of this district round here?—Three years ago there was an accident.

28,199. How many people were drowned do you remember?—I don't remember just now. I am told twelve from Portskerra alone were drowned.

28,200. Now, one question in conclusion. Would you yourself take a holding in Strathnaver if you got it under reasonable conditions?—I would in a day.

28,201. You are quite prepared to do so?—Quite prepared.

28,202. *Mr Box, factor.*—Do I understand that you are in a position to take a holding in Strathnaver?—On certain conditions.

28,203. What conditions are they? Are you in a position to bear all the expense in connection with that?—No, I did not say so.

28,204. You said in the commencement of your statement that there were several townships in Strath Strathy?—Yes.

28,205. Would you tell me whether any of these are in your own grazings just now?—Yes.

28,206. They are not on the farm?—Not on the farm.

28,207. You also spoke of the destruction by the flooding of the river?—Yes.

28,208. Can you tell me any of these places where any quantity of the arable land was taken away by the Strathy river?—Almost all of the places, a good deal of land.

28,209. What number of acres can you say?—I cannot say the number of acres, but there is a lot of shingle and stuff spread on what used to be arable land.

28,210. There is a little at the mouth of the river where the crofts are?—I mean at the top of the Strath.

28,211. But you would not say that there is very much damage done after all?—There is a good deal of damage done.

28,212. *Mr Sutherland.*—Since how long have these old townships been in your grazings?—About nine or ten years. [*Mr Box.*—I may perhaps state that in 1884 an addition was made to these grazings.]

28,213. *The Chairman.*—What was the extent of it? [*Mr Box.*—About 3000 acres, and it was all fenced by the estate at a cost of over £1000.]

28,214. Can you tell me about the poor rate? [*Mr Box.*—The poor rate has not increased very much. I would like to ask the witness about it. *The Chairman.*—Certainly.]

28,215. *Mr Box.*—Is it not the case within your knowledge that a great many persons apply for parochial relief now who would never have thought of coming to the Board at all before?—Their condition compels them to do that.

28,216. But is it not the case, as a matter of fact, that in late years they were much more reluctant in coming to the Board than they are now?—It is quite possible they might; their position now drives them to ask parochial relief.

28,217. Exactly, or else they would not come. They were helped otherwise in previous years in a way that prevented them coming to the board so frequently as they do now?—That is quite possible.

28,218. *Mr Sutherland.*—Do you attribute the destruction of that good feeling which Mr Box has referred to, to the present state of things? I have no doubt you have observed that what Mr Box says is quite true, that people more readily apply for parochial relief?—Yes, because circumstances force them to do so.

28,219. You think that that is a great condemnation of the present state of matters?—Yes.

28,220. Does it not point to a time when the people had more self-respect than now?—Yes.

28,221. And a state of greater comfort than now?—Yes.

28,222. Then, with regard to the extension of your grazing, I suppose it was done at the same time as the grazing extensions were given all round Sutherlandshire?—Yes, at the time of the election. [*Mr Box.* I beg to contradict that.]

28,223. At any rate it was before the election?—Yes.

[ADJOURNED.]

TWENTY-EIGHTH SITTING.

TONGUE, SUTHERLANDSHIRE.

October 9, 1893.

Present:—

DAVID BRAND, Esq., Advocate, Sheriff of Ayr, and Chairman of the Crofters Commission, *Chairman.*
ANGUS SUTHERLAND, Esq., M.P.
JAMES NOEL MULLER FORSYTH, Esq.
GEORGE GORDON, Esq.
WILLIAM MACKENZIE, Esq., *Secretary.*

HUGH MACKAY, Crofter, Melness (68)—*examined.*

28,224. *The Chairman.*—What is the name of your township?—Skinnid.

28,225. Has your case been dealt with by the Crofters Commission?—Yes.

28,226. What was your old rent?—£3, 6s.

28,227. And what is the new rent?—£3.

28,228. I see the area is 2 acres 2 roods arable, 1 acre outrun, 3¼ shares in the common grazing of 10,773

Tongue, Sutherland-shire.

Hugh Mackay.

acres common to the townships of East Strathan of Melness, West Strathan of Melness, Achantighailbhinn, Dalnafree, Achininver, Lub-a'-mhuilinn, Midfield, Portvascaig, Ach-na-h-uaighe, Torran-nan-cudaigean, Talmine, Skinnid, and Midtown, and divided into 303⅞ shares, all of which were dealt with except 3 3/16 reserved for the Free Church Minister. Have you a statement to submit?—Yes.

28,229. Kindly read it to us. Copy of memoranda by the Rev. James Cumming, Free Church Minister, Melness, made in 1884.

1. Ribigill.

'I, James Cumming, Free Church Minister, at 'Melness, being on duty at Achnahuagh, Melness, on 'the 5th day of February 1884, interviewed George 'Morrison, tenant there. He is in full possession of his 'faculties, except that his eyesight is a good deal im- 'paired. He stated deliberately as follows:—that he 'was born in Arnaboll, on the west side of Loch Hope, 'in May 1795, that he is now in his 89th year, that 'his wife, Isabella Calder, was born in West Strath, 'Melness, in 15th August, O.S., in 1794; that when he 'was an infant the family removed to the east side of 'Loch Hope, and when he was at the age of six years 'they removed thence to Lettermore, and that he was 'eleven years of age when his father, Alexander Morrison, 'removed thence with his family to Dionachcory, where 'he remained only two years, and removed thence to the 'west side of the Kyle of Tongue; that he knew all 'the tenants in the various townships, embraced in 'what is now called the farm of Ribigill, except 'Scrabster. Here follows the list as stated by him:—

1. Hugh Ross, . . . Dionachcary.
2. Robert Mackay, . . do.
3. Angus Mackay, . . do.
4. Alexander Morrison, . do.
5. Robert Mackay, . . Culsaid.
6. John Macintosh, . . Inch-Kinloch.
7. William Campbell, . . do.
8. Alexander Morrison, George's father, . . do.
9. John Morrison, . . do.
10. John Forbes, . . do.
11. Hugh Grant (Labarach), . do.
12. Donald Mackay, Harach-uild, do.
13. Murdo Mackay, Bruach-drainich, do.
14. John Macleod, Bruach-bui, do.
15. Donald Campbell, Raon-cluaran, do.
16. John Mackay, Luib, . do.
17. George Macleod, Torrantairbh, do.
18. Neil Gunn, . . . do.
19. Ewen Campbell, . . do.
20. John Gordon, Alt-an-t-Saghairt, do.
21. Angus Mackay, Ruidhnan, do.
22. Donald Macneil, U-Chomraig, do.

The following three names he could not recollect;

23. , Uidh-nan-aghan, do.
24. , Upper Craggy, do.
25. Mackay, Lower Craggy.
26. Murdo Mackay, Direadh.
27. William Mackay (drover), Malmscaig.
28. Donald Mackay (M'Huistean), Cunisaid.
29. Alexander Sutherland, Ridhorach.
30. Alexander Grant, Cunaisaid.
31. Alexander Sutherland, Ardrinamuch.
32. Alexander Macintosh, Kinlochbhig.
33. Alexander Macintosh, do.
34. Alexander Macintosh, do.
35.
36. John Ross, Weaver.
37. Mackay, blacksmith, Achorcovy.
38. woman, tenant.

List of tenants on the farm of Ribigill continued as given by Donald Gow, aged 84, a native of the Parish of Tongue. In his boyhood he taught a side school in Scrabster:— Tongue, Sutherlashire.

Hugh Mackay.

39. Alexander Mackay, Og.
40. Angus Mackay, Abarach.
41. James Mackay.
42. George Mackay, Macurachay
43. Colin Mackay.
44. Davie Reid.
45. Neil Mackay, Clabarich.
46. Ann Uilleam ic Ruaric, Scrabster.

'This same George Morrison declared, that in 1806, 'Lord Reay had come to Tongue House, and that the 'tenants of Lettermore heard there was a meeting of 'leading men in the district held at Tongue House that 'it was reported, this meeting which may be denomin- 'ated a clearance league, were consulting to eject the 'tenants of Lettermore and lay their little farms under 'sheep in the hands of one man. On hearing this that 'the tenants of Lettermore held a meeting, at which 'they agreed to offer a considerable rise on the rent 'formerly paid, and having written a document to this 'effect John Gordon and his father Alexander Morrison, 'two of their number, were deputed by the rest to wait 'on Lord Reay, with the proposal made in the written 'offer; that on handing it to his Lordship, they ob- 'served while perusing the paper, his countenance 'changing with symptoms of displeasure. After reading 'it through, Lord Reay said to the deputies "Poor men, '"what a pity you did not come yesterday! Your '"lands are set on another, but I'll be overmatched '"else he who has got them will pay as high a rent '"for them as you have offered." In a few years 'thereafter Mr Hughieson, from the East Coast, offered 'a higher rent than this tacksman was giving. But a 'dispute having arisen about the boundaries, between 'Lord Reay and the new tenant the case was litigated; 'Lord Reay lost, and Mr Hughieson repudiated the 'tack and the misguided Lord Reay got no rent during 'those years for his lands on the farm of Ribigill. 'And the first tacksman went over to Melness and 'began the work of clearing out the tenants on that 'very extensive farm, and continued at this unholy 'work till he ruined himself and died dependent on 'charity.

'Well, George what was the condition then of the 'tenants of Lettermore? They were better off than 'kings, for they had plenty to clothe and sustain them 'without the care that oppresses kings. What sub- 'stance had your own father? When our family re- 'moved to Dionachcary, there were 70 head of sheep, 'and 60 head of goats, 30 head of black cattle, 3 brood 'mares, and 2 garrons for home work. At to-day's 'value that stock would be a considerable capital? It 'would be close on £500. But, then, there would not 'be many holding so large a stock? About the half 'of them would. Some had a larger stock than my 'father and others less; the half of them fully would 'average as good a stock as my father had.

'Such is the account the so-called crofters give of 'themselves, those that are willing to traduce or mis- 'represent them fix on some poor family or case of 'distress and trump it up as a specimen of the liveli- 'hood the people had. But we know from the amount 'of bone and muscle contained in the frame of an 'average Reay countryman, that pinched maintenance 'never could produce them. Had they been the half 'starved people the Messrs. Thomas Purves and Thomas 'Sellar and others present them to have been how to 'account for the fact that the British Isles produced 'nowhere stronger and more enduring men?

2. Melness.

'The memoranda in this sheet as in sheet No. 1 '(Ribigill) was made at the dictation of the same 'George Morrison.

'The following is a list of tenants and cottars on the 'east side of Loch Hope, being a part of the farm of

'Melness, and resided there about the year 1808, and 'not long thereafter were removed to make room for 'sheep :—

1. Morrison, Plaid, Strathmore near Hope (held land as wages for being forrester).
2. Hugh Mackenzie, . Strathmore near Hope.
3. Hugh Macewe, . do.
4. Donald Mackay, Crannaich, do.
5. Donald Mackay (Crannaich, *i.e.*, the merchant), do.
6. Robert Macpherson, do.
7. Angus Calder (same Calders with Rob Donn, the poet, Bolanduim), . do.
8. John Mackenzie, . do.
9. Hugh Mackay, do.
10. Robert Mackay, Altnacaillich, . . do.
11. Hugh Mackenzie, Altnacaillich, . . do.
12. George Mackay, Altnacaillich, . . do
13. Hector Mackay, Cuil, do.
14. Hugh Mackay, Mussal, do.
15. William Calder, Mussal, do.
16. Hugh Calder, Mussal, do.
17. Hugh, Mackay, Mussal, do.
18. name forgotten, . do.
19. Alexander Murrison, Merkan.
20. George Ross, ... Brusgil.
21. John Ross, ... do.
22. Hugh Mackay . . . . do.
23. Donald Mackay, ... do.
24. Donald Sutherland, . . . Hope.
25. Hugh Mackay, ... do.
26. Donald Mackay, ... do.
27. James Mackay, ... do.
28. Robert Mackay, ... do.
29. George Mackay (Fear-Hope), . . do.
30. Widow Mackay (Mackenzie), . . do.
31. Achchedremy, ... do.
32. Angus Macintosh, . . . Inverhope.
33. John Munro, ... Freisgil.
34. Angus Munro, ... do.
35. Hugh Macleod, ... do.
36. George Mackenzie, ... do.
37. Angus Macintosh, ... do.

'Besides the above list who paid rent directly at 'Tongue office there were three cottars. The same 'George Morrison declares he saw all these holding 'their lands at the same time. In his own words, '"Saothaireachadh us paid headh na fearainn," *i.e.*, 'cultivating the land and paying its rent.'

'On the west side of Tongue Kyle and in the farm 'of Melness, there were :—

38. Angus Mackay, Acha.
39. Donald Munro, Bursgaig.
40. Donald Mackay, Og.
41. Hugh Mackay.
42. Hugh Calder.
43. Ann Mackay (Robie Ian), . . Tutaig.
44. William Mackay (Lain), . . . do.
45. Donald Macaskill, the drover, . . do.
46. Robert Clarke, . . . Unstreapan.
47. John Mackay, Mac Dhomhnuill, do.
48. John Mackenzie, Achnahavin.
49. Angus Mackay (na-h-airidh), Airibheag.

3. Eriboll.

'The following list of tenants on the west side of 'Hope Water, including Eriboll, was given by Neill 'Macleod, presently residing in Skinnet, Melness. Neill 'is a native of Eriboll, and now over eighty years of 'age. This list was taken on the 27th of November 1883. 'The persons mentioned in the list had all of them 'their lots and residences at the same time on what is 'now the farm of Eriboll. There is a tradition as stated 'by James Mackay of Helam, one of the tenants of that 'period, that when it was resolved to put Eriboll into 'the hands of one man, under sheep, the tenants met, 'and after consulting entered into a club and offered '£900 for the farm of Eriboll, but that Mr Anderson, 'who was then factor for Lord Reay, dissuaded his 'Lordship from accepting this offer, advising it would 'be more profitable to eject the people and to lay out 'the lands under sheep. But now in 1884 after the 'present proprietor and his father, Dukes of Sutherland, 'have laid out from 7 to 10 thousand pounds on this 'farm, it is questionable whether it would, if advertised, 'fetch a rent of £900 even now :— Tongue, Sutherlandshire. Hugh Mackay.

1. Hugh Mackenzie, M'Rob, . Eilean an rair.
2. John Mackay, M'Huistean, . do.
3. William Mackay, Bad-na-h-achlais.
4. William Mackenzie, Bad-a-mheoir.
5. Robert Mackay, M'Rob, . . Arnaboll.
6. Neill Mackay, ... do.
7. James Mackenzie, . . . do.
8. Angus Macintosh, . . . do.
9. John Mackay, M'Eachan, . Achanlochy.
10. Angus Mackay, . . . Balihavish.
11. James Mackay, Mac Dho'il-ic-Uilleim, Hylam.
12. George Mackay, Mac Dho'il-ic-Uilleim, do.
13. Hugh Mackay, M'Huistean . . do.
14. John Munro, . . . Hylam.
15. John Mackay, M'Alister, . do.
16. George Mackay, M'Huistean, . do.
17. William Mackay, M'Ryrie, . Eriboll.
18. Donald Mackay, M'Neill, . do.
19. Hugh Mackenzie, . . . do.
20. Robert Mackenzie (Rob Dubh), do.
21. John Mackay, M'Neill, . . do.
22. John Macleod, . . . do.
23. Donald Mackay, Abarach, . do.
24. William Mackay, Og, . . do.
25. John Mackay, Og, . . . do.
26. James Mackay, M'Eachan, do.
27. John Mackay, blacksmith, . do.
28. William Sutherland, . . do.
29. Donald Morrison, tailor, . . do.
30. William Macintosh, . . do.
31. Munro, M'William, Knock, do.
32. Robert Munro, M'Alister, Knock, do.
33. James Macleod, Inveran, . do.
34. Hugh Mackay, M'Eachan, Achegharasaid, . . . do.
35. George Mackay Ban, Achaharasaid, ... do.
36. Donald (Eigal), Mackay, Achegharasaid, ... do.
37. Macintyre, teacher . do.
38. George Mackay, Strathbeg.
39. Hugh Mackay Maclean, Faoilin.

'All these resided on what is now the farm of 'Eriboll. Attested correct as taken at the dictation of 'the above mentioned Neill Macleod, at the above 'mentioned date and inserted in this memoranda, May '6, 1884, by

'James Cumming,
'F.C. Minister of Melness and Eriboll.

'Copy of memoranda by the Rev. James Cumming, 'Free Church, Melness, made on the 17th March 1884.

'Adam Gordon Mackay, a native of Abersgi near 'Skelpick, Strathnaver, declared that he is eighty-one 'years of age, was fifteen years old when that district 'was cleared of its inhabitants, that he was the youngest 'of a family of 6 ; that there were 18 men in the party 'that went about that day firing the residences of the 'inhabitants, that they were led by one Duncan Ross, 'a ground officer, who afterwards retired to the district 'of Helmsdale, and died in that part of the country ; 'that on the occasion in question his father and some 'of the stronger members of the family were away from 'what was till then their home, being occupied in con-

Tongue, Sutherlandshire.

Hugh Mackay.

'structing a hut at Leadnaguilan, a distance of 10 or '12 miles. Thither they intended removing all the 'movables they could bring with them; that he and 'other juniors had on the previous days pulled down 'the byre, and the portion of the premises used as a 'sitting room, called in Gaelic "cearn." The rafters 'and couplings being principally bog fir, is a very 'durable kind of timber, the boys picked out such 'pieces of the timber as was likely to be of use in con-'structing their future residence at Leadnaguilan; and 'placed them by themselves at some distance from the 'devoted premises; that there were two good rooms, 'usually called in Scotland the "ben," part of their 'dwelling, in which were stowed away chests, with bed 'and body clothes, several articles of furniture, and pro-'vision for the family. But when the incendiaries 'came they set fire to the whole and nothing was 'saved; further that they went and fetched the pieces 'of timber the boys had set apart for future use and 'pitched them into the general conflagration! Is it 'any wonder the memory of these deeds, worthy of 'Huns and Vandals, should rankle in the bosom of the 'people and kindle the hottest indignation in all that 'hear of them! The same Adam G. Mackay declares 'that on that day he saw 30 homesteads on fire at the 'same time, in townships of Apigill, Achnaborgean, 'Achacheragary, Abersgi, Skelpick, Rinnivie, and 'Achanlochie. Remembers only some of the names of 'the occupants of the several residences of the above 'townships.

1.	George Mackay (Adam's father),	Abersgi.
2.	Donald Munro (the miller),	Dalnadroghaid.
3.	Alexander Duncan, . .	Skelpick.
4.	George Gordon, tacksman,	do.
5.	Adam Munro, . . .	do.
6.	John Mackay (M'William)	do.
7.	Hugh , . .	Fastli.
8.	(name forgotten),	do.
9.	Angus Mackay, "the pensioner," . .	
10.	John Munro, . . .	Rhinivie.
11.	John Mackay, . . .	do.
12.	John Maccaskill, . .	do.
13.		do.
14–23.	Achanlochie was occupied by ten tenants, does not remember their names . .	
24.	William Chisholm, .	Achnaborgean.
25.	John Mackay, . .	do.
26.	Andrew Munro, .	do.

'There were several others, but their number or names 'he could not recollect. His father, George Mackay, 'when tenant in Abersgi, had four or five milch cows, 'about a dozen yeld cattle, a few sheep, and goats. The 'soil yielded cereals of a superior order. He never ex-'perienced potatoes better than were produced in 'Abersgi.

'His father's family scattered after they had removed 'to Leadnaguillean; he himself became servant to the 'Rev. Mr Findlater, Durness; after the disruption Mr 'Findlater did not require his services. Mr Sinclair, the 'factor of the district at that time, allowed him to build 'a cot on a bit of waste ground, and fixed a rent of 5s. 'Having improved an acre of this waste, the rent is 'raised to £1. The Duke or rather the factor charges 'him interest in the form of rent on the labour he has 'invested in the Duke's lands.

'The above declaration made by the same Adam 'Gordon Mackay, on the 17th March 1884, in his own 'cottage at Durness, was written down by me and 'inserted herein on the 6th of May 1884.

'About the same time, if not actually on the same 'day the matters referred to in Adam Gordon Mackay's 'declaration were executed in the same neighbourhood, 'a savage and criminal act was perpetrated, viz., in the 'case of George Munro, miller at Farr, whose cottage 'before the clearances happened to be in the march 'between the territory assigned to the sheep farm of 'Skelpick and the outrun assigned to the small tenants. 'George had in view to remove his cottage to Clachan 'and was progressing with the erection of the same.

'Meantime his family were visited with a severe attack of 'fever, by which his wife and all his children were 'prostrated. There was no member of the family that 'could help the other but George himself. These in-'cendiaries came to George's cottage. In case of catch-'ing the fever they were afraid to go in. To implement, 'as I suppose, a form of law, they felt bound to ex-'tinguish the household fire. The plan they took was 'to go to the house top and pour down the opening above 'the fire pails of water. This created a volume of 'smoke, mingled with ashes, that filled the whole place, 'and made breathing most difficult. The neighbours 'learning what was going on assembled and placed the 'invalids each on a blanket, and four men in each case 'carried them down to the manse barn that afforded them 'shelter till their own cottage was ready. In the good 'providence of God they all recovered of the fever and 'escaped the suffocation provided for them by what was 'reckoned the executors of law and order. But for 'the strength of Bible principle prevailing among the 'people the land would have been infested with assas-'sination and murder. After all, even yet some would 'character such proceedings as "the advance of civilisa-'"tion."

'I had the above narration some years ago from Mrs 'John Macdonald, Edinburgh, Grace, the daughter of 'the late Rev. David Mackenzie, minister of Farr.'

James Cumming.

Free Manse, Melness,
July 25, 1893.

28,230. Were you appointed at a public meeting?—Yes.

28,231. What was the date of the meeting?—I do not remember the date.

28,232. Was it recently?—No, it was before the men went away to the fishing. They were going away from home and they held a meeting, at which I was appointed a delegate.

28,233. That was earlier in this year?—It was in summer of this year.

28,234. I see you have given in four written statements. Did you get these from Mr Cumming?—Yes, I got them from Mr Cumming's memoranda.

28,235. Did you get them from himself?—No, I did not, but I got the memoranda from him, and had them copied.

28,236. You got the memoranda from Mr Cumming, and then you wrote them out?—Yes.

28,237. Is this your handwriting?—No, it is my son's.

28,238. Is Mr Cumming still alive?—Yes.

28,239. We would like if you would ask him to put his signature to these documents. [*Mr D. H. Mackay.*—We have his written statement here. (*Hands in document.*)]

28,240. Are these the originals?—Yes.

28,241. I think we may take them as sufficient since they are original. Now, you mentioned the farm of Eriboll in particular?—Yes, because the people of Eriboll came to our district, and it was not like the crofters of to-day that they came; they were more like princes coming.

28,242. What I wanted to ask you now is, whereabouts on the farm of Eriboll is there land suitable for the object we have in view?—The land on both sides,—the land on the west side of Loch Hope that was never cultivated. There is a great deal of it. There are two or three townships that were cultivated before, but it could be all cultivated.

28,243. You mean from Hope Ferry?—Not from Hope Ferry but from Arnabol.

28,244. From Arnabol going up towards Strathmore?—Strathmore to Caisteal-Dubh.

28,245. The whole of the land between these points on the west side of Loch Hope?—Yes.

28,246. Now, in your opinion, what is that land suitable for?—For cultivation.

28,247. Do you know of cultivation having been tried

ongue, itherland-ire.

ugh ackay.

there to any considerable extent?—No, but I was through the ground myself.

28,248. You know the ground?—I know the ground.

28,249. Is it suitable, do you think, for the settlement of crofters?—Very suitable for the settlement of crofters, because it has a southerly aspect, and it is not steep.

28,250. And not too high perhaps?—Not too high either; it is well sheltered, and the ground is looking good. A very few pounds per acre would cultivate it.

28,251. How much do you think, now, would be necessary to reclaim it?—£5 an acre.

28,252. You think a crofter could reclaim the land at £5 an acre?—Yes, a crofter could, but the estate management I see could not improve land the same as crofters could; because I see it cost the estate £44 to £73 per acre to improve and bring land under cultivation, while it only cost the crofters £5 to £12 to take in their land.

28,253. Do you think there is land up Strathmore, a considerable distance?—Yes, to the top of Strathmore.

28,254. On the west side of the burn?—Yes, and upon the east side of the burn too.

28,255. What is the name of the burn again?—The Strathmore River.

28,256. Now, besides that land you have indicated on the west side of Loch Hope and on the east and west sides of the Strathmore River, is there any other suitable land in Eriboll?—Yes.

28,257. Where is it?—Far above the head of the Loch, there is a place that they call Strathbeg, which is a fine place.

28,258. That is at the top of Loch Eriboll?—Yes, above Loch Eriboll.

28,259. Surrounding the top of Loch Eriboll?—Yes, just so; and there was also another township there, Faoilinn.

28,260. I see it is marked on the map Creag-na-Faoilinn?—It was a large township at the time; also Bad-an-achaidh and Achinloch; there was no better place between this and Canaan.

28,261. Now, is there land on the west side of Loch Eriboll?—No, there is nothing on the west side of Loch Eriboll that I saw that could be profitably cultivated; there might be pieces.

28,262. There might be patches, but you don't think there is any tract of ground?—No, there is no tract of ground.

28,263. There are a good many crofters down there already?—Yes.

28,264. And I understand they are rather ill off?—Oh, yes.

28,265. Is their land poor?—Very poor; very bad soil. Their land is so poor that sheep were tried on it once, but they failed to live, and were cleared off, and the land was given to a few crofters.

28,266. Is there only one township there, or more than one?—One township.

28,267. Now, passing from the west side of Loch Eriboll to the east side, and going south, say from Heilim Inn, is there any land there?—The Eriboll land is there, and there were a number of crofters in Eriboll.

28,268. Is there suitable land there to any extent, or do you not ask our attention to that part?—There is very fine land in Eriboll.

28,269. I mean on the east side of the Loch,—on the fringe of the loch, at the east side?—There is not much that could be cultivated now, because it was taken in by the proprietor for the sheep farmer of Eriboll. [*Mr Sutherland.*—The Chairman is asking you about the land between Eriboll and Heilim?—There is no land there.]

28,270. Then, is there any land to the south of Eriboll; between Eriboll and the top of the Loch?—No; but there is land that could be cultivated between Eriboll and the top of the Loch too.

28,271. Have you been looking at the land recently?—Yes, I was looking at the whole of it.

28,272. And is it suitable for cultivation, or suitable for grazing?—Very little would cultivate it. Tongue, Sutherland-shire.

28,273. Has it been cultivated before?—No.

28,274. But it could be reclaimed at a moderate cost?—I think £5 an acre would reclaim it. Hugh Mackay.

28,275. Now, passing from the farm of Eriboll for a little to the farm of Melness, is there land on the farm of Melness suitable?—Yes, there is a place that they call Hope, beside the loch, and there is a place to the south of that, that they call Breisgil, and all the land that is between Breisgil and Hope could be cultivated profitably.

28,276. That is going past Hope Lodge, is it?—Since you leave Hope Lodge till you go to a place called Merkan, which is only a small township.

28,277. Is there any considerable extent of land there, or is it trifling in extent?—Oh, a great deal of land.

28,278. Now, besides land on Melness, is there any other land?—There is in Strathmore.

28,279. Then, you ask us to consider, I suppose, the whole of Strathmore?—The whole of Strathmore.

28,280. On both sides of the river?—Yes.

28,281. Up to what point?—To Blaig on this side of the road.

28,282. You are now referring, I understand, to land in Strathmore, forming part of the farm of Melness?—Yes.

28,283. Now, besides the land at Loch Hope and the land at Strathmore, is there any other land on Melness which you would like us to consider?—Upon the side of Melness, facing here, there are four or five townships, but there is land that could be profitably cultivated up from Strath Dithreibh.

28,284. Running up from the top of the Kyle?—Yes; up to Loch-na-Meide. I was there as a shepherd, and it gave as good a crop as ever I saw, and was very easy to cultivate. Above Achaidh Mhoir there is a great deal of land that could be cultivated, miles of it, until you come to Loch-na-Meide.

28,285. To the top of Loch-na-Meide?—Yes. I was putting up sheep stalls there; and there is nothing in it but just fine land and clay under it.

28,286. And is that land on both sides of Loch-na-Meide?—It is in Strath Dithreibh.

28,287. Running up to and along the side of Loch-na-Meide?—Upon the west side of Strath Dithreibh.

28,288. Passing up from that, is there any land on the west side of Loch-na-Meide?—There is not much land there; some could be made, but it is pretty high land there.

28,289. Is there any other land that you would like to bring under our notice?—Yes; the land of Ribigill farm.

28,290. What about Ribigill?—People from Ribigill came down upon us.

28,291. What part of Ribigill is suitable?—All round Ben Loyal.

28,292. There is good grazing at the base of Ben Loyal?—There is good grazing and good land there.

28,293. Is there good land for cultivation?—Yes; good land. There were crofters living round Ben Loyal who were as well off as any in Scotland before the clearance.

28,294. Were there a good number there?—Yes; there were forty of them.

28,295. Separate holdings?—Separate holdings; and there were more than that hereabout. There is a place or two opposite here that are not mentioned in the paper that I read.

28,296. Can you mention the names?—Ach-a-chaisteil.

28,297. Where the old castle is?—Yes.

28,298. Were the people there in any considerable number?—No; there was not a considerable number. Another place is Ceanndroch; that is a place you can see from here, and it is not mentioned in the paper either.

28,299. But generally you ask us to consider the land round the base of Ben Loyal, the land over at the castle here, and the other old township of Ceanndroch?—Yes.

Tongue, Sutherlandshire.

Hugh Mackay.

28,300. Is that all the land you ask us to inspect on Ribigill?—Yes, that is all.

28,301. Well, you have given us a very distinct statement. I would like to ask you further, among those whom you represent is there a considerable desire for land suitable for new holdings?—Yes, and a great need for it, and a great need for extension of holdings. At the time the Crofters Commission was here they applied for the farm of Melness.

28,302. And they were not successful?—No, they were not successful.

28,303. There is a great deal of floe land between Melness farmhouse and Hope Lodge as you go along the moorland road. I suppose you agree that that land is not fit for occupation?—No, that is deep and very soft moss.

28,304. Not suitable, perhaps, either for settlement of crofters or for grazing purposes?—No, indeed it is not.

28,305. Then, does the land you have been thinking of most lie to the south of that and nearer Ben Loyal,—between the road and Ben Loyal?—There is little there worth speaking of.

28,306. Then, where is it that you think extension of grazings could be most advantageously granted?—The extension of grazings is of no consequence; it is extensions of farming that they require.

28,307. You mean an increase of holdings?—Yes.

28,308. But are the crofters of Melness still desirous of an increase of grazings, suppose such an increase could be got?—To be sure.

28,309. Now, where is the land suitable for them?—There is plenty land suitable upon the farm of Eriboll, upon the farm of Melness, and upon the farm of Ribigill.

28,310. No doubt, I was dealing more particularly, however, with the farm of Melness. Is there land suitable upon the farm of Melness?—The farm of Melness is, I believe, the worst farm in Scotland for cultivation.

28,311. But is it suitable for extension of grazing?—Yes, if there was land along with it; if Melness would go along with it.

28,312. You mean the farm steading?—Yes, the farm steading: if it went along with it, it would be suitable.

28,313. But you don't think the grazing of Melness is good unless you get the arable land along with it?—No, I don't think so.

28,314. *Mr Sutherland.*—Where did the most of the people that are now in Melness come from?—The greater part of them came from the Eriboll Farm, the Melness Farm, and the Ribigill farm.

28,315. At the time when these farms were being made?—That was the time of the clearances.

28,316. They were cleared off the farms and swept into Melness; is that the operation?—Yes, they were cleared off, and put down into Melness. That was in the time of Lord Reay.

28,317. What was the date?—From 1811 to 1820.

28,318. And did Lord Reay form these farms as they now exist before he sold the estate?—Yes.

28,319. The Duke of Sutherland got them made, did he?—Yes.

28,320. And were they the same extent that they are now?—The very same.

28,321. I want to ask you how the Melness land now occupied by the crofters was occupied before these people came there?—The whole of what is occupied by the crofters was formerly occupied by about 50.

28,322. And how many are there now?—Ninety-three. It used to be 50, but by the clearance there came others from Eriboll, and from Melness, and down from the Strath here, and that made the number 73. After that 20 more crofts were formed upon the people's grazings.

28,323. But where did these people come from who came that second time?—They came from all parts.

28,324. They came from farther away than Eriboll and Ribigill and Melness Farms?—Yes, there were some among them who were labouring upon these farms, and when they changed hands these people were sent down, and the estate gave them a share.

28,325. Holdings upon the former people's grazings?—And the former people's lands too.

28,326. They were sub-dividing the arable land as well as the grazing?—Yes, and the best of it.

28,327. Then, what was the state of the land before these migrations to that land down at Melness where the crofters are now? When they went down were they given arable land ready cultivated?—Yes, they were getting the best that was there.

28,328. I am talking about the people who were cleared out of Ribigill, Melness, and Eriboll Farms when these farms were made. When these people were sent down, what sort of land did they get?—Lord Reay provided for them the best pieces that there were in Melness.

28,329. For the people who were cleared off the farms?—Yes, because you see when Lord Reay, or rather his lawyer, commenced these clearances,—

28,330. But I want to know what sort of land these people who were evicted from these farms got when they went down to Melness: was it land reclaimed or land in a state of nature?—Land reclaimed.

28,331. So that all the land that is reclaimed in Melness now was reclaimed in 1809, was it?—Yes, mostly, except what is in the township that I live in.

28,332. And then the arable holdings of the people who were down there were sub-divided when these additional people were sent in?—Yes, they were sub-divided; and it was to the advantage of those who came in, and to the disadvantage of those who were there before. My father had a share in the township; and when the clearances were made and the Duke of Sutherland got the place, he was knocked out of his place. It was mostly the same as it would be set fire to, and he only got one-fourth of an acre of arable land; he had eleven head of sheep and he was obliged to sell the whole of them.

28,333. So the people were put from good circumstances into very much worse circumstances?—Yes.

28,334. Did you ever hear it stated that it was for the benefit of the people that all this was done?—Oftentimes, but I never believed it.

28,335. You think it is a most absurd and ridiculous statement to make, as well as being untrue?—It was a most unholy statement.

28,336. Now, you referred to the way in which these clearances were carried out in Strathnaver and other places, and you did so I presume to show that the land the people occupied before could be profitably occupied now?—Yes.

28,337. Do you know what advantage was gained at the time by any person from these clearances?—Yes, I will tell you the advantage gained by these clearances if you will allow me to speak upon it.

28,338. Who profited by the transaction, that is what I want to know?—Well, I will tell you that as I go on.

28,339. You can put it very shortly.—When the clearances began, the landlords had to stock the land for the sheep farmers.

28,340. What is your authority for that?—My authority for it is that Major Forbes got Melness and he got Ribigill besides, and when Houston came from your own side of the country and offered for it, Major Forbes dropped it and went and cleared away Melness; and you see as it is written in the paper by George Sutherland that Lord Reay got no rent for Ribigill during this period.

28,341. For how long?—During this period.

28,342. Until Houston came?—Houston went away; he repudiated the lease.

28,343. Is it your statement that to the best of your knowledge and belief the landlord had to advance the capital to those men who took the lands from which the people were evicted?—Yes, and it was that that evicted Lord Reay. He stocked the farms for the sheep farmers; they could not pay the interest on it, and the bills came due and Lord Reay had to sell his lands and to flee the country.

28,344. In order to pay his liability?—Yes.

28,345. To pay the liabilities he had undertaken for the sheep farmers?—Yes, he had to pay the money to the bank, and he fled the country like a fugitive or a vagabond.

28,346. And do you say that, according to your knowledge, this is the reason why Lord Reay had to sell his estate?—The very reason, but it was beneficial to the sheep farmers.

28,347. As to the question of benefit now, who benefited by it, seeing Lord Reay did not?—The sheep farmers benefited by it, because after Lord Reay fled the country they never paid him a farthing, and they got to be tenants under the Duke of Sutherland without ever paying a farthing to him. And then they raised a report upon Lord Reay that he was a spendthrift.

28,348. That was the way he spent his money, was it?—Yes, and I see by statistics that from the year 1811 to the present time a sixpence did not go into the pocket of the proprietor, the expense was so much.

28,349. Yes, I saw that statement too; that has been made public over and over again?—And that the Stafford exchequer paid £60,000 besides the whole rental of Sutherland since the year 1811.

28,350. Where did you see that?—I saw it in some of the statistics that were given by Mr Loch in Parliament, and I got some of the facts from Mr Box here.

28,351. Did you ever see a statement of the accounts that was published by Mr Brereton who was Commissioner for the Duke of Sutherland?—I saw that.

28,352. Is the same statement made there?—No, as to the statement that was made by Mr Brereton I don't know what I would call it; I had better call it nothing at all.

28,353. But your assertion is that the system for which the people were cleared was a failure from the beginning?—A failure from the beginning to the end.

28,354. No one denies now that it is a failure, but you say it was a failure from the beginning?—Yes, it was a failure from the beginning, and it is a failure still, because I do recollect the year there came distress among the sheep, for the snow lay on the ground for a very long time, and they had to hand-feed the sheep upon the farms. Well, the sheep farmers of Sutherland formed into a league, and they adopted the plan of campaign; they went to the Duke and offered him half rent, and said if he would not take them they would throw the land upon his hands.

28,355. They offered him what rent they pleased, did they?—They offered him just 50 per cent. of the rent. It was the sheep farmers of Sutherland who commenced the plan of campaign, before ever it was commenced in Ireland.

28,356. With regard to the land from which these people were cleared, you say that it was started by men without capital?—Yes, they had no capital.

28,357. Who were they as a rule?—They were the lawyers who were on Lord Reay's estate.

28,358. You are talking of Lord Reay's estate just now, are you?—Yes. It was there that it commenced. I think the imperial law never came north of the Grampians at that time, and I am doubtful if it has come so far north as this yet.

28,359. These men, who are reputed to have been men of capital, men of skill, men of enterprise, and men of all the virtues, were they, as a matter of fact, men of capital at all when they came to take these farms?—They had no capital at all.

28,360. The capital had to be found for them?—Yes, it had to be found; and Clark of Eriboll had to keep some of the crofters upon his farms till they would advance the money. There was one Angus Mackay—

28,361. I take your general statement without going into details. Now, I ask you all these questions in view of the difficulties which we hear at the present time, about getting capital to start people in new holdings?—I don't see any difficulties.

28,362. Have these crofters, the better class of them even yet, as much capital as the sheep farmers had when they came to Sutherland?—Just about the same.

28,363. As a matter of fact, do the greater number of these large farmers not come here as shepherds?—Yes, the greater number of them come here as shepherds, only these had got it first. After that the whole of them come here as shepherds.

28,364. They would be the men who had good practical knowledge of sheep farming, I suppose?—Yes.

28,365. In your opinion then, would all this great difficulty exist with regard to capital, if there was a willingness on the part of those in authority to make a trial of them again?—If there was willingness on the part of the authority there is way enough.

28,366. And what do you think about this question of capital; do you think it is at all necessary for a man to start on a small holding now, with full equipments valued at £600 or £700?—I will give you my opinion upon that. If they would start in the proper way, if they would not put the cart before the horse, if they would start with the best offer and remove them, and let Government advance £150 as was advanced to the American settlers, and the landlord would give full compensation for their improvements.

28,367. You mean where they are now?—Where they are now.

28,368. You mean to say if he was to compensate them when removing to their new holdings for the improvements they left behind?—Yes, wherever the landlord made improvements let him have the improvements, and wherever the crofter made improvements let him carry the full value of the improvements with him. There are a good many of them who have stock that would do at first, and if they would get £150 each over five years at a low interest I think they would get a good start and prosper well, but people without capital cannot enter on anything.

28,369. Could not they enter upon it as well as the large sheep farmers did at the time you spoke of?—With sheep farmers it was possible enough, because they got the proprietor to stock the land for them.

28,370. But could not the proprietor do it now as well as then?—Yes, if he was willing.

28,371. But you think he is not willing?—I cannot say; I will not say whether he is willing or not, because I do not know.

28,372. You have not applied to him?—Yes, he said to me that he was willing to help them, the only time that ever I spoke to him; and he said that he would help myself.

28,373. I wish to ask you as to the rent that is being paid by the small holders and by the large farmers respectively. You have heard it stated, I suppose, that the large farmers are paying more for the land than you are paying. What is your opinion regarding that?—Take the farm of Melness which comprises 73,000 acres.

28,374. That is the old farm, I suppose?—Yes, the old farm, and what was under the tenants' or crofters' 10,000 acres. The crofters paid £300 and the farm of Melness paid only £600; compare the 10,000 acres with the 73,000 and you will see which of them paid the most rent.

28,375. What is the result; have you made the calculation?—No.

28,376. Do you know what is the present rent of the farm of Melness?—No, I don't know; but I know that it was reduced lately.

28,377. Do you hear that it is £280?—I heard it was something over £200, but I could not say.

28,378. Do you know the extent of the present farm of Melness?—It is said to be 22,000 acres.

28,379. It is more than that. [*Mr Gordon.*—It is less than that]. That is what is said; I never saw it stated in print.

28,380 But do you think you are paying more per acre than the farmer is paying for the farm of Melness?—Yes, because I pay £3 for two acres, and a little over it.

28,381. And the share of the hill pasture?—Yes, the share of the hill pasture. I did not pay at first but 35s., that was about 1830, but it was raised twice afterwards; in 1832 it was raised to £2, 6s. and in 1858 to £3, 6s.

Tongue, Sutherlandshire.

Hugh Mackay.

28,382. And how much did the landlord do for that?—He never did anything for me. My house came down about the time the Crofters Commission was here, and I believe most of the rest who repaired their houses got something from the landlord, but I got nothing.

28,383. I take it from the papers you have read, and from the general drift of your evidence, that you believe that there is land suitable for occupation by crofters or other small holders, and that it could be occupied to profit; also that there is a desire on the part of the people to take such land if they had the opportunity?—I am sure of it.

28,384. And you think these places you have mentioned to us as having been inhabited before are very suitable for the purpose?—I am sure they are. I remember the people that left the places, and I saw their stock, because as you see I am an old man.

28,385. And have you yourself had experience in reclaiming land?—I think I have had as much experience as any one that could speak about it.

28,386. More that a factor or a larger farmer, I suppose?—More than all the factors and large farmers in the country.

28,387. You are speaking, therefore, from your own personal experience?—I speak from what I have done myself.

28,388. You know personally the ground that you have referred to?—Yes.

28,389. You have walked over it?—I have walked over the whole ground several times.

28,390. You were asked by the Chairman if you knew the land on the west shore of Loch Eriboll; you do know that land, don't you?—Yes, I was through that land too.

28,391. And you said it was land that, in your opinion, was not suitable for cultivation?—In my opinion it is not suitable.

28,392. Yet there are people planted there, are there not?—Yes.

28,393. If you had the putting down of people in a a place where there is a reasonable chance of success, would you put them down in Laid?—I would not put one down there.

28,394. And don't the people in Laid see from their doors some of the best land in the parish lying uncultivated?—They see the best land that I know of in the north.

28,395. Lying waste?—Lying waste.

28,396. Up about the top of Loch Eriboll you said?—Yes, the land there is upon limestone.

28,397. And the land at Laid is not upon limestone?—No, indeed, it is upon the quartz stone, and there are holes that eat it away.

28,398. Are there now in the district of Melness a number of people who would be very glad to take new holdings if they got them in a better place than Melness?—Yes.

28,399. *Mr Gordon.*—I see you have a pretty large extent of pasture along with your crofting townships in Melness?—Yes.

28,400. About 10,000 acres?—It never was that amount though it is said to be so.

28,401. Now, there are 93 crofting tenants having an interest in the pasture: tell me how you occupy it,—have you sheep?—Yes.

28,402. Do you keep it as a club farm, or a common grazing?—As a common grazing.

28,403. Have you any idea how many sheep are upon that ground; have you a souming, or how do you regulate the number?—No.

28,404. Does each man keep as many or as few as he likes?—Every man keeps as many as he likes.

28,405. How many have you yourself now?—About a score.

28,406. Well, suppose you were to multiply 93 by 20 you would have nearly 2000 sheep?—Yes, about 2000 sheep.

28,407. And how many cattle would there be: four or six to each tenant?—About 500 or 600 cattle.

28.408. How many sheep would you allow for each beast? Would you allow five or four?—I think four.

28,409. That makes over 2000; how many horses have you?—About 60.

28,410. And would you allow ten sheep to each horse?—Oh, no.

28,411. Well, say five: they are not overfed, I suppose?—Say six.

28,412. That makes 360. Now, would you say that upon this bare part of the pasture you have nearly as much stock as there is in the whole farm of Melness?—Yes, but I know that if the crofters got Melness farm they would put double the present stock on it.

28,413. Yes, but would that not be to their loss,—to the loss of the people who put the stock on it? Don't you think a great deal of your want of success is due to overstocking?—Yes, and I know that the overstocking arises from the want of agriculture, because grazing without agriculture is a failure everywhere. If there was agriculture upon the farm of Melness they could have more than double the sheep stock on it at present, because the grazing of Melness is not a great deal. [*The Chairman.*—Mr Gordon's question is have you not too many sheep upon the grazing of Melness?]

28,414. He will hardly own that?—Yes, there are.

28,415. What sort of land lies between your present grazing and Loch Eriboll?—The worst of it.

28,416. Is it worse or better, or as good as you have?—It is just about the same as what we have.

28,417. Just about as good. There is no green land round by that part of the coast, is there?—No.

28,418. There is none till you come to Hope Lodge?—Only one township.

28,419. Is that at Freisgill?—Yes.

28,420. There is an old township there, and some old arable?—Yes.

28,421. But the bulk of that land lying between you and Loch Eriboll is floe land?—Yes, and there is no shelter in it at all.

28,422. But there would be shelter in one side or another of the hill: if it was blowing a west wind the stock would take naturally over to the side of Melness, and if an east wind they would take naturally over to Loch Eriboll?—Yes, but it is pretty flat.

28,423. Did your crofting townships ever apply for that part of Melness farm?—We applied for the whole farm of Melness, and also for a part of it, but we did not get either.

28,424. How many people do you think could be conveniently accommodated with arable land in your township? How many of the 93 men would you remove in order to leave the others in a comfortable position?—To leave them in a comfortable position two out of every three.

28,425. Then, you think there is not more land than would properly accommodate 31 people?—That is as much as it could hold comfortably.

28,426. Where would you suppose land could be got for the others? You have told us where there is land, but do you suppose that in all the places you have mentioned you could place the other 60 people comfortably?—Yes, and the land I went over and referred to to-day would accommodate other 60 beyond them.

28,427. Is the fishing industry carried on with you, or how do you live? Is there any part of the population of your townships that lives by fishing?—There are none who live by fishing; it would be a poor living.

28,428. You have no harbours?—No.

28,429. Nor boats?—No, nor a coast suitable for fishing.

28,430. In fact, your principal livelihood is drawn from the land such as it is?—It is drawn from all countries.

28,431. The men go out to work do you mean?—The men have to go as far off as America and Africa to work.

28,432. It is by labour outside your crofting townships that the townships are maintained?—Yes, the fishing is a little help, but it is a poor support.

28,433. Do the younger men go away to the summer fishing?—Every one that can go.

28,434. You live partly by fishing, but not home fishing?—We don't live at all by fishing.

28,435. Would your township consider it an advantage to get an extension of grazing towards Loch Eriboll?—No, I don't think it would be any advantage to get grazings unless they got arable land along with it.

28,436. Have you quite as much grazing just now as you can use properly or profitably with the small extent of arable land you have?—Yes, because it will summer our stock.

28,437. Your opinion is that to obtain a real relief you must remove from the townships at least two-thirds of the present occupants?—That is my opinion.

28,438. *The Chairman.*—I see that the crofters of Skinnid have 81 acres of township pasture, is not that so?—Where?

28,439. Township pasture, 81 acres held in equal shares by the crofters of Skinnid, is that not correct?—No, it is not correct. [*Mr Watson*, surveyor.—At Airdskinnid]. It is no more than——

28,440. Never mind the precise extent, but is there township pasture held by the crofters of Skinnid at Airdskinnid Point?—Yes. The extent of it is very little.

28,441. Just listen to these two sentences from Mr Loch's book. In his account of the improvements on the Sutherland Estate published in 1820, p. 108, the following passage occurs:—'The Reay country which 'had been arranged in the same manner as the estate of 'Sutherland was most judiciously done by Lord Reay, 'and with equal success. The whole of the interior of 'that property has been let in seven large sheep farms 'occupied by two south country and five native stock 'farmers. The people have been settled on the shores 'near the mouths of some of the noble sea-water lochs 'with which Lord Reay's estate is intersected;" and in another sentence on p. 109, he says 'Lord Reay's lands 'are situated at Skerray, and near the mouth of Loch 'Inchard on the west coast, and at the mouth of Loch 'Eriboll and at Skerray near Eriboll Island on the north 'coast.' That is correct, is it not?—I think it is.

28,442. I was going to ask you this further question. You stated, I think, in the course of answering Mr Sutherland that you had been promised, or that the landlord had been favourable to giving you some assistance at one time for stocking?—Yes, but it was not publicly; it was in my own house.

28,443. Are you yourself desirous of getting a new holding?—To be sure.

28,444. And you would be willing to remove?—I was in much need of removing.

28,445. Is that the prevailing feeling in the township of Skinnid?—That is what I always heard among them.

28,446. Now, suppose you removed, would you require assistance?—Yes, but I think Government assistance should be given, such as was given to those who were emigrated to America.

28,447. Then, is the assistance you require about the sum you mentioned, £150?—£150 divided upon five years. [*Mr Gordon.*—I don't think his meaning is clearly expressed; I think he means spread over five years.]

28,448. Spread over five years and repaid at a low rate of interest?—Yes. £30 a year would keep a family working upon the croft; but if they did not get anything they would require to scatter and to seek work in other places.

28,449. You mean the £150 to be lent to you in sums of £30 each year?—Yes.

28,450. And repaid by you over a long period of time at a low rate of interest?—Yes.

28,451. *Mr Sutherland.*—You said that you are willing to remove to a new holding? Yes, I have the greatest need of all.

28,452. And who has the power to give you the new holding?—The estate.

28,453. The Duke of Sutherland you said intimated his willingness to help you?—Yes.

28,454. And he has the power of doing it?—Yes.

28,455. Why then are you not in the new holding? (*No answer.*)

28,456. Well, I won't press you for an answer to that. But, with regard to the overstocking, is it a fact that the crofters' lands are overstocked as compared with the large farmers'?—Yes.

28,457. How do you account for that?—Because every one that can keep sheep tries to do so, and those who have none are apt to suffer.

28,458. In other words it is from a desire to make the best of your circumstances?—Yes.

28,459. It is a proof of the desire of the people to do better than they can at present?—That very desire.

28,460. Have you ever heard it raised as an objection against giving new holdings to crofters that they could not stock them?—That was always the objection.

28,461. And now it is an objection that they have too much stock?—Yes; but they must object to something.

28,462. Then, with regard to the amount of green land on the sheep farms, I think Mr Gordon stated,—and stated quite correctly,—that it is a very great matter to have green land on a grazing farm. Do you agree with that?—Yes.

28,463. You believe that too?—Yes, I was ever of that opinion.

28,464. And how is heather made green?—That is easily done.

28,465. How is it done?—Plough heather and it will soon come green.

28,466. Who made the green spots in the large farms that give them their value?—It was the crofters; and the crofters could do very little at that time compared with what they can do now, because then they had nothing but a spade, and I am doubtful if they had even that.

28,467. You stated, I think, that the large farm of Melness had a great deal of inferior pasture on it; is that not so?—Yes.

28,468. Who was the tenant before the present tenant?—William Mackay, Thurso.

28,469. Had he other farms?—Yes, a large number in Caithness.

28,470. He had arable farms, had not he?—I think about the time he took the Melness farm he had fourteen arable farms.

28,471. And has the present occupier also got low country farms?—There are two about the farm now.

28,472. And has either of them got low-lying arable farms?—One of them is a proprietor, with the best places I think in Caithness. He has Scrabster as an estate, and he farms extensively in Caithness besides.

28,473. Then, it has always been found necessary, has it not, that the occupier of Melness sheep farm required to have arable land somewhere?—Yes.

28,474. And that is the principle you are advocating with regard to making more arable land in these glens,—that they would then carry more stock?—The very same principle.

28,475. Did you hear that the Duke of Sutherland's object when he initiated the reclamations on the east coast was to increase the amount of arable in proportion to the pasture, so that they could winter more stock?—Yes, and I am sure that was the object.

28,476. Are you aware also that the sheep carrying power of the pasture in Sutherland is decreasing?—Yes, I know that grazing without agriculture is on the decline everywhere.

28,477. And do you think that the reason for that is that there is too little agricultural land and too much pasturing?—That is the very reason.

28,478. And are you of opinion that if the people were sent back to the glens they would increase the amount of arable land very largely?—If half the money was spent upon agriculture that was spent upon desolating the country they would have every piece that

Tongue, Sutherlandshire.

Hugh Mackay.

could be profitably cultivated in Sutherland cultivated in half the time.

28,479. Are you aware that the Duke of Sutherland expended enormous sums of money in reclaiming large acreages on the large farms in this country, and in other parts of the county as well?—Yes, I know, because I was working at it myself.

28,480. And I think you stated in your paper that he paid an enormous sum per acre for doing so?—Yes, according to the estate account from £44 to £73 per acre.

28,481. And you are of opinion that crofters could reclaim it at what price?—From £5 to £12.

28,482. Then, if the Duke of Sutherland had encouraged the crofters to reclaim the land he would have reclaimed six times the acreage with the same money, is that what it comes to?—Yes, by giving the money to crofters.

28,483. And, as a matter of fact, have not the rents been raised upon the improvements made by the crofters themselves?—It is I that could tell that.

28,484. You could tell that from personal experience?—Yes.

28,485. Do you ever hear of a rent being raised on a large sheep farmer for the improvements he made at his own expense?—I never heard that a large farmer made any improvements.

28,486. And do you know, as a matter of fact, that the large farmers are allowing the land to get worse and worse every year?—I know that the land is deteriorating every year, and that it will soon be worse than the deserts of Arabia.

28,487. Do you think it would be in the interests of the landlords themselves, or the landlord himself in this case, if the land were given in the way you advocate?—If the land was given in the way I advocate, I think it would be as profitable for the landlord as it would be for the crofters.

28,488. Taking into account all the circumstances that you know, is the present time, in your opinion, a favourable time to try such an experiment?—Yes, it is, because I see that every other thing has failed, and I think that this should be tried now.

28,489. You think that all the experiments that have been tried for the last eighty years have now practically turned out a failure, and that the time is now arrived for trying something else?—All the skill of the managers of the north of Scotland has failed now.

28,490. And is that the general opinion in the district you represent here to-day?—Both my opinion and the opinion of those I represent.

28,491. *Mr Macaulay, Solicitor, Golspie.*—I want to get some further explanation regarding the statement about Lord Reay having stocked the sheep farms. What farms do you specially refer to when you say that he stocked their farms?—Five farms.

28,492. Who held them?—Forbes had one, and he got another; that was two; Clark of Eriboll got another.

28,493. Do you say that Clark of Eriboll's farms were stocked by Lord Reay?—What other would stock it but Lord Reay?

28,494. Who are the other parties? Who held the farm of Ribigill?—There was one Charles Clark.

28,495. Which farm had he?—He had two or three farms; I think he had Glendhu, and he had Shegra and Shilivall.

28,496. Now, how do you come to know that that was the case? Is it simply by report or have you any means of telling us? It is an extraordinary statement.—It was just a report, and I am sure it was true enough.

28,497. When these parties went out, do you think the incoming tenants paid for the stock?—They did.

28,498. So that Lord Reay did not. For instance, Mr Innes in Ribigill; do you think his stock was paid for by Lord Reay?—No.

28,499. Then your statement simply applies to the Forbes', does it?—Yes.

28,500. Now are you aware that the Forbes' were friends of Lord Reay?—Yes, I know that they were. [*Mr Sutherland.*—Do you mean relatives?]

Tongue, Sutherlandshire.

28,501. Relatives?—Yes, and a good bit off too.

Hugh Mackay.

28,502. You made a statement here that the present Duke of Sutherland promised you a holding; where did he make that promise? [*The Chairman.*—No; it came out in this way; what he said was that the Duke had a private conversation in his house, when he expressed his willingness to assist the witness in stocking: but the examination after that rather took the form of assistance otherwise. I think what witness meant was assistance in stocking.]

28,503. It was especially with regard to the answer he gave to Mr Sutherland that I asked the question. [*To Witness*]. He did not promise you a holding?—No, but he asked if I were to get a holding, how did I think I could work it, and I told him how far I could stock a holding. He said if I would get assistance from the landlord along with that, and I said yes. 'Well,' he said 'take not the advice of evil counsellors, and I will try to give you advice.'

28,504. You told us a little ago that the Crofters Commission had fixed a Fair Rent for you. Have you paid up that rent?—I think it is paid.

28,505. But have you paid the rent that was fixed by the Crofters Commission? Have you fulfilled your obligations to your landlord?—No, I could not.

28,506. How many sheep do you say you have?—Twenty.

28,507. Do you think you have more than your share of sheep?—I think it is fully as much as I should have.

28,508. But still you don't think you are doing anything wrong in having so many sheep?—I don't think I am doing anything wrong.

Donald Hugh Mackay, Merchant, Ach-na-h-uaighe, Melness (36)—*examined.*

Donald Hu Mackay.

28,509. *The Chairman.*—Are you a grocer?—Yes.

28,510. Was your croft dealt with by the Crofters Commission?—Yes.

28,511. I see your arable land is 4 acres 2 roods, and outrun 6 acres 3 roods, and share of 10,773 acres common grazing; former rent £5, 19s. 3d., fair rent £5?—Yes.

28,512. Were you appointed at a public meeting?—Yes.

28,513. As a delegate to represent the crofters of Melness?—Yes.

28,514. Was there a meeting of the townships generally?—Yes, a public meeting called for the purpose. A committee had been elected, and still exists, of which I am a member.

28,515. Have you a written statement?—Yes, but it simply reaffirms what my friend has already stated to Her Majesty's Commission.

28,516. And you agree with his statement?—Yes, I simply reaffirm what he said. My statement is word for word with his, and two delegates being elected in case one might not be able to attend.

28,517. *Mr Forsyth.*—You have heard Mr Mackay's statement as to the number of people who would have to leave the place in order to make the rest comfortable, *i.e.*, two out of every three?—Yes.

28,518. You concur specially in that view?—Yes, indeed.

28,519. Would that leave the holdings sufficiently large to enable the people to live?—Well, it would place them in better circumstances; but in some instances they would require that more should leave, because their holdings are miserably small and bare patches.

28,520. Even more than two-thirds?—Yes, although that would be a great improvement on the present state of matters.

28,521. You have a share in the grazing, of course, along with the rest?—Yes.

28,522. Is there any system of management at all?—Simply that we have a private committee appointed

Tongue, Sutherlandshire.

Donald Hugh Mackay.

for keeping regulations as to herding and the like of that; and we have to pay for our herds, and so forth.

28,523. Is there any limit among you as to the amount of stock?—No, we are simply allowed to go our length that way as far as we are able to winter the stock.

28,524. The fact then is that everybody puts upon that hill what is right in their own eyes in the way of stock?—Exactly.

28,525. And do you find that the place is overstocked?—Yes, indeed, I find that.

28,526. Has there been any attempt made to improve the sheep pasture by surface cuts or sheep drains?—No.

28,527. I noticed that there is a great deal of wet land there; don't you think that would add to the value of it?—It would if we had the means of doing it.

28,528. Don't you think that could be done by combination among yourselves?—Yes, if we had the means, but the question is how to get the capital; we cannot expect men to work without something.

28,529. But could not you all arrange to turn out for a certain time at a slack season and trench these wet lands?—Yes, but, in fact, people have so much to do: for the first part of the summer they are away at the fishing, and during the depth of winter the day is short and everything is inconvenient, and in the commencement of spring we are sowing; there are so many things pressing upon us.

28,530. Then, as a matter of fact, you think the most is not made of the grazing land, and that the grazing is overstocked?—Yes, because it is of such a character that we cannot depend on cattle living there for the winter supposing we were able to keep a shepherd.

28,531. *Mr Gordon.*—I put the question to the former witness as to whether there would be any advantage in getting your grazings extended, and he said there would not unless you had more arable land. Now, assuming that you keep your present stock of sheep and cattle on the ground, would it not be an advantage to have them better grazed?—Yes, certainly it would.

28,532. Would they not be better grazed if you had the grazings on to Loch Eriboll?—It would if we got the arable land; but without the arable land it would be in vain to get an extension.

28,533. But would your beasts not be a little better grazed if you had a little more extension of pasture?—No, because we cannot get any good off our grazing that we have, as it cannot keep cattle during the winter.

28,534. But you have too many sheep on for the boundary you have; you have too many mouths to feed?—We have simply to hand-feed all our stock, from the hens to the horses; that is how we stand.

28,535. Would it not be better if your cattle and sheep were away some distance along Loch Eriboll side just now while the weather is good?—Certainly, if we had arable land there.

28,536. But if you had a shepherd?—We cannot afford that as at present circumstanced.

28,537. *Mr Sutherland.*—With regard to the stock on the hill, you agree among yourselves as to the stock, don't you?—Yes, certainly.

28,538. And with regard to the improvement on the pasture, I suppose you don't deny but it would be important to drain the pasture?—Certainly, I do.

28,539. Is your land worse drained than the large farm of Melness?—Yes, it certainly is.

28,540. Who made the drains on the large farms?—It was done by the sheep farmers themselves; they employ men for the sheep drains and pay them.

28,541. And who pays the money?—I think it is the farmers.

28,542. Do you?—Yes, for the sheep drains whatever.

28,543. What is your reason for supposing that?—I was speaking to the men that were employed.

28,544. And they were paid by the farmer?—Yes.

28,545. But you don't know whether it was the farmer's money or not?—I cannot say, I will not take that upon me.

28,546. I presume that the want of drains on your pasture in the past would be owing to the fact that you had no security of tenure?—Certainly.

Tongue, Sutherlandshire.

28,547 But now that you have security of tenure, perhaps it might not be a bad thing, you think, to improve it in that way?—No, I should encourage that.

Donald Hugh Mackay.

28,548. As I understand from what you have said, the limit to the pasture you might usefully use is the amount of wintering, is it not?—Exactly.

28,549. And it is your contention that you could not utilise this properly, because your arable land is too small an area?—Yes.

28,550. If you got improvable land you think you could increase that arable land, and thus be able to winter more stock?—Yes.

28,551. In fact, is this the case, that the problem as to keeping of stock is just the same in your case as in the case of the large farmer; you can only maintain a certain amount in proportion to the wintering land you have?—Exactly.

28,552. And you think that the amount of pasture that has been referred to is too large in proportion to the arable land you have?—Exactly.

28,553. *The Chairman.*—Are you of opinion that if the crofters who have this large extent of upwards of 10,000 acres kept only as much sheep stock as the land would carry it would be more profitable to them than keeping the excess number?—I do confess it would be better to keep it equal to the wintering they have.

28,554. Then, do they keep stock at present in excess of the wintering?—Yes, they do. For the past two or three years there has been no price for cattle, and people were obliged to keep their stock on hand for two years in succession; they were unable to clear the stock although they had a mind to do so.

28,555. But how do they winter their stock at present? You say they have an excess of stock and have difficulty—how do they winter it?—As far as the provender that we have at our hand will go we must hand-feed them, and they are half starved after all.

28,556. And when the provender at hand fails, do you buy any?—Yes, whenever we can get it.

28,557. That makes wintering a very expensive business?—Yes, it is quite a failure.

28,558. And the expense is added to by the fact that the sheep on the hill are in excess of what the arable land will sustain?—Yes.

28,559. *Mr Macaulay, Solicitor, Golspie.*—Has any movement been started in your township to come under the operation of the Grazings Regulation Act?—Yes, we made arrangements to get a committee appointed for that purpose.

28,560. And has the matter been gone on with?—It has not been put forth yet, but, in fact, we made a noise.

28,561. Is there an application before the Commission? [*Mr Box.*—No, but there will be before long.]

28,562. About these drains on the sheep farms, your understanding was that the farmers paid for these?—Yes.

98,563. Well, that is the fact, I may tell you?—Yes, I thought so.

28,564. *Mr Sutherland.*—Are you aware that there are advances made every year by the country for the purpose of draining lands, and that there is a special Act of Parliament passed for the purpose of allowing that?—I was not aware of that, but still I believe it now.

ALEXANDER BARNETSON, Cottar, Skinnid, Melness (38)—*examined.*

Alexander Barnetson.

28,565. *The Chairman.*—You are a cottar at Skinnid?—Yes.

28,566. Have you any land at all?—No land whatever.

28,567. Just the site of your house?—Yes.

28,568. Have you a potato patch?—Nothing, but what I get from my neighbours.

28,569. And do you pay them anything?—Formerly I did, but not for the last two years.

Tongue, Sutherlandshire.

Alexander Barnetson.

28,570. Did you pay in labour or in money?—I paid partly in both.

28,571. But you have not been doing so for two years?—No.

28,572. Was that owing to bad times?—Well, since the Crofters Commission was here the cottars of Melness, 30 in number, held part of the arable land, that was down in Ardskinnid, which was at one time cultivated by the crofters. Before the Commission came round they were giving it to cottars, but since the Commission came round they were taking it away from cottars; so that anything they give to the cottars is simply small patches on the crofts.

28,573. May I ask you how do you earn your livelihood?—Sometimes I go to the fishing, and at other times I work away in the south, and anywhere I can obtain work.

28,574. Your livelihood is obtained by labour wherever you can get it?—Yes.

28,575. And, I suppose, that labour is precarious?—Yes.

28,576. What average wage do you earn?—To take it upon an average, I suppose, about £35 a year.

28,577. Have you been earning that during the last two years?—No, I have not. I have been working at home, at the new quarries that have been started at Melness for the last two years.

28,578. What wage did you get there?—15s. a week.

28,579. But your labour is steady in the meantime. Were you one of the delegates appointed at that meeting?—Yes.

28,580. I suppose we may take you as representing specially the feelings of the cottars?—Yes.

28,581. Are these cottars desirous of obtaining holdings?—Yes, they have applied to the present factor, Mr Box; they have applied to the late Duke, and to the Duchess Dowager, and also to the present Duke for land, and they could not get it.

28,582. Were these different applications?—Yes, they were different applications.

28,583. How many applications were put in?—We made two to the late Duke, and one to the Duchess Dowager, and one to the present Duke.

28,584. That makes four; what answers have been made? Did you get an answer to each of these?—The last answer we got was handed in to you, my lord, at the time the Crofters Commission was here, by the agent who represented the people of Melness, Mr Ewen Robertson.

28,585. But possibly you can tell me what the substance of the answer was?—The substance was that we were to apply to the Crofters Commission.

28,586. That was the answer made by the estate?—Yes. [*Mr Ewen Robertson.*—The answer was that it was left over to the Crofters Commission to settle it.]

28,587. Do the other cottars whom you specially represent maintain themselves similarly to the way in which you do?—Yes.

28,588. By labour?—By labour and by fishing in the summer time.

28,589. As hired hands?—Yes.

28,590. Have any of them boats of their own?—No.

28,591. But they get occasional hiring engagements on fishing boats?—Yes.

28,592. Is that the herring fishing?—The herring fishing.

28,593. *Mr Sutherland.*—How many crofters are there in Melness?—Ninety-three now. There were ninety formerly, and other three were added when the Crofters Commission was here.

28,594. And how many cottars?—Thirty.

28,595. Thirty people without land in Melness?—Thirty without land and having separate houses. [*The Chairman.*—And paying no rent?—Paying no rent. None of them?—Two of them; one pays 5s. and the other 12s.]

28,596. And they have no land?—Well, they have a garden.

28,597. Who built the houses?—Their forefathers, I suppose.

28,598. Not the proprietor?—No, the proprietor built no houses in Melness as far as I have heard or can learn.

28,599. A rent of 12s. is paid for what acreage?—I would say that this man who pays 12s. will have only ¼ acre.

28,600. Then, he pays at the rate of 48s. an acre?—Yes.

28,601. You state that the cottars made repeated applications to the estate to give them some land?—Yes.

28,602. Did you specify any amount of land wanted?—We specified part of the farm of Melness, and pointed out the boundaries.

28,603. But I did not understand what answer you got?—The answer we got then was to apply to the Crofters Commission.

28,604. The Crofters Commission had no land?—No, but they had the power. The estate, I suppose, tried to give us the best answer they could, or to put us off at the time, and that was the answer they gave, —to go to the Crofters Commission.

28,605. *The Chairman.*—Were you not aware that the Crofters Commission had no power to enlarge the holdings of cottars?—We were fully aware of that, and we wrote back to that effect.

28,606. To whom?—To the present Duke; but we got no answer.

28,607. The Crofters Commission, as you are aware, have special Parliamentary powers under the Act to give enlargement of holdings to crofters, but not to cottars. —Well, I know that we wrote back to the present Duke stating that we knew the Crofters Commission had no power to give land under the Act, and that we hoped his Grace would be kind enough to give his consent to the Crofters Commission to deal with the cottars of Melness; but we got no reply to that.

28,608. When was that answer by you to the estate made?—Shortly after we got the answer from the Duke that we were to apply to the Crofters Commission.

28,609. And you got no reply to that?—No reply.

28,610. *Mr Sutherland.*—Did that answer come through the usual channel of communication with the Duke of Sutherland,—that you were to apply to the Crofters Commission?—Yes, it did.

28,611. From the factor?—Yes, we got the reply from Tongue; but the last two replies came from the Duke's Secretary.

28,612. Are all these thirty cottars that you referred to anxious to get land?—Very anxious; I suppose if they had not been anxious they would not have applied to the Duke for it.

28,613. I think you are quite justified in making that statement. They would be perfectly willing, you think, if they got land on anything like reasonable terms to take that land and to work it to advantage?—Very willing.

28,614. And do you think there is plenty land in this district?—I hold that there is plenty land in the farm of Melness.

28,615. Suitable for them?—Very suitable.

28,616. And plenty on the farm of Ribigill?—Plenty.

28,617. And plenty in the whole of this district and on the farm of Eriboll?—Yes.

28,618. You don't think these holdings are too restricted, do you?—No, I don't.

28,619. *Mr Macaulay, Solicitor, Golspie.*—With regard to these cottars, are they men of any means? Are the cottars in Melness fairly well off?—I think they are about the average.

28,620. Would they be able to stock holdings if they got them?—I hold that if they were not able they would not ask for them or apply for them.

28,621. You think no one in these parts ever asked for anything he could not fulfil?—I am speaking for the cottars.

28,622. Then, you think they would be able to stock a holding and pay a rent?—I am fully aware that they would be able to stock a holding.

28,623. You would be able to do it yourself?—Yes.

28,624. *The Chairman.*—Do you admit, Mr Mac-

Tongue, Sutherland-shire.

Alexander Barnetson.

aulay, that the answer from the Duke was to apply to the Crofters Commission? [*Mr Macaulay.*—I am not in a position at this moment to say.]

28,625. You do not deny it? [*Mr Macaulay.*—I am not in a position in the meantime to deny it, but I could shortly ascertain.] [*Mr Box.*—If the letter in question came from Tongue, copy of it can be obtained.]

28,626. We would like very much to see a copy of the letter at your convenience. [*Mr Box.*—Very well. I cannot carry in my mind the exact facts of the case, but I don't think they were told to apply to the Commission.]

28,627. *Mr Box.* [*To witness*].—Did that letter come from me?—No, not the last letter.

28,628. The letter in which it was stated that you should apply to the Crofters Commission for this land; how was it that the letter came?—Through the Duke's Secretary.

28,629. *The Chairman.*—Who got the letter?—I got it myself.

28,630. It was you who wrote the application?—Yes.

28,631. And you received an answer directed to yourself?—Yes.

28,632. Have you got that letter?—I understand it was lodged with the Crofters Commission and put up as a production along with the application.

James William Morrison.

James William Morrison, Torrisdale (29)—*examined.*

28,633. *The Chairman.*—Are you a teacher in Melness school?—I am not employed as a teacher now; I am staying with my father.

28,634. When did you cease to be a teacher?—I was teacher in Melness school in the beginning of this year.

28,635. Were you appointed as a delegate at a public meeting of the crofters of Torrisdale?—The crofters of the district of Skerray.

28,636. You are here therefore as a delegate from that meeting?—I am.

28,637. And have you a written statement?—I have. Shall I read it?

28,638. If you please.

I was elected at a public meeting of the inhabitants of the district of Skerray, in this parish, to give evidence before your honours, in regard to the land suitable for cultivation lying in our immediate vicinity.

The district I represent contains 84 crofter families, with a population of about 520 more or less resident, —that is who have no other permanent home. Besides these there are 26 families, who come under the designation of cottars or squatters representing 100 people or thereabout. The 14 crofters have on an average $2\frac{3}{4}$ acres of arable land, or 230 acres in all, and for this they pay £295, 13s. 10d., or an average of £3, 10s. 4d. Each crofter is also supposed to have 73 acres of hill pasture as his share of the common grazing ground, but this includes lochs, rocks, and bogs, so that they pay rather more than $11\frac{1}{4}$d. per acre over all. The neighbouring farm of Borgie pays about 5d. an acre.

The only land in the vicinity capable of being cultivated with advantage is on the farm of Borgie, lying on both sides of the river Borgie. It comprises the old township of Polruisguidh, Crackerine, Achnantot, Eas-an-fhaidh, Borgie-beg, and Reidh-ruadh, on the right or eastern bank of the river, and Aultyhallard and Breachadh on the left bank. All these places were formerly occupied by tenants, but the old arable land is not so extensive as might be supposed from the number who lived there seventy years ago. This might be owing to the primitive methods of agriculture and the difficulty of working any extent of land with the tools of husbandry then in use. However, as far as can be ascertained there are 105 to 110 acres above Borgie which could be turned with the plough alone, while there are about 150 acres that would require some labour in reclaiming them, but nothing compared with what has been spent in other places. Besides, there is a piece of ground about 45 acres in extent called Melvich under cultivation until seven or eight years ago, but now in the possession of the crofters of Naver, who got it from the Crofters Commission as an extension of their grazing ground. It is not in any way suitable for grazing from the nature of the soil, and it has turned mossy since it has been under grass, but it used to yield splendid crops of oats, turnips, and potatoes. Alongside this there is a wide extent of level land,—Blar-eilean-na-goal, part of which was formerly cultivated, and the remainder about 100 acres is capable of being turned into good land, as there is a capital clayey subsoil, and only about 18 to 24 inches at the deepest part of peaty soil above that. It is also in the possession of the Naver crofters.

Tongue, Sutherland-shire.

James William Morrison.

There are thus about 470 acres on this farm eminently suitable for crofters, and it is free from many of the objections made to some of the other straths, as it is remarkably free from early frosts, and the elevation above the sea is generally from 50 to 150 feet; in no instance would the arable land be more than 200 feet above the sea level. The subsoil is good, being in some cases clay mixed with sand, and in others fine gravelly sand which usually bears good crops where it occurs on the present holdings of the crofters. The shepherd at Dalness, as high up the strath as any of the proposed holdings, usually has a good yield of potatoes, the only crop he cultivates.

I should like to point out that in instituting any comparison between the small holdings and the large farms, it has to be noted that there is in the case of the large farms considerable expenditure on improvements on the part of the proprietor at the end of each nineteen years' lease. In the case of Borgie, with a rental of £250 per annum, there has been expended on improvements including repair of the dwelling house, river embankments, new fencing, and repair to dykes, &c., something like £380,—at least that is my estimate, and if the amount yet to be expended is added it will not fall far short of two years' rental. The crofters on the other hand when they do get any help from the estate have to pay interest at the rate of 5 per cent.; and not only that, but rates are charged on the interest, so that in this parish a crofter pays $5\frac{9}{16}$ per cent., surely more than is current in any other investments in this kingdom. They do not get help at this exorbitant rate with any goodwill, for, to give one instance, when the crofters of Torrisdale applied to the proprietor last year to erect a fence round the township and offered to pay the interest on the outlay, their application was curtly refused.

As to the size of the new holdings, much would depend on the nature of the ground and the capabilities of the tenants, but in no instance should a holding be smaller than 15 acres arable. But strict limits should not be set to the extent of the arable ground. In a place like Strathborgie where old arable and new ground suitable for reclamation lie side by side a certain proportion (say 15 acres) should be given that could be cultivated with immediate profit; while there should be no limit to the extent the tenant might reclaim of the new ground lying in a line with his first portion. Taking 30 acres as the average holding, with outrun to correspond, the whole of the farm of Borgie could be profitably utilised by the crofters settled on it.

Some of the crofters in the district I represent might be able to take a holding without any outside aid, but the great majority would need help in erecting buildings and stocking the holdings. If the estate gave as much in proportion as they give to the large farmers at the beginning of a lease, and the Government gave a grant in aid, the money difficulty—the only difficulty on the crofters' part—would be settled very soon. And any legislation on the question will not be satisfactory that does not provide for the remaining one of the three F's — free sale, that is, that the crofter could dispose of his tenant right, or assign it as security to the Government for the money advanced, without being hampered by such conditions of consanguinity as are a blemish on the present Crofters Act.

In conclusion, I desire to point out to your honours the urgent necessity there is for something being done

Tongue, Sutherlandshire.

James William Morrison.

to relieve the congested districts similar to the one I represent. The people are eagerly desirous of availing themselves of any opportunity of getting back to the straths, and never was there more need of land than there is now. Other industries are not in a prosperous state, and work is so scarce that it may be said to be wanting altogether. The fishing cannot be prosecuted with confidence owing to the want of harbour accommodation; and through the non-fulfilment of the late Duke of Sutherland's promise of pecuniary aid, the money given by the Government cannot be used, and the harbour at Skerray on which the people set such high hopes and for which they made sacrifices in subscribing money greater comparatively than the Duke of Sutherland seems to be no nearer realization than when the proposal was mooted first.

Rates are increasing, and while the population is diminishing the number of paupers is on the increase. And increase it will and must under the present conditions, when every man has enough to do to keep himself and family without providing for those who under happier circumstances would share in his prosperity and be fed by his bounty.

(Signed) JAMES WILLIAM MORRISON.

28,639. Have you a croft yourself?—My father has.

28,640. Is he No. 257 Torrisdale?—I think that is the No.

28,641. I see the area is stated as 5 acres 1 rood arable, 1 acre 1 rood outrun, and 6½ shares in 11,070 acres of hill; the former rent was £6, 10s. and the fair rent is £5, 10s.?—That is so.

28,642. You have referred particularly to the farm of Borgie, and I think part of your observations were directed to the whole of the farm?—They were.

28,643. But you call our attention particularly to the land on both sides of the river Borgie, going up the valley of the river?—Certainly.

28,644. And is it in that quarter you think that we can find the 470 acres from Borgie Bridge?—If I may be allowed to explain the matter, there is part of the 470 acres included in the extension of holdings given by the Crofters Commission to the crofters of Naver.

28,645. Can you tell us what extent of land there is exclusive of the land given to the crofters of Invernaver?—It would be about 325 acres in the farm of Borgie.

28,646. And particularly on the banks of the river Borgie?—Yes.

28,647. Is that land, in your opinion, suitable for new settlements?—It is.

28,648. Is the township of Torrisdale congested?—It is; both the township of Torrisdale and the district of Skerray.

28,649. You represent the whole district?—I do.

28,650. Can you tell me how many cottars are in the district?—Twenty-six families.

28,651. And how many families of crofters?—Eighty-four.

28,652. You represent both I take it?—Yes.

28,653. Have any of the 26 cottars land?—None, I don't count them cottars if they pay any rent.

28,654. All these are tenants who pay no rent?—They pay no rent.

28,655. And have no land?—And have no land. Some of them have some stock, they do have some sheep.

28,656. Upon the crofters' pasture?—Yes.

28,657. But I suppose we may take it a very small number?—Well, about half of them have sheep; and one or two of them have cattle and sheep.

28,658. How do they live?—They mostly live by fishing or other work.

28,659. Have any of them boats?—None of them have boats, but some of them have a share in a boat.

28,660. When you say fishing do you mean that for the most part they go as hired hands?—Yes. There are one or two who are hands upon the boats given by Government and the Duke of Sutherland.

28,661. How many such boats are there?—There are two in the district; one given by the Government and one by the Duke of Sutherland.

28,662. You said the crofter part of the township of Torrisdale was congested and there are 84 families; how many of these would you propose to take out in order to leave sufficient area of crofters' holdings for the remainder?—Between two-thirds and three-fourths.

Tongue, Sutherlandshire.

James William Morrison.

28,663. And could they find accommodation in Strath-Borgie?—No, not all.

28,664. Only to a limited extent?—Only to a limited extent.

28,665. Could they find accommodation taking the whole farm of Borgie?—No, not on the farm of Borgie.

28,666. Then, where would you propose that they should go?—There is Strathnaver and round about there; some of them came from Ribigill farm and some from Strathnaver.

28,667. Wherever there is available land in the district?—In the county.

28,668. Is there a desire on the part of the crofters of Torrisdale to remove?—I have so expressed in my statement.

28,669. And I take it you say the same of the cottars?—I do, more strongly in their case if possible.

28,670. The case of the cottars is even worse than that of the crofters?—Even worse than that of the crofters.

28,671. *Mr Sutherland.*—You were born in Torrisdale?—I was.

28,672. And have been brought up there?—Yes.

28,673. And know intimately and of personal experience all the circumstances and opinions of the people?—Every one of them.

28,674. What is your knowledge with regard to how that colony was formed at Torrisdale? I take for granted that it is not a place to which people would go of their own accord?—No, unless they wanted a good view; that is about the only thing they can get there.

28,675. How did they come to settle there?—They were driven there.

28,676. Where did they come from?—Some from Strathnaver, and some from Strath-Borgie, and Torrisdale itself,—I suppose you include the district of Skerray.

28,677. Yes.—Well, they came from Strathnaver and from Strath-Borgie, and from Ribigill, and up by the side of Loch-Loyal there.

28,678. In fact it is the old old story that they were swept out of the land and put down there out of the way?—That is so.

28,679. And the good land made into sheep farms?—That is so.

28,680. Do you know what provision was made for them when they were sent there?—I will give you an instance. There were some crofters sent from Strath-Borgie down to a place we call Achtoty. They were allowed one cow, but they had to sell the rest of their stock; they had to build their houses there, and they had to sleep in the houses they were building all through the summer, because it was too far to their homes. They kept their cow that winter; they had to cut hay in Tongue wood here; it was the women who cut the hay, and they were allowed as much as they could carry home on their backs after their day's work.

20,681. That was the payment a woman got for her day's work?—Yes.

28,682. The green grass she could carry on her back?—Yes.

28,683. From Tongue to Skerray?—Yes.

28,684. What is the distance?—Eight miles.

28,685. These were some of the circumstances under which the settlements were made there?—Yes.

28,686. You referred to Achtoty. What sort of land did the people of Achtoty get?—Land covered with three feet of water.

28,687. The water was measured out for them?—Evidently.

28,688. The land that the people down there hold in common borders with two large farms; you hold in common with Tongue, don't you?—Yes.

28,689. On this side it borders with the large farm of Ribigill and on the other side with Borgie?—Yes.

28,690. Have you anything to say about suitable

places on the farm of Ribigill?—I have no personal knowledge of the farm of Ribigill.

28,691. You simply left that for the people of Tongue to point out?—I did, those who knew better about the place than I do.

28,692. You said that there are 26 cottars, people without land. You know the terms of our remit very well, I have no doubt you have read it?—I have read it.

28,693. We are appointed to inquire as to land that is suitable for cultivation to a profit or could otherwise be advantageously occupied by crofters or other small tenants, and you know the restrictions that are put on it?—Yes.

28,694. Knowing the circumstances and the opinions and feelings of the people, are you of opinion that there is a good deal of land such as we are looking for in this neighbourhood?—In this neighbourhood there is more than will suffice for all the people who would want the land.

28,695. You know the Strath of the Naver?—Perfectly.

28,696. Is it your opinion that it would be advantageous for all parties that it should be reoccupied?—It would pay the proprietor better than the large farms, and there is no doubt it would be to the advantage of the crofters; and it would be for the benefit of the nation at large.

28,697. You have had a considerable experience and knowledge of the world. How do the people here compare in industry and intelligence with the people in other parts of the country?—I have a considerable knowledge of England, and I would no more think of comparing the Highland crofter to the English labourer than I would compare a philosopher to a Hottentot.

28,698. So that in the interests of the public you think that in conserving a good and intelligent portion of the public for the nation, something ought to be done on that ground alone?—I think it is urgently necessary that it should be done.

28,699. You are aware, no doubt, and would have heard and read that it was stated at the time the clearances were carried out, that the people were not up to the scientific method of agriculture?—I have seen it stated.

28,700. And I suppose that comparing them at the present time you would be inclined to agree that that is so?—Yes, I would admit that.

28,701. Now, what I wish to ask you is this; in your opinion, is it a fair thing to compare the people of eighty years ago and their advancement, with a state of matters that did not exist anywhere at that time?—There is no fairness about it.

28,702. They are comparing it, are they not, with the present time?—Yes.

28,703. But if you compare the method of agriculture carried on in Sutherland with the method of agriculture carried on in the county of Ayr at the same time, do you find any difference?—No, I should not fancy so, but what I should state is this, that within the last eighty years agriculture has made more strides than I suppose it ever made from the beginning of agriculture.

28,704. But it made it in Sutherland as well as in Ayr?—In Sutherland as well as in Ayr, within the last few years.

28,705. I don't want to dwell upon that, but I merely wish to ascertain the opinion of a gentleman who has given this question some thought, and who is not likely to look at it from one point of view alone. You think, then, that viewing all the circumstances, the policy that dictated and led to the clearing of the people has been a failure?—It has been a failure from the beginning I think.

28,706. Have you noticed that the apologists of that policy have departed from almost all their own old arguments?—I have noticed that.

28,707. They have given up a great number of their old arguments?—They have.

28,708. Which you take, I presume, to be tantamount to an admission of the case you advocate?—That they were wrong in the beginning.

28,709. Accepting that,—do you consider that these places in which the people were before could be advantageously occupied in terms of the subject that has been remitted to us?—I have not the slightest doubt about it.

28,710. Do you know, as a matter of fact, people who would be very glad to undertake such a holding?—I know many of them.

28,711. Now, you have just referred to the discrepancies between the amount paid by the large farmers, and by the crofter, as he is now called?—I have.

28,712. We take here, in your own case, two blocks of land, which appear to be practically the same area, and which the figures show to be almost the same area, that is the farm of Borgie, and the grazings held by the crofters of Tongue and Skerray together; in the one case, the crofters have 12,420 acres, and the other the farm of Borgie has 12,350 acres; these are practically the same figures?—Yes.

28,713. What is the rental, do you know, of the farm of Borgie?—£250 I am told.

28,714. What is the rental of Tongue and Skerray?—I cannot say as to Tongue.

28,715. Well, it is £431; we have practically here, then, Borgie, with 12,350 acres, paying £250; and Tongue and Skerray, with 12,420 acres, paying £430, or double the amount as near as possible?—It amounts to what I have stated,—11¼d. for the crofters, and 5d. for the large farmers.

28,716. And what do you say as to the quality of the land?—I say this: I could give you an instance if you would permit me to give an explanation.

28,717. Which is the better land: I would put it that way?—There is no doubt about it that Borgie farm is worth ten times as much as the other.

28,718. So that for the poorer land that you think is not half so good, the people pay double what is paid for the better land?—That is so.

28,719. Are you of opinion that that would apply all over,—to the other large farms as well?—I believe so, but I would not like to affirm so without more practical knowledge of the question.

28,720. I think you say in your statement that the people when they came there made homes for themselves under very disadvantageous circumstances?—I mentioned that in my cross-examination.

28,721. And you think they would do the same thing much more easily under favourable circumstances if they got the chance?—That is why I mentioned such a thing.

28,722. Would you be surprised to find that the farm of Borgie, with which we make the comparison, pays a higher rental than any other large farm in the neighbourhood, with the exception of Achnabourin?—I believe it is over-rented: I have no doubt as to that.

28,723. *Mr Gordon.*—This is a populous part of the country round the coast?—It is.

28,724. Our last witness told us that there were 93 crofters at Melness?—Yes.

28,725. And a witness from Skinnid told us that there were 30 cottars, or together 123 families. There are 84 crofters you say in Torrisdale and 26 cottars—in all 110 families. Between Bighouse and Melvich we were told the other day that there are 415 crofters. I am not able to say from my remembrance of the evidence how many cottars, but I have no doubt there are a good many, possibly over 50 cottars. Then, there is a district of the country between Melvich and your township, of which at the present moment we have no information before us as to the number of crofters or cottars. But we have here from the evidence taken to-day and at Melvich the large number of 648 cottars and crofters, without taking into account those who reside between Melvich and your township. Now, you and the last witness who gave us very clear evidence, stated that it would be necessary to remove two-thirds of the crofters, and I presume the whole of the cottars from these districts?—That is so.

28,726. That would mean that out of 648 you would have to remove 432. You further stated to us that it

Tongue, Sutherlandshire.

James William Morrison.

would be necessary to give each man at the commencement 15 acres of old arable land?—I mentioned one place in particular where it was not exactly old arable, but land that could be turned by the plough. I confined my attention to our own place.

28,727. You proposed to increase that arable area to 20 or 30 acres?—I set no limits to the arable land within a reasonable amount.

28,728. It is very easy to make a statement which it would put us into a great difficulty to fulfil. You say there is abundance of land in this country to meet all the wants of these people?—I believe so.

28,729. Multiply 430 by 20 and you see that you have upwards of 8000 acres to find. Do you mean to say that there are 8000 acres in this quarter that could be reclaimed?—I cannot follow you there; what is the 400?

28,730. The number of families all the way from Bighouse on to Melness. [*The Chairman.*—From Strath Halladale to the Kyle of Tongue]. And that excludes the people between Melvich and your township? [*Mr Box.*—I may say that, as a matter of fact, there are 745 families in the whole of this district without cottars.]

28,731. I merely want to put you right as to the general statement you made. Do you think there are 8000 acres of land?—I do, and I believe there are fully more.

28,732. More than 8000 acres that could be reclaimed and would pay for reclamation?—Yes, to a profit.

28,733. I am sorry to say I differ from you. Assuming that there are 400 acres that could be reclaimed profitably, you, as an intelligent man, must have been thinking out in your own head how that would be applied. What arrangement would you propose for locating people on the land?—It is not my part to enter on details.

28,734. But that is a very important matter; how are you going to divide the land among the people?—I indicated in my statement that 15 acres should be given to each man.

28,735. But what man is to get the first 15?—The people who could best afford to leave the place; and they should be taken out of the most congested places to begin with.

28,736. But who is going to do that?—The thing is not going to work by itself; it must be done by some machinery, and if the Government is taking the inquiry in hand surely it will provide the machinery to work it out.

28,737. I thought you would have had some idea in your own mind?—I could not presume to set my own idea up. [*The Chairman.*—All Mr Gordon means is, have you any suggestion to offer on the matter, if so, we shall be glad to hear it]. I might have; but I have not yet considered any details like that. If I were to prepare to be questioned on the matter in detail I might be able to say, but off-hand I could not give further details without consideration.

28,738. But your opinion is that in order really to afford the remedy which the people desire it would be necessary to remove two-thirds of the present crofters and the whole of cottars from the township which you represent?—I might qualify that statement a little; I believe that in every community it would not be well that every man should of necessity have land; I believe that we cannot mix the occupations of fishermen and crofters very well, and if we have a harbour and a good fishing industry we could have fishermen settled there without any land.

28,739. You are in favour of that?—I am.

28,740. Do you think the fishermen would remove from your township to the neighbourhood of a good harbour?—Well, there are associations connected with the place one is born in that are very hard to shake off in the case of the Highland people.

28,741. How would you get them to remove for the sake of crofts, if you would not get them to remove for fishing facilities?—The old associations of their forefathers are very strong.

28,742. But surely the sentiment exists in each case equally: if it would work in the case of the croft, why not in the case of the harbour?—No, not with the sea.

Tongue, Sutherlandshire.

James William Morrison.

28,743. Are there many men in your township who would take to the sea naturally as a profession or as a business?—I represent crofters in an island called Eilean Roan, who really make a profession of fishing.

28,744. I ask the question in this way. Good harbours cannot be made at every part of this rough rocky coast; that is scarcely to be hoped for, I am afraid.—But recommendations have been made.

28,745. There are certain points on the coast which an expenditure of money would convert into places of safety. But supposing the Government were to lay out money in the formation of a good harbour at certain points, perhaps 5, 10 or 15 miles apart,—supposing they were to make a good harbour at Scrabster and another at Melvich if possible?—There is one recommended at Melvich.

28,746. But suppose they were to make good harbours at such points as these, do you think there are people in your township who would willingly migrate to the vicinity of these places in order to fish?—I beg your pardon, there is a harbour scheme recommended for our own place, where we are now.

28,747. But suppose the Government did not see it in their power?—The Government have seen their way to build a harbour at Skerray, so I won't make the assumption.

28,748. Do you suppose people would shift from Melvich to Skerray for the sake of a good harbour?—There is one recommended at Melvich also.

28,749. I am afraid they won't all get harbours.—But the Government has granted the money for it.

28,750. You don't think that, as a rule, men would be willing to remove from certain localities to other localities for the sake of being near a harbour, putting it generally?—Yes, taking it like that; I believe that the men within a certain radius of the harbour on each side would be inclined to come. There are three harbours recommended on the north coast,—Talmine, Skerray, and Portskerra; there are five miles between Talmine and Skerray, and ten between Skerray and Portskerra.

28,751. If these men had houses provided for them there in the neighbourhood of these new harbours would you find a proportion of your crofters and cottars who would willingly devote their life to the sea?—I believe there would be a number.

28,752. So that would be one relief to the present congestion?—Yes.

28,753. *Mr Forsyth.*—You mentioned the farm of Borgie, and you have given information as to certain lands which would be available for the plough, I think I gather from you, on both sides of the river Borgie?—Yes.

28,754. Is that above the bridge?—Above the bridge.

28,755. Can you tell me where it is more accurately?—I could point it out to you on the map. There is the Achantot burn (*explains on map.*)

28,756. I have seen that ground. How much available land fit for the plough do you consider there is there?—I think between 55 and 60 acres.

28,757. Of land available and ready for the plough?—Certainly, with a little labour. It could not exactly be *all* turned with the plough.

28,758. But that is what I understood you to say?—Of course, you would have to work, to make drains for burns, and all that sort of thing to begin with.

28,759. Then, you mean land that is reclaimable?—Well, it would only need to be turned.

28,760. Do you mean that it is dry enough for the plough?—I mean so.

28,761. That it needs no drainage?—Not as far as I am aware.

28,762. Have you been over the land yourself?—Often.

28,763. And have you any practical knowledge as an agriculturist?—Yes.

28,764. Have you worked land?—I can work land.

28,765. Do you say there are 70 acres on the land that would need no draining?—Fifty-five to 60 acres.

28,766. Well, I must say I am surprised; and where else besides this place do you propose to find land?—On the left bank of the river.

28,767. How far up?—Just above the bridge—the flat above the bridge.

28,768. By the left bank, you mean the west bank?—Yes.

28,769. About half a mile above the bridge?—Yes.

28,770. How much would you say there is there?—I cannot remember the particulars, but I made it out and I gave it as a general statement. I should say there would be about 18 acres of old arable there; and I know one or two places that would be fully better ground than the old arable, which could be used. I take it that the old arable could be turned with the plough at any time without any further labour, and there are one or two patches down at the riverside at both ends of this place called Breachadh which could be turned with as great ease as the old arable.

28,771. By that you mean the patch where the green land is?—Yes, and round about it.

28,772. And you think more could be brought in?—Yes.

28,773. I think so too; and you say there is about 18 acres of green land?—No, I don't mean green, but old arable.

28,774. Well, fairly good dry land that could be brought under the plough?—I don't exactly mean to say that it would do to turn over a big field without putting drains in it.

28,775. In fact reclaimable land?—No, I don't say that draining land is reclaiming it. I mean to say this, that if you drain and trench land that would be reclaiming it; but if you only put drains in it I don't mean that that would be reclaiming the land.

28,776. It would cost something at any rate; it requires outlaying to drain it?—It would really not cost much to the crofter to make drains in any land; but it is the only thing for which he would require any help.

28,777. But on the whole it is not land immediately available for a crofter going into at once?—It is land a good part of which would yield a crop the first year.

28,778. And how many holdings do you think could be got in this valley?—If I am allowed to take in this part now in possession of the Naver crofters. [*The Chairman.*—Oh, no, please keep that out of view in the meantime]. Very good, but supposing that these crofters would see their way, I am not sure if the law allows them to cultivate this, they would need an extension of holdings for pasture, for outrun.

28,779. Which land is this you are referring to?—The old arable land, in possession of the Invernaver crofters as an extension of holdings.

28,780. Would you suggest that you should take the land from the Invernaver people?—Not we; they could do it themselves.

28,781. But I was restricting my own inquiries as to Borgie farm, because I wanted to get your views as to what should be done in the valley, without any reference to the part of Borgie farm that belongs to Invernaver. It is the land up the glen I mean.—There would be room for something like ten crofters.

28,782. And how much would you give them a piece?—Fifteen to forty acres according to the circumstances of the place and the capabilities of the tenant.

28,783. And that could be done in that glen?—I believe so.

28,784. *Mr Sutherland.*—You were asked questions with regard to the finding of improvable or reclaimable land for the number of crofter and cottar families that were on the land in this management?—Yes, I was.

28,785. Did you know Mr John Barclay, who was for thirty years in the Duke of Sutherland's office in Tongue here?—I have heard about him; he was before my day.

28,786. Are you aware that he sent in a very valuable statement to Lord Napier's Commission at the time they were here?—No, I was not aware.

28,787. You were not aware that he stated that all over Sutherland one acre in every ten is reclaimable land?—I have seen the statement made.

28,788. And was not Mr Barclay, in your opinion, a very high authority?—I should fancy he would be a very good authority on the Strath.

28,789. You were not aware that he made that statement?—No.

28,790. Well, you may take it from me that he made that statement with all the authority and weight attaching to one of his experience. What in round numbers is the area of the Tongue management?—I could not say. [*Mr Box.*—About 400,000 acres.]

28,791. Divide 400,000 acres by ten?—40,000 acres.

28,792. Divide 40,000 by 270, the number of families given: it brings 148, which would be the number of acres of reclaimable land for each of the 270 families; do you follow?—Yes.

28,793. That would be a very fair proportion of arable land don't you think?—I should fancy it would be rather more than we need.

28,794. So that you think if the will was there the way is plain enough?—I think the way is plain enough.

28,795. As to the question of harbours and fishing; as a matter of fact the people of Skerray do go far and wide in search of fishing: they go all over the country, do they not?—They do.

28,796. And do they suffer a good deal of hardship and undergo a great deal of labour, to your own knowledge, while pursuing their avocation?—It is the most arduous occupation I know of, especially if conducted on the north coast.

28,797. And it was with these conditions in view that the executive Government of the country saw fit to grant them how many thousands for building harbours,—£10,000 was it not?—Something like that.

28,798. And do you know any of the arguments that recommended the project to the Government? Have you ever heard them stated?—No.

28,799. Have you ever heard that the people were sent down from inland places to the sea coast in order to become fishers?—I heard that; it is an old argument.

28,800. And was it not stated that after eighty years there were no harbours there?—Yes, I have seen that statement.

28,801. Would not that now in your opinion be an argument that would go a very long way with an executive Government to induce them to make harbours?—I should fancy it would; a Government that had the good of the country at heart.

28,802. Therefore, it cannot, in your opinion, be said with any degree of truth that the people are not very anxious to be fishermen if they could?—They cannot be fishermen if they would.

28,803. Then, with regard to the people applying for land, did it in your opinion ever occur that all the community wanted to cultivate the land?—Never; I should have fancied there would be other means of employment.

28,804. There would be merchants and tradesmen, would there not?—Yes.

28,805. There would be ministers?—Yes.

28,806. There would be lawyers even, would there not?—Well, a few of them.

28,807. And there would be a great number of the population absorbed into the professions would there not?—Certainly.

28,808. So you think generally and finally that there is plenty land for every person?—I do; more than enough.

28,809. *The Chairman.*—I gather from what you said before that suppose a considerable change made on these congested townships, you are in favour of establishing two classes, a crofter class with self-subsisting holdings, and a fisherman class who live by the sea?—That is my own idea.

28,810. That is an opinion which you hold most distinctly?—Quite distinctly.

28,811. And in any arrangements made you would

Tongue, Sutherlandshire.

James William Morrison.

be in favour of steps being taken for the establishment of a fisherman class along with the crofter class?—I should like to see a class established that would devote their whole time to the sea.

28,812. With houses adjacent to the sea, and small patches of ground for potatoes, and so forth, but whose whole time was really to be devoted to and livelihood to be derived from fishing in the sea?—That is my opinion.

28,813. Do you think there is any considerable desire in that direction?—The difficulty is this, that we have such bad harbour accommodation, there is so much danger at present in prosecuting the fishing industry that it offers no attraction to any man.

28,814. Well, then, suppose the harbour accommodation to be materially improved, and such other conditions as could fairly be granted given to the class of men in question, would there be a sufficient number to warrant steps being taken to form such holdings?—I believe so, but, of course, you cannot educate the people in a year or two; I believe in a few years there would be plenty demand.

28,815. With harbours?—With harbours and facilities.

28,816. And with small holdings adjacent to the sea, there would be a development of what you might call fisher crofters?—I believe so in a few years.

28,817. And are you of opinion that the men are men who would readily become fishermen?—The men are as skilful fishermen as can be found.

28,818. And would that kind of population, in your opinion, tend to increase with such facilities as we have been pointing out?—Of course, because the sea round about us is teeming with fish.

28,819. These, of course, would be people without land practically?—Practically without land.

28,820. *Mr Macaulay, Solicitor, Golspie.*—How does the quantity of arable land in the townships of Tongue and Skerray compare with that upon the farm of Borgie as now occupied?—I cannot give you the figure for Tongue, but for the district of Skerray it is 230 acres, and 70 acres for the farm of Borgie, or thereabouts.

28,821. You cannot tell me the state of matters as regards Tongue?—No, I am sorry to say I cannot; I don't represent Tongue.

28,822. Would you be surprised to find that there are upwards of 500 acres arable on Tongue and Skerray?—Yes, I should be surprised.

28,823. You think there are not so many?—I think not.

28,824. There are actually 532.

28,825. *Mr Sutherland.*—Who made the land on Borgie arable?—The crofters, of course, the old inhabitants.

28,826. And who made the land on the holdings of the people of Tongue and Skerray arable?—Themselves.

William Mackay.

WILLIAM MACKAY, Torrisdale (41)—*examined.*

28,827. *The Chairman.*—Do you live with your father?—Yes.

28,828. Is he a crofter?—Yes.

28,829. Were you appointed as a delegate?—Yes.

28,830. At the same time as Mr Morrison, the last witness?—Yes.

28,831. Your father's name is John Mackay, Ard-Torrisdale?—Yes.

28,832. I see he has 3 acres arable and 1½ acres outrun?—Mr Watson said it was 3 acres arable, but I differed from him.

28,833. And also four shares of the common grazing: the former rent was £4 and the fair rent is £3?—That is right.

28,834. Have you a written statement?—Yes. At a public meeting of the inhabitants of the district of Skerray, in the parish of Tongue, I have been appointed as delegate to represent them before your honours. In this district there are 84 crofters, and 26 cottars with no land. The only land formerly under cultivation near this locality is on the Borgie farm, which contains nine townships, from which 38 families or 228 individuals were removed. The first removals took place about the year 1826, when four families were removed from the township of Achantot, and were allowed to settle on Borgie More for three years. In or about the year 1829, the whole of the 38 families were cleared out to make the present sheep farm, on which about 30 individuals reside. Some of those removed were allowed to settle on the shores of Lochtoty, where they got about 1½ acre of land on the side of a hill, with leave to keep one cow: they had to build new houses and reclaim land without any assistance or compensation for their former holdings. After reclaiming their allotments they set to work, drying the loch and made it good arable land. They slept out under cover during the summer months when reclaiming their new holdings, which is a proof that they were an industrious people. Others of them went to Island Roan and some to Polerscaig in Farr. Annexed is a list of the townships with number of crofters or tenants removed:—

Tongue, Sutherlandshire.

William Mackay.

Township.	No.	Tenants. Names.
Pol Rusguidh,	2	William Mackay and Hugh Mackay.
Achnatot,	4	Robert Mackay, John Mackay, Widow Macleod and Angus Mackay.
Aultyhallard,	2	Donald Mackay and William Mackay.
Breachadh,	4	Angus Mackay, Hugh Campbell, Angus Macleod and Andrew Murray.
Borgie Beg,	6	Donald Mackay, Thomas Mackay, Neil Mackay, Alexander Mackay, Donald Mackay and Angus Mackay.
Eilean-na-gaont,	4	Donald Mackay, Alexander Mackay, Alexander Duncan and William Mackay.
Borgie More,	11	Hugh Mackay, William Mackay, Hugh Balfour, James Gunn, Donald Macintosh, William Mackay, Charles Mackay, Widow Macintosh, William Munro, James Mackay and George Macleod.
Loan,	3	Angus Mackay, Donald Taylor and Alexander Mackay.
Essanfhaidh,	2	Marion Campbell and John Mackay.

Among the majority of the cottars there is a desire for holdings as there is no work to be got in the country; the only industry is the fishing industry, and owing to the wild nature of the coast and want of harbour accommodations it cannot be carried on to advantage.

I got my information from William Mackay, Alexander Munro, and others.

(Signed) WILLIAM MACKAY.

28,835. You concur also with the evidence given by the previous witness?—Yes, I concur with the evidence given by Mr Morrison.

28,836. *Mr Sutherland.*—You can give us plenty information about the fishing?—Well, I believe I could give you a little, I have been trying it for the last twenty years at any rate.

28,837. You have been going all over the north?—From Shetland to the Butt of Lewis, and as far south as St. Abb's Head.

28,938. You have a good idea of what it is to be a

Tongue, Sutherland-shire. William Mackay.

fisherman?—Yes, and what it is to be a crofter too, because I have to work at that also.

28,939. And you would be very glad to give up the fishing for the chance of having a croft?—I would do it before to-morrow if I was getting a new holding, for I don't care very much about the one we have at present.

28,840. You would like it on better land?—I would.

28,841. But it is your father who has the croft?—Yes, but he cannot work it now by himself, and I am the only one of the family who resides with my father.

28,842. So you practically have to go all over the country in order to maintain your father when he lives here?—Yes, I have.

28,843. And is the croft self-supporting?—Well, I believe, as was stated already to the Crofters Commission, that for the last seven years we got about one and a half bolls from the croft, from the two and a half acres. Mr Watson, the surveyor, told me it was three acres. He paced it, but I measured it with a chain and made it rather less—2½. I don't know which of us is right, but I maintain that I am right.

28,844. You hold that the croft is not self-sustaining?—No, it is not. We keep two cows and a calf and 20 sheep.

28,845. There is no rent in it?—No.

28,846. The rent comes out of the sea?—It always comes out of the sea.

28,847. As far south as St. Abb's Head?—All round the coast of Scotland. It comes from Edinburgh partly, because my brothers are there, and they help to maintain my father.

28,848. Have you an opinion regarding this matter, whether it would be better for fishermen to have no land, or to have a little land?—I believe it would be better for them to have a small patch of land, just enough to grow potatoes; but I know from practical experience that it is not very beneficial to have a regular croft and be a fisherman: you cannot attend to both at the same time.

28,849. The questions the Chairman asked were rather, I think, directed towards the state of matters where you would not have to go all round the country from home for fishing?—But the fish do not stop in one place. I believe you would have read Mr Maconochie's statement before the House of Commons.

28,850. What was the gist of his statement?—His opinion was that the fish came on from the Butt of Lewis, round the north coast here, and went round to the east coast.

28,851. Do you agree with that opinion?—No, but I agree that the fish come to all the fishing grounds at their natural times; each place has its own time.

28,852. Take the case of Skerray. When you get your harbour there, will it be necessary for you to go away from Skerray and pursue the fishing all round the coast as you do now?—I think it would; we could prosecute the herring fishing up to July, and then there might be some other fishing to follow, though not perhaps so profitable as the herring fishing; but I think people would require to go to the east coast fishing as well.

28,853. But you think if you had a self-sustaining holding such as the Chairman has been asking questions about it would not be necessary to follow the fishing everywhere?—No, it would not.

28,854. And it would be desirable you think to have such a holding?—Yes, it is desirable; there is a lot of expenses connected with the fishing more than with a holding.

28,855. Are the risks greater?—The risks are much greater, without a doubt; you are under the risk of losing everything you have and perhaps your own life as well.

28,856. Have you seen as much as £100 worth of fishing gear lost in one night?—Yes, and far more. I have known of £400 or £500 worth being lost from this same parish in one night at the fishing.

28,857. And did you ever hear of £100 worth of potatoes being destroyed by frost in one night?—Never, or anything like it.

28,858. If you had an opportunity of taking a moderate sized holding you would do so?—Yes, I would.

28,859. And you would be ready to take it at any time?—I would be ready to take it to-morrow without any assistance.

28,860. *The Chairman.*—Subject to what you have said, I understand you agree with the evidence given by the previous witness in favour of the establishment of fishermen's holdings along the north coast where the fisherman would depend exclusively upon the sea for his livelihood?—Yes, with a small patch of land to grow potatoes.

28,861. Who would take their livelihood from the sea and not from their holdings?—Yes, of course.

JOHN BOX, Factor for the Tongue Property of the Duke of Sutherland (48)—*examined.* John Box.

28,862. *The Chairman.*—You are factor on the Tongue management of the Sutherland estates?—Yes.

28,863. And that exclusively?—Yes.

28,863*a*. For how long have you been factor?—For eight and a half years.

28,864. The previous factor was Mr Crawford?—Yes.

28,865. I see you have a statement to submit to us. Kindly read it.—Sutherland Estate—Tongue District. Statement of facts, statistics, &c., prepared for the inquiry of the Royal Commission (Highlands and Islands 1892) by John Box, factor, Tongue.

The Tongue district of the Sutherland estates comprises (*a*) part of the Reay country, viz., the parish of Tongue and part of the parish of Durness; (*b*) the old property of Strathnaver, comprising a considerable portion of the parish of Farr, and extending from the march with the parish of Tongue, on the west to Armadale on the east; (*c*) the old estate of Armadale, including Strathy to Portskerra; and (*d*) the Bighouse estate, which includes Strathalladale.

The Reay country was bought by the Marquis of Stafford, from Lord Reay, in 1829 (May 15th); Strathnaver was disposed by Donald, first Lord Reay, to John, Earl of Sutherland, in 1642; Armadale, with Strathy and Portskerra, was disposed to the Marquis of Stafford by Lord Armadale, in 1813; Bighouse, with Halladale, was acquired by the Marquis of Stafford from Major Mackay, in 1830 (July 23rd). All these properties were acquired by purchase after the removals had taken place, except in Strathnaver.

CLEARANCES.

The Armadale property was cleared for sheep by Lord Armadale in 1792, and the people removed to their present holdings. The Reay country was cleared for sheep, and the people removed to their present holdings by Lord Reay between 1800 and 1815. Bighouse was almost entirely cleared by Mackay of Bighouse before the sale, but a few crofters were left who were under notice of removal, which took place a year after the sale of the property. Many of these tenants were left in their houses for some time. Strathnaver was cleared—the east side of the river—in 1814 and the west side in 1819.

AREA.

The area of the Tongue district is:—

Tongue parish, ...	87,330 acres.
Farr parish (old boundaries), .	194,586 „
Farr parish (formerly part of Reay),	71,842 „
Durness parish (part of), . .	29,500 „
Total, . . .	383,258

Tongue, Sutherlandshire.

John Box.

Divided as follows:—

	Hill.	Arable.
Sheep farms, . . .	262,660	1,005
Deer forests, . . .	47,800	*nil*
Crofts, ...	62,377	2,300
Hotels, factor, &c., . .	...	300
	372,837	3,605
	3,605	
	376,442	
Leaving for water, plantations, glebes, &c., . .	6,816	

The deer forests contain about 300 acres of old arable, now under grass.

Tenancies.

The number of tenancies has changed but very slightly since 1830, at which time they were 745, whereas in 1892 they numbered 751.

Crofters' Rents.

The crofters' rents show an increase during the same period as follows:—

In 1830 they were, . . .	£1534
„ 1850 „ . . .	1720
„ 1860 „ . . .	1894
„ 1870 „ . . .	2048
„ 1890 „ . . .	2057

And in 1891 they were reduced to 1953 by the Crofters Commission.

The increase during the above sixty years (£523) is explained by the fact that in 1830 there were a large number of *nominal* rents, viz., a few shillings a year, which were to hold during the lifetime of the tenant. The increased amount also includes in it a considerable sum for interest on money expended by the proprietor for the improvement of land, &c.

It will be noticed, however, that there has been no increase on the total of the crofters' rents since 1870. The slight difference between the total then and at 1890, viz., £9, being much more than accounted for by interest on money granted for improvements.

Estate Outlays.

During the last ten years—1883–1892—the proprietor's expenditure in connection with crofts, principally in help for buildings and land reclamations, amounted to £6507, an average of £650 per year.

Crofter Outlays.

On the other side, I would call attention to the fact that during the six years since the passing of the Crofters Act the value of the land improvements done by the tenants themselves amounts *in all* to £527, or £88 per year for 750 tenancies.

Deer Forests.

The deer forests in the Tongue districts are only three in number, viz.:—

Lochachoire in the heights of Farr, contains about 10,000 acres. It was cleared of sheep by the tenant in 1881, the farming of sheep in that high land being found unprofitable. This forest ranges in altitude from 500 feet to 2300 feet. There is very little below 500, and its general average altitude may be stated at about 1500 feet. In this forest there are very few signs of previous habitation. The green patches are very few in number and small in size. They consist principally of two small patches or shepherds' crofts. There is probably not more than 30 or 40 acres of what may, by the most liberal interpretation, be called old arable land, in this forest.

The rent of the farm (Coire-na-fearn) was £405, reduced in the last year of its occupation, by 50 per cent. to £202, 10s. (not permanent).

Tongue, Sutherlandshire.

John Box.

The shooting rent cannot be fixed, as it was part of a larger area, with a *cumulo* rent as a grouse-moor, but it is certain that a better return has been obtained by clearing the ground of sheep.

Upper Mudale (part of Ben Klibreck shootings) lies at the upper end of Strath Mudale, towards the base of Ben Hee. It contains about 7500 acres, and was cleared by the tenant in 1887. This was wether ground and found to be unprofitable. The ground is from 500 to 1500 feet high, the general height being about 1000. There are no sign of previous habitation within its bounds. The old rent of the sheep ground (£150) is paid by the shooting tenant.

Kinloch was cleared in 1890 and comprises the high portions of Melness farm. The stock had to be taken over by the proprietor on the expiry of the late tenant's lease, and at a very high valuation. All the sheep belonging to the high parts of the farm were at once sold off at considerable loss, and the ground afforested. The area is about 30,000 acres, and with the exception of a narrow strip in Strathmore it is all wether ground and very high. Strathmore is below 500 feet, but with that exception the altitude of this forest ranges from 500 feet to 3040 feet (Ben Hope). It will average fully 1800 feet, and except Strathmore it is entirely unfit for habitation. Strathmore contains about 200 acres of old arable land, and there has probably been about a dozen families living there. With the exception of the old shepherd's croft at Mussel and a patch of from 15 to 20 acres at the up end of the Strath, all this green land is regularly subject to flooding and to frost, and quite unfit for cultivation unless the river were embanked, as would appear to have been the case in past times. This land has never been deeply cultivated, the system adopted being that known as 'lazy 'beds.' It is most unquestionably better suited to growing grass than for crops at the present time, and is of the greatest importance to the forest as feeding ground and shelter for the deer in winter. All the deer of the forest practically live there during hard times. Strathmore was included in the boundaries of Lord Reay's old forest.

The whole of the remainder of Kinloch forest does not contain more than 50 acres of old arable land, and that widely separated and in very small patches.

Over all these forests the amount of arable land is so very small, and its proportion towards the enormous areas of comparatively valueless land so infinitesimal, as to preclude the possibility of these lands being profitably occupied by crofters; and if the few green spots were taken for occupation, long narrow strips would have to be effectively fenced at great cost, and the deer forests seriously injured.

The change from sheep farms to deer forests in these instances was necessitated by the inability of farmers to work these high lands profitably and by the difficulty of letting them to other tenants. At present I should say that as many persons, if not more, are employed on these lands as before, and the rents obtained for these forests greatly assist in keeping the rates and taxes from becoming more burdensome than they now are.

Sheep Farms.

The sheep farms (ten) produce an annual gross rent of £4475, and give employment to a considerable number of people, both permanent and casual. The green land on the lower parts of these farms, which after all forms a very small proportion of the whole area, is, I need not point out, of great importance to the farms, which could not be worked without it. This, however, is a matter which I would wish merely to mention here and not to enlarge upon, as it is one of the principal points that will engage the personal attention of the Commissioners at their inspections. I would, however, wish to impress upon them the smallness of the proportion of arable land included within the boundaries of the sheep farms and forests in this

district. Statements have been frequently made that would lead to the belief that very large areas of arable land exist on the sheep farms and forests in this part of the estate that are fit subjects for cultivation and occupation. On inquiry and investigation I venture to say that these statements will be disproved. I do not believe that the old arable ground, even on the most liberal interpretation of the definition, will be found to exceed one per cent. of the entire area, and much of that is not suitable for cropping.

As far as can be made out without an actual survey, I would estimate the old arable land on the sheep farms as follows:—

Farm.	Arable. Acres.	Hill. Acres.	Old Ar. Acres.	
Achnabourin,	10	5,780	150	
Armadale, .	70	29,700	130	
Bighouse, .	200	47,300	390	
Borgie, . .	70	12,000	40	
Clebrig, . .	10	41,200	235	
Melness, . .	100	20,000	50	
Mudale, . .	—	8,000	80	and 50 ac. *lones.*
Rhifail, . .	160	30,000	260	
Ribigill, . .	175	26,500	200	and 50 „ „
Skelpick, . .	100	11,880	130	
Syre, . . .	120	30,300	350	
	1,015	262,660	2,015	100 „ „

Of these 2015 acres, a large proportion cannot properly be called arable, and a considerable quantity could not be cropped through flood and frost.

Mudale and Ribigil contain each 50 acres *lones.* These *lones* are useless for cultivation or occupation. Most of the arable land on the sheep farms has been made at a very heavy cost during recent years, and its cultivation is maintained at a considerable expense, much more than it would be in the power of crofters to do.

The carrying out of any large scheme of migration on these lands would necessitate a very heavy outlay of capital, which we are led to understand is not possessed by the crofters. Houses would have to be erected, dykes built, land improved, hill fences erected and stocks purchased. A few crofters may have the means required, but such persons cannot be numerous.

Crofters' Rents.

Fair rents were fixed by the Crofters Commissioners in 1891, when they cancelled £447, 15s. 9d. of arrears and ordered £1269, 7s. to be paid. Of this only £1000, 5s. 4d. has yet been received. Since the fixing of fair rents two years' rents have become payable, amounting in all to £4111, 7s. 4d., and of this sum there has only been paid £1626, 18s. 6., leaving a total amount of arrears due of £2753, 10s. 6d. At the present moment there are only 22 tenants out of 751 who are clear, that is, who have paid all the rents due by them up to Whitsunday 1893.

During the twelve months or so previous to the passing of the Crofters Act, the late Duke voluntarily reduced the crofters' rents in many cases, totalling in this district an annual amount of £47, 8s. 10d., and on two occasions he granted abatements; to the extent of 50 per cent. in 1885 and 25 per cent. in 1887.

Enlargement of Holdings.

I do not find that any of the crofters' land has been taken away from them during recent years, but considerable additions have been made to crofters' arable holdings by granting money for such work done by the crofters themselves at a low rate of interest, and in some cases, as Baligill and Strathy, where the work has been done on a larger scale. In these townships land to the extent of 75 acres has been thoroughly made and is now under crop.

In 1885 two of the grazing parks, measuring 35 acres and 19 acres of good arable land, belonging to Tongue Mains farm were let to crofters.

During recent years many additions have from time to time been made to the crofters' grazings. In 1884 an area of 3000 acres of the best hill ground on Armadale farm was added to the crofters' grazings for that district free of charge, and fenced by the Duke at a cost of £1043. In 1887, 350 acres of good hill ground were added to the Naver tenants from Borgie farm and the land fenced by the Duke.

In 1891 these same tenants obtained through the Crofters Commission a further enlargement from Borgie farm, consisting of 150 acres hill, with a large proportion of green ground, and 48 acres of arable land.

In 1891 the West Farr tenants obtained an enlargement from Skelpick farm, consisting of 1568 acres good ground, which contained a considerable proportion of green haughs.

The Skerray tenants got the fertile Island Coomb, 70 acres of the best grass in the district; and the Island Roan tenants got the Rabbit Islands, 138 acres of good green pasture; and at the same time, when the Crofters Commissioner's inquiry was proceding, the remaining portion of the farm of Melness was offered to the crofters of that district; *vide* Crofters Commission Report, p. 181.

I feel that I need not here enumerate the vast amounts of money expended by recent owners of the Sutherland estate for the benefit and improvement of that property and its people, but it is worthy of consideration that the prospects of everyone on that estate have been more or less improved by that outlay, particularly by the immense sums spent on roads and railways.

As has already been explained by the factor of the Dunrobin district, the Duke of Sutherland is disposed to look favourably on the creation of small farms where suitable holdings can be found, and where they can be made with satisfaction and with prospects of success to those concerned, and provided that the whole farm be utilized, and not only the best of the ground selected.

(Signed) John Box, Factor.

Tongue, October, 1893.

28,866. How many crofters do you say are on the coast line from the Bay of Bighouse to the west side of Loch Eriboll?—The whole number of crofters in the Tongue district is 751: if you wish to exclude Strath Halladale, I think you would arrive at a fair estimate by taking off the 51.

28,867. I do not wish to go outside your management; but from the east boundary of your district to the west boundary along the coast there are 751 crofters?—Yes.

28,868. And how many cottars?—That I cannot tell you. I have heard to-day of 30 at Melness, and 26 in Skerray, and I think that at the Melvich sitting there was some mention made of about 25 at Portskerra; and there would, of course, be others elsewhere.

28,869. From 80 to 100 cottars may we say?—There will be 100 cottars at least.

28,870. That makes a total of 851 families?—I believe there will be fully 100 cottars.

28,871. I am putting the number down as 100 at a rough estimate. The greater number of these are along the coast?—Yes.

28,872. Many of them close to the sea?—Yes.

28,873. I suppose you admit that that district from Bighouse to your west boundary is a congested district?—Parts of it, certainly.

28,874. Which parts do you specify as congested?—Congested is a comparative term, I suppose, is it not?

28,875. Use the word in your own sense. Of course, it is a comparative term; but what points do you say are congested?—I can tell you the points where the houses are closest.

28,876. Where?—At Melvich, Portskerra, Skerray, and Melness: I should think these are the most congested.

Tongue, Sutherlandshire.

John Box.

28,877. And Strathy Point?—At Strathy Point they are not quite so close; not nearly so close as at Melness. The crofts at Strathy Point are certainly very poor, but the houses are not nearly so close as at the other places.

28,878. Any other place?—These are the principal.

28,879. And perhaps you will admit that the other townships, while not so congested as these, are to some extent congested?—If you will tell me exactly what congested means I will be better able to answer you.

28,880. I mean where the crofts are too small to enable the holders to get on even with the aid of outside labour?—The crofts all the way through the estate are much about the same size, with the exception of those in Strath Halladale.

28,881. I will put it in this way. Suppose you had this land along the coast to lay out as crofts now, would you think of making them as small as they are at present on an average?—I should prefer to see them larger.

28,882. And if you had the making of them, the lotting of them, would you lot them in larger areas?—Well, I should prefer to see them larger.

28,883. The cottars again who number 100 are, of course, a considerable burden upon their neighbours, the crofters?—Yes.

28,884. They have no land?—No land: they have been allowed to crowd in at various times.

28,885. They depend entirely for their livelihood upon labour and fishing, and such chances as may occur?—Yes.

28,886. You concede, I have no doubt, that that is a most undesirable state of matters?—Which?

28,887. This congestion and crushing in, this overcrowded state of the people between these two points: you concede I suppose that that is an undesirable state of matters?—Yes, it is undesirable.

28,888. And one that calls for a remedy if a legitimate remedy can be got?—Yes.

28,889. What is your remedy?—I can hardly propose a remedy.

28,890. Or do you say with all your knowledge of the place that there is no remedy?—I should be sorry to say that.

28,891. I should certainly think so. Then, what remedy do you suggest?—The remedy I suppose is, on the face of it,—larger holdings.

28,892. And I daresay you would concede larger holdings in the neighbourhood of these large holdings if they can be got?—If they can be got.

28,893. Now, in view of that, do you adhere to your statement that there is no available land within your district?—Oh, no, my lord, I did not say that.

28,894. Where do you say there is available land?—I don't know where there is available land: I can tell you where there is old arable land and new arable land.

28,895. You have given us a pretty precise account of the old arable land and arable land within your district?—I have endeavoured to do so faithfully. It is only a rough estimate, however.

28,896. I take it as approximately correct, and as intended to be perfectly straight. Is this land, in your opinion (I am not now dealing with the question of injury to the farms), but would the taking up of that land in your judgment operate a considerable and substantial relief to those congested districts?—Apart from the question of sheep farms or deer forests, or other management of the estate, there certainly is some land upon which crofters could be profitably put.

28,897. And the taking of that land would greatly relieve,—I don't say wholly but greatly relieve the state of matters to be found along the north coast within your limits?—Naturally it would if you took any away.

28,898. Could that be done to a considerable extent?—I think that is a question I should rather leave for the Commission to determine.

28,899. But I am asking whether you think from the knowledge you have of the available arable or old arable land, that this relief could be operated to a considerable extent?—I have enumerated the land which I consider old arable land, and which would doubtless make crofts: there is also some proportion of land that was never under cultivation, which might be reclaimed, and put under cultivation now, if it was considered that such could be done profitably.

28,900. Your answer, therefore, is that to the extent that there is such available land as you have indicated, it would to that extent, if so used, relieve the congestion on the north coast?—I think that goes without saying.

28,901. Are you of opinion that no land can be taken from the farms without serious injury to the remainder?—I certainly think that to take any of that land away from the farms or the forests would distinctly deteriorate them as farms and forests.

28,902. I put it to you in this way. Do you think the injury to the farms or forests would outweigh the benefit that would arise from the assignment of the land to the crofters?—Is that quite the question to put to one, sir?

28,903. Well, if you do not wish to answer I will not press it. You said that the Duke of Sutherland was favourable to the creation and formation of small farms?—Yes, I do.

28,904. Do you indicate to us where land is to be got for that purpose?—At present all the land in this district is under lease.

28,905. Then you say there is no such land at present?—Not available in the immediate present.

28,906. But suppose land to become available?—If land became available, and it could be demonstrated that a certain farm could be taken by crofters, and could be cultivated by them, and so tenanted by them as to be to their benefit, there is no doubt, I should think, that the Duke would be quite willing.

28,907. To consider a proposition of that kind favourably?—A practical proposition.

28,908. Even although the return to the Duke were somewhat less than the return he gets from the farmer?—I believe I may safely say that if the return to the Duke were only *somewhat* less, he would not allow that consideration to stand in the way. I do not suppose, however, that he could be expected to give it all away.

28,909. No, no, I am not suggesting that. Now, which of the farms within your management is in your opinion most favourable for that purpose, supposing it fell out of lease?—I can only answer that by telling you those farms that have the most old arable land, and I have enumerated them already.

28,910. You referred to the crofters' arrears of rent? Do a considerable portion of the present arrears come to be due in consequence of the position of matters after the late Duke's death?—Yes, a considerable portion was due before he died.

28,911. And you think the present arrears are in some degree due to the circumstances which have arisen in connection with the estate?—Yes, probably to a certain extent that may be so, because owing to legal difficulties we got no instructions to collect the rents at the proper time last year. But I have held rent collections since, after giving official notice, and the people have had the opportunity of paying their arrears had they felt inclined to do so.

28,912. The last year's rents have not been collected?—I have held the audit, but the rents have not been paid.

28,913. That state of matters being due, I think you say, to some extent to the circumstances which have arisen in regard to the estate?—The putting off of the collection was due to that.

28,914. Now, is there any holding along the north coast, between the east boundary of your district and the west boundary, which you could describe as a self-sustaining holding?—There is no gradation of holdings here at all; there is nothing between the large and the small,—the very large and the very small.

28,915. And are there very small holdings, holdings of a kind which, to enable the crofters to live, require the aid of outside labour?—Yes.

28,916. Are there such holdings?—Most of them require the aid of outside labour.

28,917. Can you mention any one that does not?—I think you have seen the holdings in Strath Halladale?

28,918. Yes.—I should certainly say that the holdings in Strath Halladale do not, as a rule, require outside labour; except it is in the case of several sons in one croft. No family can expect to live on a holding of £6 or so of rent, and keep seven or eight of a family.

28,919. You think the holdings there may be self-sustaining, but you do not mention any others?—They would be self-sustaining I should think to any ordinary family.

28,920. But except these, are there any others?—We have no others as good as Strath Halladale, with one or two exceptions hardly worth enumerating.

28,921. I may take it then that there are no self-sustaining holdings along this north coast, except the Strath Halladale holdings?—There are some fairly good holdings,—I cannot tell whether they are self-sustaining or not.

28,922. Are the majority of them such as would require the aid of outside labour?—Yes.

28,923. The man must be partly a crofter and partly a fisherman or a labourer?—Yes.

28,924. Is that a state of matters that meets with your approval?—I have already said that I should like to see the holdings larger.

28,925. Would you like to see as a matter of good for the estate and for the individuals themselves, a grade of holdings between the large farmer and the crofter, of the kind I have been describing as a self-sustaining holding?—Yes. It would not be so easily done here, however, as on the east coast, where there is a large amount of arable land; because where we have 10 or 20 or 100 acres of arable land we have 10,000 to 40,000 of hill ground, a large proportion of which is of little value.

28,926. But you think, assuming always that the land could be got, that it would be for the good of the estate to have a grade of farmer or holder between the very large farmer and the labouring crofter?—I think it would be beneficial all round that it should be so. I don't know that it would be particularly for the good of the estate if you mean by that the economical good.

28,927. It would be beneficial all round,—I am quite willing to take it in your own words. At present all the tenant holders of land are either very large holders or very small holders, with a few exceptions?—Yes.

28,928. There is no middle class?—No, there is not. We might enumerate a dozen, or a score or so, who have comfortable holdings.

28,929. But that is a small number out of so many hundreds?—I am speaking now of the proportion.

28,930. How do the rents of the crofters in the part of the estate under your management compare with the rents of the farmers?—Do you mean the rents fixed by the Crofters Commission?

28,931. Yes, the present rents, the fixed rents we should call them?—I can hardly answer that question, because it is impossible to make a comparison. The proportion of arable land to hill ground will not agree in any shape in the two cases.

28,932. Is there more arable in proportion to the hill ground in the case of the crofter than in the case of the larger tenant?—Yes, a great deal more.

28,933. Have you endeavoured to make any comparison?—No, I have not.

28,934. Has there been in recent years a very considerable reduction in the rents of the large farmers?—Yes.

28,935. And the reduction in the rents of the crofters recently has been due to the operation of the Crofters Commission?—Yes, except in the case of the temporary abatements. In this connection it might be well to remember that at a certain period the sheep farm rents reached a very high rate.

28,936. And they are now at a very low rate?—They are now at a lower rate.

28,937. Are they down 50 per cent.?—Yes, about that.

28,938. More than that?—Well, perhaps on the whole not quite so much; you may say they are down 40 per cent. over all roughly speaking.

28,939. May we take that as the average reduction in farmers' rents in recent years?—I do not speak from the book, but I think that is about the figure. In some cases it may be more, and in others perhaps a little less.

28,940. You heard evidence given with regard to an application from cottars for land and an alleged reply by the secretary of the Duke advising them to apply to the Crofters Commission; had you any personal knowledge of that?—I have a recollection that an application was made by the cottars of Melness,—one or two applications, but I have no recollection of the terms in which the reply was sent.

28,941. It is not said to have been a letter from you?—No.

28,942. But from the secretary of the Duke, Mr Wright, I suppose?—Yes.

28,943. You did not know of the writing of such a letter?—I am not prepared to say that at all; I really do not recollect the occurrence sufficiently. If I had had notice of this matter I could have looked up my correspondence and seen what I did know of it.

28,944. Of course, you are aware that the Crofters Commission had no power to enlarge the holdings of cottars?—Oh, yes, I know that. I should like to say that I am not aware that that was the wording of the letter referred to, and I am not prepared to admit it.

28,945. I do not ask you to do so, because we have not got the letter before us, your own recollection does not help you in the matter?—No, it does not.

28,946. *Mr Sutherland.*—Your statement as a whole does not, I think, call for much questioning, but I should like to ask you in reference to one or two particular points. There was some question of an historical character which I wished to ask, but it has escaped my memory; perhaps I may recollect it later. You said that when the people were settled at one place on the coast their rents were nominal for some time?—Yes.

28,947. That is when they were first settled there?—At the time the estate was taken over from Lord Reay.

28,948. But these changes that you have referred to were carried out on the Reay estate before the Earls of Sutherland acquired it?—Yes.

28,949. With the single exception, I think you said, of Strathnaver?—Yes.

28,950. Then, you stated with regard to Strathmore, I think, that it was inhabited by only a dozen families?—Yes.

28,951. Did you not hear more than a dozen families enumerated very circumstantially here to-day?—I really did not altogether follow all that was said.

28,952. It was a little more than a dozen?—You may make it 15 if you like. The best way would be to look at the place; I have no means of telling you; I have no rental to go by. This is the impression I have got from looking at the place, and it was also the impression of those who know Strathmore better than I do. From a dozen to fifteen is the most I have been able to gather, and most of them say about a dozen.

28,953. But you see no reason to throw doubt generally upon the statement that was made there?—I can criticise it when I read it; I could only hear the witness very imperfectly.

28,954. I gathered that there were a little more than a dozen?—You may get a lot of names together, but they might be simply individual names.

28,955. I don't suppose the discrepancy is very great?—I think not.

28,956. Then you made remarks with reference to the deer forest; and you stated that you had not many deer forests; as a matter of fact, you have not?—No.

28,957. But they are on the increase, are they not, since you came here?—Yes, I have given the dates.

Tongue, Sutherlandshire.

John Box.

28,958. Yes, you have. As to the method in which they were cleared, you said that the tenant in one case cleared the land of sheep and made it into a deer forest?—Yes.

28,959. Did that remark apply to the other two cases as well?—It applies to the ones in which I have stated so.

28,960. What are they?—I think I have stated that at Coire-na-fearna the tenant himself removed the sheep; and at the upper end of Mudale the tenant himself removed them; but, in the case of Kinloch, the Duke sold them by public sale immediately after the ground was cleared. He had to take over the whole of the late tenant's stock, and all the eild sheep at the upper end were instantly sent off and sold.

28,961. What I wanted to ask was the operation by which the tenant can change the land let under lease from a sheep farm into a deer forest?—By mutual arrangement with the proprietor.

28,962. Of course, there is no use of asking you,—you are quite familiar with leases; are not the purposes to which the land is to be devoted very stringently specified in the lease?—Oh, yes, but it is quite possible for the proprietor and the tenant to come to terms even although the lease may not have run its natural course.

28,963. But changing them during the currency of the lease from one purpose to another,—is that part of the bargain?—Not at all: the sheep farmer simply retired from those areas.

28,964. I must have misunderstood you. Is it the sheep grazing tenant who changed the land into a deer forest?—No, he simply got permission to give up his ground, or that portion of his ground which he found unprofitable under sheep.

28,965. Then another man came in and took over the sheep stock?—No, the tenant himself did what he chose with the sheep stock,—sold it as he chose, and left the ground clear.

28,966. That is not the usual case?—It is the case with those places.

28,967. Then, the bargain that he had with the proprietor in the commencement must have been different?—Oh, no. It is quite simple. Take the case of Upper Mudale, Mr Sellar, the sheep farmer, said "I want to get rid of the wedder ground as it does not pay me." We came into correspondence and conversation with the shooting tenant, and I said to Mr Sellar "Very well if you wish to clear that ground you must take your sheep and do what you please with them; the Duke won't take your stock off that ground; do what you like with them; clear them off that ground and your lease for that ground ceases." That was done, and the ground was let as a deer forest.

28,968. Is it not the usual arrangement that the proprietor agrees to take over the stock at a valuation?—But the proprietor here agreed to break the lease before its natural termination.

28,969. The usual conditions were departed from?—Yes.

28,970. Outside your management, is that becoming common, that way of making an arrangement?—I don't know that it is.

28,971. We have met one or two cases of it. You may be able to correct me, but I always understood that on the Sutherland estate, at any rate, it was a condition of the taking of a grazing farm that at the termination of the lease the proprietor would take over the stock at a valuation?—That is so; but when the tenant comes forward and says "I wish to break my lease so far as a portion of the ground goes as I find it unprofitable," then we may say "Very well, but you must take your stock with you; we don't want it, and if you choose to leave on these terms you may; but you must dispose of your stock." [*The Chairman.*—The tenant is anxious to get quit of his lease?—Of that portion of his ground.]

28,972. Is it not the fact that every tenant who leaves is anxious to get rid of his lease, otherwise it is *primâ facie* an argument that he would like to continue?—Do they not like to continue sometimes?

28,973. I take it that they would be allowed to continue if they were satisfactory tenants?—But when they don't want to keep that bit of ground what objection is there to the Duke making an arrangement with them to relieve them of it?

28,974. I only wish for information.—Upon what?

28,975. The distinction in this case between leaving the stock on the hands of the landlord, and in the other case the tenant himself getting rid of the stock?—When the lease comes to its natural expiry the landlord or the incoming tenant is bound to take over the stock. But if you come before your lease expires and wish to get rid of some particular land, if you come to the Duke and say, This wedder ground is not paying me now, and I will be very glad to get clear of it, and you can get a shooting tenant, the proprietor may very well allow you to go.

28,976. Then, I understand these changes took place during the legal currency of a lease?—Certainly.

28,977. That saves the landlord from the responsibility of a valuation?—It does so.

28,978. In that operation in the case of large farmers, did the landlord suffer considerable loss sometimes in the transfer of stock?—He did in the case of Kinloch when that was cleared.

28,979. But was the valuation there higher than the market price?—I am unable to say that; it was much higher than the price we got for them.

28,980. That is the market price, I presume,—what you were able to get for them. How did that come about, do you know?—I don't know.

28,981. You said that Strathmore was within the boundary of Lord Reay's forest. Of course, you don't mean by that that it was a forest in the sense of a deer forest now-a-days where no man is allowed to live?—I don't know what is actually meant.

28,982. I have no doubt you are aware that the appellation of 'forest' in the old time was very different from what it is now?—Yes.

28,983. So it might have been just a territorial name in that case?—It might have been, but one would hardly understand it as such.

28,984. These people we have heard of, and were all living in it?—The whole estate might be called a forest if it was only a territorial name.

28,985. Do you know anything of it as regards the usage of the word?—No.

28,986. But here you admit that there were a dozen families living within a forest; that state of matters would not be applicable in the case of a forest now-a-days?—No.

28,987. So you don't mean that Lord Reay's forest was a deer forest in the same sense as Mudale now is?—No, I don't think so; certainly not in the same sense as when applied to ground that has been cleared.

28,988. In reference to your statement as to what the Duke of Sutherland was willing to do, you had how many limitations, do you remember,—three or four?—You had better perhaps refer to the statement itself.

28,989. You say, 'Where suitable holdings can be 'found and where they can be made with satisfaction 'and with prospects of success to those concerned, and 'provided that the whole farm be utilised and not only 'the best of the ground selected.' Now, it would depend, you will observe, very much on where suitable holdings can be found; we would have, you see, to get holdings that in the estimation of the proprietor would be suitable?—Yes, but that does not in any way influence the action of the Royal Commission: this offer is purely voluntary.

28,990. I understand that; but as I understand the whole gist of your statement is a defence of the present system, more or less?—My statement does not profess to be a defence.

28,991. But you have stated certain facts and admitted others,—very candidly I must admit,—but upon the whole I may take it that you are naturally interested in defending the management as it is at present carried out? I don't think that is a false position to put you in?—I don't think it is, but I did not understand that there was any necessity for defence.

28,992. But you very naturally defended the present arrangements; that is the position you take up, and you modify that by saying that the proprietor will consider a certain course in certain circumstances. But, as you say, that is not meant to influence us in any way?—Oh, no.

28,993. Then, you said in answer to a question by his lordship in references to this very paragraph that where it can be demonstrated that new holdings if made would be successful, &c. How can it be demonstrated before hand that they could be successful?—I said where it could be demonstrated that there would be a reasonable prospect of success.

28,994. You know there is no demonstration except actually trying it?—I only stipulate for a reasonable prospect of success. You would not wish to break up a sheep farm if it could be seen in a few years that the thing would come to grief or would not succeed. What we require is that there should be some real prospects of success before it should be done.

28,995. You have been in Sutherland for a great number of years?—Yes.

28,996. Have you never heard any statements like this twenty years ago?—Like that? No, I don't think so.

28,997. On no occasion?—No, I have no personal recollection of such.

28,998. Of any promise like this being made by the proprietor in Sutherland?—No, I think not.

28,999. Well, I am glad to know that your experience is different from mine.—If you will ask me about any individual case I will be glad to answer.

29,000. I could mention one or two cases within my own recollection.—I can only say that so far as I can speak from my connection with the estate I don't know of any.

29,001. I think you made some modification or rather explanation of your statement in regard to the arrears in answer to the Chairman. Is there not, as a matter of fact, with regard to the current rents of the crofters, a good deal of uncertainty in their minds naturally arising from the delays that have taken place owing to the complications that have been referred to?—It is very likely they may take some such view; but at the same time the estate has made an application to them for the rents, and I have tried to collect the rents.

29,002. I don't know if it is the case here, but in other parts of Sutherlandshire notices have been posted up announcing rent collections, and these have afterwards been postponed, thus giving rise to some doubt; that also might have been an element in the case?—Yes.

29,003. *The Chairman.*—Perhaps I may be allowed to interpose a question here. Since the rents were fixed by the Crofters Commission, until the Duke's death, have you any reason to suppose that there was any deliberate withholding of rents?—From the fact that only 22 tenants out of 751 are at the present moment clear of arrears, it looks distinctly as if that were so; but I cannot say what was in the people's minds.

29,004. Do you mean clear up to date?—Clear of the rents due up to November of last year.

29,005. *Mr Gordon.*—Take it to Whitsunday was a year; how did matters stand then?—I cannot say offhand, but I could find out.

29,006. At the rent collection immediately previous to the Duke's death how did the matter stand?—It was a very poor collection indeed. I have been told once or twice, officially indeed, by some of the crofters who received extensions of holdings from the Commission, of which you, my lord, were president, that they are not to pay. That is a deliberate withholding, I suppose. I understand they have some grievances as to pasture.

29,007. *Mr Sutherland.*—You refer, I have no doubt, to the Bettyhill crofters?—I do.

29,008. And they state that they are paying 1s. 1½d. per acre for the same measurement, for which farmers pay much less?—They make their measurements very much as the other measurements were made here to-day,—without taking into account the due proportion of the arable land to pasture. In that extension made by the Crofters Commission there is a very large area of green ground.

29,009. More than in the farm of Skelpick?—A great deal more.

29,010. Perhaps that may account for the fact you stated, that there was only one per cent. of old arable land in the whole area of the district?—Yes.

29,011. We have seen it and are able to judge for ourselves if your percentage is correct.—I do not say that it is the same all over.

29,012. I am referring to a part which we have deliberately and carefully looked over. We cannot walk over the whole of the ground in your management with the same deliberation and care, but we are able to judge of the one from the other?—Well, you can see so much from the road.

29,013. Is there more than one per cent. of old arable in the extension given to the Bettyhill crofters?—Yes.

29,014. It is the exception then to the general rule—In all cases where you take the low land off a farm you naturally have more green ground than where you take the upper end.

29,015. Do you mean to tell me that there is more green land down at the low end of the river Naver in proportion than in the farm of Skelpick?—Yes, there is hardly any green land in the upper part of Skelpick.

29,016. You stated that altogether there was something over 2000 acres of this green land?—Yes.

29,017. Now, we had it from a statement that was referred to that in former times the land in cultivation in Strathnaver alone was 1606 Scots acres?—Yes.

29,018. That would bring it up to your number in Strathnaver alone?—Yes, but will you kindly allow me to see that list? [*Captain Henderson's report handed to witness*]. Part of the lands which I see mentioned here are in the crofters' own hands; so that must be taken off.

29,019. Which?—Clerkhill and Swordley, Kirtomy, Farr, Newland, Dalcharn, and Achina.

29,020. How much is there?—I cannot say, but there are at least 80 acres.

29,021. Well, take off the 80 acres; that leaves 1526 acres in Strathnaver alone?—Yes.

29,022. Now, don't you think the balance is too small for the rest?—No, I do not think so. However, I have only given an estimate, though I have done it as fairly as I could; and I have put down the old arable on Syre farm at 350 acres; Rhifail, 260 acres; Clibrick, 235 acres; Achnaburin, 150 acres; and Skelpick, 130 acres. I am not far short there, I think, of what you have.

29,023. No, but you have Armadale and all the other places included besides?—Yes, they are not Strathnaver.

29,024. No doubt the difference may be due to what a man considers old arable. You allow as a natural thing that a great deal of the land that was old arable may now be unrecognisable?—It would want a careful survey to come to any accurate result.

29,025. Then, with regard to the comparative rentals of small holdings and large holdings, which is a material element in our inquiry, you are inclined to think that small holders do not pay as much as large holders; but I don't suppose you lay much stress on that argument?—No, either on one side or the other.

29,026. Will you be inclined to think that the balance is in favour of the small holder, taking all the circumstances into account?—It depends very much on the quantity of arable land; when there is a much larger proportion of arable land in the one case than in the other you cannot make a fair comparison.

29,027. Do not the small holders make a much larger proportion of arable land than the large holders?—Quite so, but I am not going now into the question of who made the land arable.

29,028. It is very important in our inquiry to know whether the arable land capable of wintering stock will be likely to increase instead of decrease, and I

Tongue, Sutherlandshire.

John Box.

have no doubt you will admit its importance from your point of view?—Oh, it will increase, no doubt, slightly.

29,029. I have already quoted from Mr Barclay whom I have no doubt you will admit to have been an authority?—Mr Barclay was purely theoretical in his views.

29,030. A gentleman who had thirty years' experience in a factor's office,—you do not call that a theoretical man?—He was intensely theoretical. I believe he made a sort of calendar that would tell you the day of the week and the day of the month for the next five hundred years.

29,031. That is a high testimony to his ability as a calculator?—Yes.

29,032. Would you be inclined to agree with him in regard to small holders in this neighbourhood? He said:—'This result,' referring to the improvements in the immediate neighbourhood of Tongue, 'taking every 'circumstance into account, exhibits an effort by a 'people that I humbly believe has no parallel in the 'agricultural annals of Scotland.' Would you be inclined to agree with that?—I am not in a position to agree with Mr Barclay's statement, which must have been made a very long time ago when the work was going on.

29,033. Perhaps, in my desire to save you trouble, I did not make the matter clear enough: but he is commenting upon a statement made by Mr Macdonald who read a paper upon the agriculture of Sutherland. Mr Barclay agrees with him to a certain extent, but he contrasts the use to which the land is put as sheep grazing, with the manner in which it could be used to the advantage of the proprietor as smaller holdings where the people could reclaim it. He has stated a most remarkable result, and that is the general remark he makes upon it. You, I suppose, would be quite prepared to admit that the industry exhibited by the people in improving land in this quarter has been very great?—In past years it must have been so.

29,034. I suppose, you will admit too that there is a very great discrepancy between the 1¼d. per acre at which the farm of Melness is held, and the 8d. and 9d. and 10½d. that the crofters pay?—I think you will admit that there is a very large area of land on Melness farm which the crofters would not take at 1¼d. the acre.

29,035. That may be so, but then compare it with the land they have themselves, is it not just as good?—No.

29,036. Did they not get a general slice of the same sort of land to begin with?—Oh, yes, but they don't go in for the enormous amount of floe ground that is on Melness farm.

29,037. Well, they have applied for it, and have not got it; that showed their desire to have it?—You will find that it was offered in more ways than one. The whole farm was offered.

29,038. That is not my remembrance.—No, but it may be the Chairman's.

29,039. You will admit, taking the figures that we have got and the rentals divided by the acreages as I have them before me, the discrepancy is so great that surely you think encouragement ought to be given to these people to improve the land?—I have not the slightest objection to encouragement being given.

29,040. But, as a matter of fact, with these huge holdings on the one side and these restricted holdings on the other, where is the encouragement?—The encouragement is in the appointment of the Royal Commission.

29,041. Where?—To meet the case.

29,042. But it is at present in the hands of people who have full control over the land to deal with it: that is the point. Do you not think that we are justified in asking questions at least with regard to the discrepancies that exists?—Oh, certainly, any questions you may like to ask.

29,043. Well, I would not like to end the examination with any impression that I have been asking improper questions; but I wish to say with regard to these people at South Halladale that you state there is a tendency on their part to squat about their homes?—Did I say so?

Tongue, Sutherlandshire.

John Box.

29,044. I took a note to that effect. Did you not say that the holdings are insufficient when the sons all stay about the holdings?—Not at all. The question was asked of me whether these holdings were self-supporting, and I said I believe that with an ordinary family they were, but if there was a large family they could not be self-supporting.

29,045. Where was the necessity to make that statement in explanation?—Because I was answering a question that the Chairman asked me.

29,046. But did you imply in any way that there was a tendency so to do?—Not at all: I simply implied that if a crofter were to keep his family, say several grown-up sons at home, there would not be enough to keep them all at work.

29,047. Then you heard what was said as to the prosecution of the fishing?—Yes.

29,048. Have you any opinion with regard to the advisability of having a fisherman and a cultivator of the land combined?—My opinion on that point is very much the same as Mr James Morrison's,—that there should be accommodation for the fishermen near the places where harbours are to be constructed.

29,049. Then, it would be a good thing perhaps, would it not, for fishermen to have small holdings as well?—If they had enough to grow a little potatoes that is all they would care to have.

29,050. You know the holdings about Golspie?—Yes.

29,051. How do they do there?—They have their houses on lease there; they have built houses and have a small piece of ground behind, some of them, others have none. At Embo it is the same; very small patches.

29,052. But are the people engaged in the fishing industry here not much more comfortable upon the whole than the Golspie fishermen even with all their advantages?—The Golspie fishermen should be pretty well off, but they have not nearly so good a fishing ground.

29,053. It is a better coast?—The coast is not so rough.

29,054. Could you then, Mr Box, assist us in any way in showing us such land as we are trying to discover?—I am afraid I cannot show you any more land than you have seen yourselves.

29,055. *Mr Gordon.*—I want to know about these Strath Halladale crofters. Can you tell me without much trouble what rent the 51 crofters in Strath Halladale pay?—I don't know, but I could tell you in five minutes.

29,056. Do you happen to know what is the present rent of Bighouse?—£700 I think.

29,057. Does that include the shooting rent?—Oh, no.

29,058. How would the area under crofters there and the area of Bighouse compare?—There is the same difficulty in comparing the two.

29,059. Take it as it stands arable and pasture land together, would the crofters occupy more than four-elevenths of the whole Strath?—No, I don't think they would; I don't think they occupy so much as that.

29,060. Assume that the farm of Bighouse could be occupied by a set of crofters as successful and well doing as are at present in Strath Halladale. Would you admit that it could be so occupied without loss to the proprietor?—Yes, I would like to see it.

29,061. That is a very strong position for you to admit?—I would be very willing to see more crofters in the same position as those in Strath Halladale are now.

29,062. The occupation of these Strath Halladale crofters meets the difficulty to which you made pointed reference that if they took the low ground they would have to take also the high?—Yes.

29,063. In each case they would go to the backbone or the watershed?—Yes, on both sides.

29,064. And consequently if it was possible to plant crofters on each side of Melness farm, that is along the

Kyle of Tongue on the one side and Loch Hope on the other side,—if they came to the centre of ground then your difficulty as to the bad ground being left would be removed?—Yes.

29,065–66. Now, I was going to ask you a few questions about Melness, but you can answer the questions or not as you please. Can you tell me first what was the former rent of the farm?—How far back do you want to go?

29,067. Five years, or last year, or two years ago?—It was £600 I think.

29,068. That makes £1200. The new rent of the farm is, you say, £280, and the shooting rent is?—£1000.

29,069. Making together £1280, so that you have improved your position to the extent of £80?—More than that, because the shooting tenant pays both keepers' wages and his own taxes, which we had to pay before.

29,070. Then, you have made a distinct profit by the arrangement?—Yes.

29,071. Do you happen to remember how many sheep you took over from Mr Mackay?—No, I don't.

29,072. Would I be right in saying it was about 7000?—Yes.

29,073. And you sold a number of the sheep at Lairg?—Yes.

29,074. Do you happen to recollect what the loss was per head upon the sheep?—No, I don't.

29,075. Possibly, it is not a question that you wish to go into?—I don't recollect.

29,076. Do you see that in such large farms as Melness and others in this country, where a tenant says at the end of his lease 'I don't wish to continue 'the farm,' the proprietor is subjected to the risk of very serious loss?—The proprietor has to take over the sheep stock at valuation.

29,077. And in this case that was done at a very serious loss to the proprietor?—By the valuation prices being extremely high.

29,078. They were considerably over the market prices. If my information is correct, the interest at 5 per cent. on the loss the late Duke sustained by the realisation of the sheep stock would amount to a sum equal to the rent now paid for the remainder of the lease?—No; nothing like it.

29,079. Well, I do not wish you to answer the questions unless you choose, but that was the information I received. The loss does not then amount to as much as that?—Oh, no, I hope not.

29,080. It would be a very serious thing if it were. But in the event of these bigger farms being broken up and smaller holdings substituted, there would be less risk of many of these farms being left in the proprietor's hands?—Yes.

29,081. And for that reason, and that reason alone, it would be an improvement in the position of the estate if the farms were made of a more lettable size?—Yes.

29,082. *The Chairman.*—Was the land given in enlargement of crofters' holdings from Skelpick in the main green ground?—No, there were both kinds.

29,083. Was there a considerable proportion of it green ground?—Yes, there was.

29,084. Was it one of the best parts of the farm?—So the farmers maintain.

29,085. Is the land left on Skelpick to a considerable extent rough ground of less value per acre?—There is some green ground left on Skelpick; they have still got the upper part towards Rhifail.

29,086. What character has the land there?—I cannot speak of it personally as I do not know it; I have never been quite up to the top there.

29,087. But is there a larger proportion of rough ground to green ground left on Skelpick than of rough ground to green ground in the enlargement?—If a larger proportion of green ground has been taken away by the enlargement it naturally follows that a smaller proportion of green ground is left to the farmers. I cannot go into the details offhand.

29,088. In comparing the rent per acre of the Skelpick enlargement with the rate per acre of the Skelpick farm, is it necessary to keep in view that in what is left of Skelpick farm there is a very considerable proportion of rough ground?—I think so.

29,089. It would necessarily be at lower rate per acre if valued by itself than the green ground taken from the enlargement?—I suppose so; I suppose that would be in the minds of the Commissioners when they valued it.

29,090. Is it correct to say that the tenant of Skelpick has got a very considerable reduction of rent since the enlargement was granted?—Yes.

29,091. Very material?—Very material.

29,092. Hingeing mainly upon the loss of ground from the enlargement?—Yes.

29,093. *Mr Gordon.*—Is the reduction greater than the amount payable for the enlargement?—Oh, yes, very much.

29,094. What is the difference?—£350 – £85 = £265; £265 – £170 = £95.

29,095. *Mr Sutherland.*—Was it a section of the farm of Skelpick from the watershed down to the river that the crofters got?—It was a section of the farm from the loch down to the river.

29,096. It would naturally from the configuration of the country be a representive portion of the whole?—Oh, yes, a portion of it would. (*Explains on map*). I am not in a position to make an exact statement as to the area in either case.

29,096*a*. Is there anything to justify the discrepancy between 1s. 1½d. and 4½d.?—No, I don't think there is, except that we may have let the farm too cheap; we may have been too liberal to the farming tenant.

29,097. Or the Crofters Commission may have fixed the rent too high?—The one or the other.

29,098. *Mr Macaulay, Solicitor, Golspie.*—In using the word 'congested' with reference to the north coast here, I presume you do not hold that this district is more congested than crofter districts ordinarily?—I suppose it is well known that there is nothing in Sutherland so bad as in some other places. I said already that the word 'congestion' must be looked upon as a comparative term.

29,099. In your opinion, is there such a quantity of this available arable land and otherwise in this district as would appreciably relieve what has been termed the congestion in the north?—It depends upon what is looked upon as available land. The arable land that we know of will not do it, so far as we know it, unless, indeed, the whole of it was taken away, and the sheep farms left without any.

29,100. Then, with regard to the middleclass holdings to which reference has been made, in your opinion, would the crofters here be likely to be able to take these places and stock them without assistance?—Not if two-thirds of the present crofters are to be planted there at once, they certainly could not do it. Two-thirds of the crofters in this district would not be in a position to undertake that at once.

29,101. But would two-thirds of the crofters, if removed, not more than exhaust any amount of available land you possibly could have in this district?—I have already stated that they would exhaust much more than all the arable land I know of.

29,102. The whole of the crofters' rents in this district were fixed by the Crofters Commission, were they not?—Yes.

29,103. And I think you told us in your statement that there has been a very small increase in crofters' rents during the last forty or fifty years?—During the last twenty years at any rate.

29,104. Is it not the fact that the rents of sheep farmers went considerably up about fifteen years ago?—Yes, very considerably; they reached a very high figure.

29,105. And it is also the fact that they have come down relatively more than the crofters' rents?—Yes.

29,106. But to compare the decrease during the last ten years, say, with the decrease that the Crofters Commission gave, is not a fair comparison?—I think not, because farm rents went down from a position that crofters' rents never reached.

Tongue, Sutherlandshire.

John Box.

29,107. The crofters' rents practically never went up?—No, they never went up much.

29,108. So they had not to come down?—No.

29,109. Now, with regard to this piece of forest that was cleared by Mr Sellar I think it was. Is it not the fact that this ground was cleared practically because it could not be made to pay for purposes of sheep?—That is the reason why he did it.

29,110. And the tenant by selling his sheep must have sacrificed some money as compared with the valuation prices?—I don't know anything at all about that. I don't know what he got for his sheep when he sold them.

29,111. Is it not usual that the valuation prices are higher than the market prices?—There were no valuation prices in that case, they were his own sheep.

29,112. But is it not ordinarily the case that the sum paid to an outgoing tenant for his sheep is higher than would be got for them in the open market?—Yes.

29,113. So that Mr Sellar must have dropped a good deal of money by putting his sheep into the open market rather than by getting them taken over by the landlord?—There was not a large number of sheep.

29,114. Then, with regard to the percentage of arable land that you named, in speaking of that you took in the whole of your district, including mountains and everything, in fixing the arable rate at the percentage you did?—Yes.

[ADJOURNED.]

TWENTY-NINTH SITTING.

Durness, Sutherlandshire.

DURNESS, SUTHERLANDSHIRE,

October 16, 1893.

Present:—

DAVID BRAND, Esq., Advocate, Sheriff of Ayr, and Chairman of the Crofters Commission, *Chairman.*
ANGUS SUTHERLAND, Esq., M.P.
JAMES NOEL MULLER FORSYTH, Esq.
GEORGE GORDON, Esq.
WILLIAM MACKENZIE, Esq., *Secretary.*

Donald Whyte.

DONALD WHYTE, Crofter, Durine (52)—*examined.*

29,115. *The Chairman.*—Are you the tenant of 31 Durine?—Yes.

29,116. I see your area is 4 acres 1 rood 38 poles arable, 1 acre 2 roods 1 pole outrun, and a share of 3200 acres. Old rent, £1, 8s.; fixed rent, £1, 15s. Are you to give your evidence orally, or have you a written statement?—I have a written statement.

29,117. Read it, if you please.—As one of the delegates appointed to appear before your Royal Commission, I have to represent that the general complaint in Durness is that the holdings are too small. For this reason the land cannot be properly cultivated in shifts, but is ploughed yearly, and in process of time has become so weak as to yield nothing but the poorest of crops. To remedy this there is abundance of land on the two neighbouring sheep farms, which, added to the present crofts, would enable the crofters to obtain better returns with less labour than at present: so what is really required is the gradual extension of the present holdings by adding to them the neighbouring arable and pastoral land from Far-out Head to the Big Bridge. The crofters might not be able to stock all this at once, but it may be mentioned that Rispond Farm, acquired only three years ago, is already fully stocked, if not overstocked. The improving of houses, fencing, and general improvements in the circumstances of the people, are sufficient evidence of what may be accomplished by the inherent energy of the people, when they are encouraged by the laws of the country. We would not recommend additional holdings to be formed in this district, because the district between Far-out Head and the Big Bridge was formerly occupied by crofters. New holdings could be formed on the east side of Loch Eriboll, all along both sides of Loch Hope and Strathmore, and in several townships on the Eriboll sheep farm from which crofters were removed to make room for sheep.

Durness, Sutherlandshire. Donald Whyte.

29,118. Is that the whole of it?—That is the whole.

29,119. Were you appointed at a public meeting?—Yes.

29,120. As a delegate to represent the crofters of this district?—Yes.

29,121. And were David Mackenzie and George Campbell appointed along with you?—No, not at the same meeting.

29,122. But were they appointed at other meetings?—I was not present at the meeting.

29,123. I think you have represented in your statement that the holdings of the crofters whom you represent are too small?—Yes.

29,124. You mean by that, that it is impossible for the occupant of a holding to earn his living by his croft?—That is it.

29,125. Then, is it the fact that no crofter here of those whom you represent earns his living by the croft?—It is a fact that they do not.

29,126. How do they earn their living?—Some go to the fishing, and others have friends in the south, and some have children in the south.

29,127. They get assistance in that way?—Yes, and a few get employment.

29,128. Do a few get employment in the locality?—And some are roadmen; very few get employment on the farms.

29,129. But do the whole of them have to eke out their living by wages obtained from labour outside the holding?—Yes, that is so.

29,130. Or by fishing?—Or by fishing; there is not a crofter in Durness that can live on his croft.

29,131. Then you say in your statement there is abundance of land which might be made available, and you refer specially to two farms?—Yes.

29,132. What are the names of these farms?—Keoldale and Balnakill.

29,133. Do these farms march with crofters' lands?—Yes, both of them.

29,134. Now when you say there is land available, to what kind of land do you particularly refer?—Pastoral land, and arable as well.

29,135. Land that has been for a length of time under sheep?—Yes.

29,136. When you say 'arable,' do you mean old arable or land under rotation?—Old arable I mean.

29,137. You don't include in your statement land under rotation?—No.

29,138. And when you distinguish between old arable and land under sheep, do you mean by land under sheep, ground which could easily be tilled?—Yes, I mean by that, land that was formerly in the occupation of crofters.

29,139. And is it land which, in your opinion, could again be profitably occupied by crofters?—I think so.

29,140. Either for grazing purposes, or for cultivation?—Both.

29,141. Then, do the crofters whom you represent mainly desire an extension of holdings?—Yes.

29,142. That is their main object?—Yes, they have lodged applications to the Crofters Commission.

29,143. Which have not been dealt with, I suppose?—No.

29,144. How many applications?—There are three applications from the parish.

29,145. And are all these applications directed to lands belonging to these two farms?—Two of them.

29,146. To what farm?—To Keoldale and Balnakill, and one to Eriboll farm.

29,147. You mentioned Rispond; Rispond was formerly a farm in the hands of a lessee, I suppose, but is now in possession of the crofters?—Yes.

29,148. It was granted by the proprietor as an extension of grazing some years ago?—Yes.

29,149. And is the whole of the farm in the occupation of crofters, or only a part of it?—The whole of it, with the exception of a small bit down at Rispond.

29,150. I see there is an application from six crofters of Durine and Sangomore for a part of the farm of Keoldale, and an application from five of the crofters of Laid for a part of the farm of Eriboll, and a third from five of the crofters of Sangomore for a part of the farm of Balnakill. These seem to be the applications to which you refer?—Yes, that is meant for the whole of the townships, for the townships between Sangobeg and Smoo.

29,151. We cannot go into the work of the Crofters Commission here; but it is right perhaps to tell you that there may be a difficulty about that. Is it part of your proposal that crofters should be taken out of their holdings and settled in new holdings, or simply that the present holdings be extended?—That the present holdings be extended in this district; and there may be room for new holdings.

29,152. On the lands to which you refer?—I don't think there is, unless you begin at the end of the Kyle at Grudaidh and go along to Kilbreck.

29,153. Was that matter considered, or was it rather extension you had in view?—It was extension we had in view, and they generally spoke about removing too.

29,154. To whom did these suggestions of removal refer?—To the cottars; and some crofters would remove too.

29,155. Was it mainly cottars?—Cottars and crofters, but they don't approve of being under the Small Holdings Act.

29,156. Are there many cottars among your townships?—Not very many.

29,157. How many?—Only half a dozen, I suppose, or not so many.

29,158. Do these cottars pay rent?—I think they do pay 10s.

29,159. You mentioned the east side of Eriboll, and both sides of Loch Hope?—Yes.

29,160. The west side of Eriboll is where the township of Laid is?—The west side.

29,161. To what purpose do you think the east side of Loch Eriboll is suited?—It would suit the Laid crofters, who have a miserable place to live in.

29,162. Do you mean for settlement or for extension?—For settlement.

29,163. Do you think the land there is better than the land on the side they occupy?—Oh, much.

29,164. You said the place occupied by the Laid crofters is miserable; do you mean that the land is very poor?—Very poor: any person could see that.

29,165. It consists of moss and stone?—Moss and stone, nothing else.

29,166. *Mr Sutherland.*—What is the extent, do you know, of the land held in large farms; do you know the areas of the farms?—I am not sure, I heard 20,000 or 25,000 acres for Balnakill.

29,167. And what do you think is the area of Keoldale?—I cannot say.

29,168. What is the extent held by the crofters now?—I cannot tell you that either.

29,169. It is 3200 acres, and their arable won't be included in that I suppose. Would 4000 acres hold all the land in the occupation of the crofters?—I think so.

29,170. And what is the area of the parish, do you know?—I cannot exactly tell.

29,171. The area of the parish is 140,812 acres, and if you subtract the 4000 from that it leaves 136,812 acres. How many people now possess these 136,812 acres?—I think there are 68 crofters.

29,172. I am talking of the remainder outside: if you subtract the crofters' area from the area of the parish you have left the area in the possession of the sheep farmers; how many sheep farmers occupy these 136,812 acres?—Three.

29,173. So three families have 136,812 acres, and 69 families have 4000 acres; is that the distribution of the land?—Yes, I don't know if that is the area of the land or not.

29,174. In your opinion is that a state of matters that cries for redress?—I should think so, but that does not include the Rispond farm; there is an acreage of 3200 in the old pasture.

29,175. But you have got the Rispond farm now, haven't you?—Yes.

29,176. And is it included in the 3200?—No, it is not.

29,177. Well, add it then to what the crofters have got and that will bring it up to 7000 acres?—Yes.

29,178. If you subtract 7000 instead of 4000 you leave still 135,000 acres in the possession of how many families?—Three.

29,179. And 7000 in the possession of the 69 families?—Yes.

29,180. That then is the distribution of the land at the present time?—That is so.

29,181. You mentioned places where it would be possible to form new holdings or extend the present holdings. The farms were?—Keoldale and Balnaaill.

29,182. And, in your opinion, would these form suitable extensions of holdings for the people of this district?—Oh, certainly.

29,183. Would you now, if you had the opportunity, take the whole of that as extension of grazings for the existing holdings? Would you take the whole of the parts you mentioned? Would it be necessary in order to form a proper extension of the holdings of the present tenants?—Oh, no, it would not.

29,184. Would there be some left for the forming of new holdings provided it were available?—Oh, yes.

29,185. Then, the first thing to face would be the erection of buildings and the stocking of the land, provided you got it?—Yes.

29,186. Have you any fear that that would not be met by the people?—I think it would. About new holdings I know they would require some help, but as for extensions they could stock them I know.

29,187. They could stock them easily enough?—Oh, easily enough.

29,188. And I think you adduced as an argument in favour of that, that they had no difficulty in putting stock on Rispond farm when they got it?—No.

29,189. When did you come into possession of Rispond farm?—Three years ago, or a few years ago.

29,190. How long were the people out of possession of it?—Fifty years ago, since the Ceann-na-Beinne evictions.

29,191. So they were out forty-eight years, and then they got back the land out of which they were cleared?—Yes.

29,192. Now, with regard to the population we see along here, where did the people of these districts come from?—From the farms of Balnakill and Keoldale. [*The Chairman.*—The date of the order is 17th September 1890.]

29,193. It was in 1890 you came into possession of the Rispond farm?—Yes.

29,194. Where did these families come from that we see now in Sangobeg and in Leirin-mhor?—A few of them that were living in Ceann-na-Beinne, and the islands, and these places.

29,195. Eilean Hoan?—Yes, and some were living on Keoldale and Balnakill farms.

29,196. They were cleared off these large areas and put in there?—Yes.

29,197. You mentioned another place regarding which I have no doubt we will have direct evidence, that is Laid, on Loch Eriboll?—Yes.

29,198. When was that settlement formed?—I cannot tell: about forty or fifty years ago.

29,199. Did any of them come from these places

Durness, Sutherlandshire.

Donald Whyte.

that were cleared at that time?—I cannot tell: I suppose so.

29,200. Do you know anything about Strathmore?—No, but only what I was hearing about it from people who were evicted.

29,201. But have you ever been there yourself?—Many a time.

29,202. Is it in your opinion a place suitable for putting people in?—Yes, the best place that could be.

29,203. And are you aware of the population it sustained before?—No.

29,204. But you know that all these townships were occupied?—I know that all these townships were occupied.

29,205. And, in your opinion, are they as good places as Durine or Sangobeg?—Yes, and Leirin is the most miserable of all.

29,206. Is it more miserable than Laid?—Well, no: it is second to Laid.

29,207. You have heard, I have no doubt, a great deal of solicitude expressed on behalf of crofters with regard to putting them into places where they were not likely to succeed?—Oh, yes.

29,208. You are glad to hear it, aren't you?—Oh, yes, as a crofter that is natural enough.

29,209. But do you think there is much reality in it when it is expressed in order to prevent the people being put back into these places? Would there be much danger of their not succeeding there when they have succeeded in Durine?—There would be no danger.

29,210. Do you suffer from frosts here?—No.

29,211. Nor floods, more than other places?—No.

29,212. But you are of opinion, are you, that if they got an opportunity of forming holdings there they would be in better circumstances to try it than where they are now?—Oh, yes, of course. How can they thrive in the present circumstances?

29,213. You could show us these places that, in your opinion and the opinion of those you represent, are fit for the extension of grazings or forming new holdings?—Yes.

29,214. *Mr Gordon.*—How many crofters are there in Durness?—There are 68 crofters in the townships of Sangobeg, Leirinmor, Sangomore, Durine, and Bailevollich, and I think 19 or 18 in Laid, Loch Eriboll.

29,215. Never mind the Eriboll people, how many are there between Durness and Rispond?—Sixty-eight.

29,216. Now, do all these people participate in the extension of Rispond?—Yes.

29,217. The whole of the Durness crofters?—The whole of the Durness crofters, with the exception of Laid, Loch Eriboll.

29,218. How do you use the farm, is it for pasture, or arable; is there any part cultivated just now by the Durness crofters?—I think the Sangobeg crofters have got 4 or 5 acres between 11 of them.

29,219. And the rest of the hill ground is grazed by the stock of the whole of the townships?—By the stock of the whole of the townships.

29,220. Can you give me any idea of the number of stock upon the place altogether?—Yes, I think about 1400.

29,221. How would that compare with the stock that was on it before, in Mr Swanson's time?—I mean the whole of the pasture.

29,222. There are 1400 sheep upon the 7000 acres of grazing, is that what you mean?—Yes, that is what I mean.

29,223. Now you told us that the meeting whom you represented preferred rather to have an extension of your arable holdings and pasture than township pasture, is that so?—Not the township pasture, I meant hill pasture for the different townships between Sangobeg and Bailevollich.

29,224. Any new pasture you wanted was for that purpose?—Yes.

29,225. You want in the first place an extension of your arable holdings, and you also wish to have your present hill pasture extended?—Yes.

29,226. You have presently 7000 acres; now how much more pasture do you think you could profitably occupy?—As much again whatever, and more.

29,227. You could take 14,000 acres?—Yes.

29,228. That would be sheep grazing?—Sheep and cattle and horses.

29,229. Have you any idea how many cattle and horses there are in your townships?—No, but we will soon know.

29,230. How many cattle do you have yourself?—I have two cows and a stirk.

29,231. Would each of the 90 crofters have three beasts or more?—Oh, yes, they would average that.

29,232. That is nearly 300 cattle you have upon this pasture?—Yes.

29,233. And how much do you allow for each beast?—Five sheep.

29,234. And how many horses would you have?—I have a horse, some have two.

29,235. Have you any law among yourselves regulating the number of cattle and horses that a man may keep?—Oh, yes, the Common Grazing Regulation Act from the Crofter Commission.

29,236. That is not the Munro-Ferguson Act, is it?—Yes, Novar's Act.

29,237. Is that kept in force with you?—Well, we are trying to do so.

29,238. How many acres of arable land would the man have who has two horses?—Four and five.

29,239. Well, if there were two good well-fed horses they would eat nearly the whole of that?—But they buy most of the provender.

29,240. Is there any man holding only 4 or 5 acres entitled under the Novar Act to have two horses?—Yes, if he reduces his other stock.

29,241. Do you know any man who has two horses?—Yes.

29,242. Have they their full number of cattle too?—Well, they may have that too.

29,243. Therefore, the Act is not obeyed?—Not as yet, we could not obey it.

29,244. You have, say at least, 100 horses; that would be, at 6 sheep to the horse, equivalent to 600 sheep; and you have about 300 cattle, which at 5 sheep would be 1500; that is, roughly, for the cattle and the horses, 2000 sheep, and you have 1400 sheep, that is in all 3400 sheep you have on the 7000 acres. Don't you think that an excessive stocking?—But some of the crofters have no horse at all.

29,245. Well, how many horses; you said there was an average of one or two?—I did not say an average, but I said that some had two.

29,246. That would be fully an average of one?—No, only two or three have got two, and the crofters in Sangobeg have no horses, nor in Leirin either.

29,247. Is it spade husbandry they have?—Yes.

29,248. But there is no arable land in the vicinity they could get to extend their holdings?—No.

29,249. Where are the men whom you think would be inclined to flit from their present holdings?—In the southern townships.

29,250. You would be inclined to go yourself?—Yes.

29,251. It would require to be a good croft that you would go to?—Yes, if I got the holding on reasonable terms.

29,252. You mentioned the side of Loch Eriboll; where is the land there that is not under cultivation that you think would be suitable for new holdings?—What I mentioned about Heilem.

29,253. How many people would you put in there?—I cannot say.

29,254. Do you know any other part of the east side of Loch Eriboll that would be fit for crofters except Heilem and the home farm?—Oh, yes, both sides of Loch Hope.

29,255. But in Eriboll. You mentioned Heilem, and I know that place; is there any other place along Loch Eriboll where you could put in crofters?—Yes, Freisgill and Badlehamhish.

29,256. Is it a good place down about Freisgill?—Not very good, but it is very good down about Badlehamhish.

Durness, Sutherlandshire.

Donald Whyte.

Durness, Sutherlandshire. Donald Whyte.

29,257. The Melness crofters declined to have anything to do with it, so perhaps you would not like it either. I am afraid you have run away a little too far as to the number of people you could put on to Loch Eriboll. There is a little bit on Heilem, but I don't know any other place till you go down to Freisgill? There is Achlochy.

29,258. How many people would you put in there?—I cannot say.

29,259. That is the difficulty you have in making a general statement. There is no room for crofters in Loch Eriboll except at that one place. Take Loch Hope; where is the land there?—Arnaboll and Badmheon; I don't know exactly the names of the other townships on the east side.

29,260. And Poll-Ath-roinn?—Yes.

29,261. The shepherd has the whole ground there in hand. I think he has the whole in cultivation that will cultivate. You have the green ground of Loch Hope, from Hope Lodge away upwards?—Yes.

29,262. Now, if you take that green ground off the farm of Melness what are you going to do with the back of it, the floe land in the centre?—Give that to the crofters as well.

29,263. Do you think they would manage to get people to go there and be able to occupy the whole of the farm of Melness?—About the farm of Melness I cannot say anything, because I am not acquainted there. Melness is not in our parish at all.

29,264. Neither is the east side of Loch Hope, but you mentioned it?—The east and west are in the parish of Durness.

29,265. I am afraid that all the ground that you mentioned as suitable for new holdings in that side of the country would be reduced to some half a dozen available places: now that would not go far to relieve a congested district. I merely wish to point that out to you?—I pointed out another place between the end of the Kyle there at Keoldale and up to Cambreck.

29,266. *Mr Forsyth.*—What size of holding would you contemplate as a desirable one in this district for the crofter, I mean as to arable land?—From 15 to 20 acres.

29,267. And a proper share of a hill?—Yes.

29,268. How many sheep would you like the man to have?—About 100.

29,269. As many as that. Would that be held as a club stock, or as individual sheep running on common pasture? Which system do you prefer?—Individual sheep running on hill pasture.

29,270. You have not tried the club farm system in this district at all?—No, never.

29,271. Have you considered it?—Oh, yes, we have considered it, but we think the other system would suit best.

29,272. You think the individual system is cheaper? Yes, I think so.

29,273. Do you find any trouble in managing your hill under this individual system?—No.

29,274. But supposing your grazings were very much extended, supposing that in place of the comparatively small acreage you have now, you had really a large hill to deal with, say 10,000, 12,000 or 14,000 acres, don't you think it would be more economical to work your sheep properly under a club system?—No, I don't think it.

29,275. You still would keep them under the individual system?—Yes.

29,276. Don't you think that under that system the individual lots would all come in to the nearer parts of the grazings, that the sheep would not be properly distributed over the hill, and that the nearer parts would thereby be overstocked?—We would have shepherds to do the work properly.

29,277. It would take probably more than one shepherd for such a large grazing?—Yes.

29,278. And still you would hold the individual system?—Yes.

29,279. You don't think you would sell your sheep better as in one lot off a club farm? Don't you think you would get better prices under a proper system of arrangement?—I don't think so.

29,280. Then, as to the arable land, say 15 to 20 acres, would you be able to cultivate that land with an average of one pony apiece?—Yes, I think we would; we could have it in shifts, and it would be much less labour than we have at present. Durness, Sutherlandshire. Donald Whyte.

29,281. Do you think you would be able to agree among each other so that one pony would do on the average, for say 20 acres of land? I am pointing out this, because I see the great number of horses that are kept everywhere?—We were ever agreed.

29,282. You have been able to agree in the past about ploughing together?—Yes.

29,283. Have you had any system of rotation of crop here in your small holdings?—Well, no, the holdings are so small, and if the crop failed there would be nothing for the cattle.

29,284. What has been the system in the past, has it been oats and potatoes alternately?—Yes.

29,285. Have you been sowing any grass seeds?—Some do so.

29,286. But no regular system?—No regular system.

29,287. Is it in your mind that if you had larger crofts you would take up a regular system and sow grass seeds?—Yes.

29,288. Then, as to your cattle, is it milk cows you keep only?—Yes.

29,289. Do you rear much young stock?—We do sometimes, but there is no price for them now.

29,290. Then, if you had larger crofts, would you increase your number of cattle, or would you keep mostly to the milk business?—We would increase our cattle as we have no milk at all. There is not much milk to be seen in Durness.

29,291. You mean that the milk now goes mostly to the calf?—Yes, there is no pasture for the cattle and they cannot have milk.

29,292. Then you are confident that the majority of the men here would work crofts properly if they had bigger ones?—Yes, there are no better farmers, I suppose, in Sutherlandshire than the Durness crofters.

29,293. *The Chairman.*—You said just now there was very little milk in Durness?—Yes.

29,294. What is done with the milk which the crofters use so far as they have any?—Done with it! I think it is little enough for their porridge.

29,295. But have the children milk?—Well, some.

29,296. Have some of the crofters in Durness no milk at all?—Yes, there are some of the crofters in Durness that never had much milk, they might have a little drop.

29,297. But the supply of milk is quite insufficient?—Quite insufficient.

29,298. Have any of the crofters a sufficient supply of milk?—I don't think so.

29,299. Then do those who have rather more than the others give assistance to those who have less?—Yes, they do, that is the case, I know, in many instances.

29,300. I suppose there is no use made of anything in lieu of milk, such as Swiss milk?—No.

29,301. I understand on the question of available land that your position is this, that you and those whom you represent are able to speak with confidence of the farms of Balnakill and Keoldale?—Yes.

29,302. These are lands immediately marching with your holdings and of which you have a considerable knowledge?—That is so.

29,303. But when you come to speak of the banks of Loch Hope or Loch Eriboll, while you gave us as much information as you had, I suppose, you do not feel yourself able to speak so confidently of that part of the country as of those two farms?—That is the case.

29,304. But you invite our attention to the banks of Loch Eriboll and Loch Hope for our consideration, without venturing upon a dogmatic opinion?—Yes, that is it.

29,305. *Mr Sutherland.*—I would like to ask you with regard to the questions Mr Forsyth put to you with the object of ascertaining about a club stock, have you any experience of holding stock in a club?—No, we never tried that system.

Durness, Sutherlandshire.

Donald Whyte.

29,306. So I presume you are not in a position to say that the club system is worse, or less adapted to your circumstances than the individual system?—Well, we had a talk over it many a time, but perhaps we don't understand the thing.

29,307. As a matter of fact, you had not practical experience of it?—No.

29,308. But you had of managing it on the individual system?—Yes.

29,309. May I ask you, with regard to this question of club stock, if you can think in your own mind of any reason why there has been no club stock in Sutherlandshire? Have you formed any opinion regarding it, that whereas it is somewhat common in other parts of the Highlands it is not in Sutherlandshire at all? Has any reason occurred to your mind why that should be so?—Not at present.

29,310. Does a club stock not depend upon the amount of grazing a man has?—Yes.

29,311. Do you think it would?—Yes.

29,312. If he has only a trifling area of grazing it would not be worth while forming a club system?—I think that is the reason.

29,313. And has the idea been mooted at all among you until you got the recent extension?—No.

29,314. Because there was no necessity for it, is that the reason?—Yes, that is the reason.

29,315. But you are not prepared to say upon the merits of the question that the individual system is better?—No, I don't say that; we never tried the system.

29,316. But you have considered the points that Mr Forsyth brought before you as to the advantage that might arise from managing it on a club system?—Yes.

29,317. Uniformity of stock would be much better than the way it is now?—Yes.

29,318. And one transaction instead of 100 transactions?—Yes.

29,319. You think that might be an advantage?—Yes.

29,320. Then, with regard to the amount of stock you have in the grazing, I think you have stated that you agreed among yourselves?—Yes, we agreed among ourselves.

29,321. And the Act of Parliament does not prescribe the number of stock you keep, does it?—Yes, the regulations we got.

29,322. But the Act of Parliament that you don't obey. Is the number of stock a man may keep laid down in the Act of Parliament?—No, I don't think so.

29,323. It simply gives you power to form committees in order to agree among yourselves and make regulations that would be sanctioned by the Crofters Commission?—Yes, and by the landlord as well.

29,324. But you would be quite prepared to admit, I suppose, that there is too much stock on your grazing?—Yes, I think so.

29,325. From the areas that have been stated to-day you say that you have already close upon 7000 acres (that is overstating it, I have no doubt), and that you have got 1400 sheep upon that?—Yes.

29,326. Exclusive of horses and cattle?—Yes.

29,327. Taking the sheep alone then you have only 5 acres for each of the sheep you have got?—Yes.

29,328. Is that not a very high stock?—Yes.

29,329. Do you know any large farmers that hold as much stock as that on their grazings?—I do not think so.

29,330. Do you know what the common rule is for that?—No.

29,331. You have not heard it?—No.

29,332. Would you be surprised to hear that they have 10 acres for every sheep they have?—I was not aware of that.

29,333. It has been stated before us several times. What then do you think is the fair deduction from that state of matters?—The fair deduction?

29,334. Don't you hear a great deal about the difficulty of putting stock upon the land if the crofters got it?—Yes.

29,335. Have you found any difficulty?—No.

29,336. You have put too much stock on it?—Yes, that is the case.

29,337. So you think that argument vanishes?—I think so.

29,338. Well, then, as to the capability of certain places for making new settlements, in your opinion, is that power determined by the number of green spots that you will find?—I don't think so.

29,339. When the people of Sangobeg and of Durine were placed down there, was there any green ground for them to settle on, do you know?—I don't think so.

29,340. You think that all the land you see hereabout was reclaimed out of the heather, is that your opinion?—Yes, that is my opinion; it is true enough.

29,341. You have seen it done yourself?—No, it was done before my time.

29,342. But have you seen no land reclaimed from the heather in this district?—Yes, a little.

29,343. And you think it would be much easier—you know some lands under heather that would be very much better subjects, do you, for reclaiming?—Yes, I do.

29,344. *Mr Macaulay, Solicitor, Golspie, Agent for his Grace the Duke of Sutherland.*—With regard to your applications for additional grazings, do these applications apply simply to the lower part of these farms of Keoldale and Balnakill?—To the adjoining portions.

29,345. But the fact is that these are the lower parts?—These are the lower parts.

29,346. Of the farms?—I suppose so.

29,347. And the remainder of the farm is very much higher than these parts in question?—No, the most of the farms are lower than that piece, that stretch that goes up to the Big Bridge for which we applied.

29,348. But your application does not apply to any of the hill ground proper, does it?—Yes.

29,349. To how much of it, a great proportion of it?—Well, say Sartle, that is considered a hirsel or a shepherd's herding for 800 or 900 sheep. There is one shepherd they have there, that is on the Balnakill farm.

29,350. But in your applications for land in this immediate district in the Keoldale farm, the lands referred to lie comparatively low, don't they?—Yes.

29,351. Are you aware that during lambing time sheep are brought down from the higher parts of Keoldale to these parts?—Not to these parts.

29,352. To that neighbourhood?—Not to that neighbourhood. Of course, the sheep on Sartle, I think, lamb there.

29,353. Well, what are you going to do with the remainder of the lands of Keoldale if you take away this portion?—I think they would have enough.

29,354. But is there land suitable for lambing purposes on the remainder away up on the hills?—Yes, of course, they would not up at Ruighaghalldfhir, I think they take down their sheep from Ruighaghalldfhir to Balnakill.

29,355. Why do you suppose the large farmers would take their sheep down there if they would do as well up on the hills?—I think they could take better care of them there.

29,356. So that if you take away these lands that you want now, it would be very much more difficult to work the remainder of the farm?—I don't think so; they have plenty land besides that portion.

29,357. Suitable for lambing?—Yes, suitable for lambing.

29,358. And are the other suitable lands that you refer to nearer the ordinary grazing ground of the sheep than the lands down here that you want?—No.

29,359. Then, where do they lie, what is the name of the place?—Sartle, along the Kyle way.

29,360. Do you think then that this portion between the Drochaid Mhor and Keoldale would be sufficient to hold the number of sheep that are at present brought down for lambing purposes, without the lands that you require?—I think so.

29,361. How have you arrived at that conclusion?—I mean to say that there is plenty of room for

UL 22 JAN 1981